

# The Rod and Measuring Rope

Festschrift for Olof Pedersén

Edited by  
Mattias Karlsson



Harrassowitz

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Detail from the Ur-Namu Stele (city of Ur, c. 2100 BCE, stone, 97x72.5x15 cm). Exhibited in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (B16676.14).

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# Abbreviations

## Bibliographical abbreviations

ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen
AAA	<i>Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology</i>
AASyr	<i>Annales Archéologiques de Syrie</i>
ActOr	<i>Acta Orientalia</i>
ADFU	Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka
ADOG	Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
AF	<i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i>
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AHw	see von Soden 1959-81
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
AKM	Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
Anatolica	<i>Anatolica: annuaire international pour les civilisations de l'Asie antérieure</i>
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
AnSt	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOS	American Oriental Series
ARCE	American Research Center in Egypt (Conservation Series)
ARM	Archives Royales de Mari
ARRIM	<i>Annual Review of the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Project</i>
ARTA	<i>Achaemenid Research on Texts and Archaeology</i>
AS	Assyriological Studies
ATU	Archaische Texte aus Uruk
ATU (1)	see Falkenstein 1936
ATU 6	see Englund and Nissen 2005
AuOr	<i>Aula Orientalis</i>
Babyloniaca	Babyloniaca: études de philologie assyro-babylonienne
BARI	British Archaeological Reports, International Series
BBVO	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient
BE	Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts
BE 6/1	see Ranke 1906
BEES	<i>Bulletin of the Egypt Exploration Society</i>
BiMes	Bibliotheca Mesopotamica

<i>BiOr</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
Boğ	Boğazköy-Hattusa, Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen
Boreas	Boreas: Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations
BRM	Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan
BRM 4	see Clay 1923
<i>BSA</i>	<i>Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture</i>
BSAW	Berlin Studies of the Ancient World
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CAD</i>	see Oppenheim and Reiner et al. (eds.) 1956–2011
<i>CAJ</i>	<i>Cambridge Archaeological Journal</i>
CDLI	Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative
CDOG	Colloquien der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
CR	Colloquium Rauricum
CRRAI	Comptes Rendu de la Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum
CT 4	see Pinches 1898
CT 5	see King 1898
CT 31	see Handcock 1911
CT 32	see King 1912
CT 43	see Figulla 1963
CTN	Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud
CTN 4	see Wiseman and Black 1996
CunMon	Cuneiform Monographs
CUSAS	Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology
CUSAS 18	see George 2013
<i>Deut.</i>	<i>Deuteronomy</i>
<i>Ee</i>	<i>Enuma Elish</i>
ePSD	Electronic Pennsylvanian Sumerian Dictionary
ETCSL	Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature
FAOS	Freiburger altorientalische Studien
FAOS 5	see Steible 1982
FAOS 6	see Behrens and Steible 1983
Fossey	see Fossey 1904-26
<i>GE</i>	<i>Gilgamesh Epic</i>
<i>GEN</i>	<i>Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld</i>
<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Genesis</i>
<i>GM</i>	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i>
HANEM	History of the Ancient Near East, Monographs
<i>Hdt.</i>	<i>Herodotus</i> (referring to Herodotus, Ἱστορίαι ( <i>Historíai The Histories</i> ))
HL	Hannig-Lexica
HSS	Harvard Semitic Series
HSS 16	see Lacheman 1958
<i>Hg</i>	<i>Lexical series</i> ḪAR.gud = imru = ballu
<i>Hh</i>	<i>Lexical series</i> ḪAR.ra = ḫubullu
<i>ID</i>	<i>Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld</i>

<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
IN	Ivories from Nimrud
<i>IrAnt</i>	<i>Iranica Antiqua</i>
<i>Iraq</i>	<i>Iraq: Journal of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq / Journal of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq</i>
<i>JA EI</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JAR</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Research</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JEOL</i>	<i>Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Gezelschap / Genootschap „Ex Oriente Lux“</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JRGS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
<i>JSOTS</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series
KA	Keilschrifttexte aus Assur
<i>KAJ</i>	see Ebeling 1927
KAL	Keilschrifttexte aus Assur, literarischen Inhalts
KAL 5	see Heeßel 2012
KAR	see Ebeling 1919-23
KAW	Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt
KB	Keilschriftliche Bibliothek
KUSATU	Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt
<i>LAK</i>	see Deimel 1922
MDI	Mémoires de la délégation archéologique en Iran
<i>MDOG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft</i>
MesCiv	Mesopotamian Civilizations
Mesopotamia	Mesopotamia: Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology
<i>Mesopotamia</i>	<i>Mesopotamia: rivista di archeologia, epigrafia e storia orientale antica</i>
MSL	Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon
MSL 2	see Landsberger 1951
MSL 3	see Landsberger 1955
MSL 5	see Landsberger 1957
MSL 9	see Landsberger and Civil 1967
MSL 14	see Civil 1979
MSL SS 1	see Civil et al. 1986
MSVO	Materialien zu den frühen Schriftzeugnissen des Vorderen Orients
<i>MVAG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-Ägyptischen Gesellschaft</i>
MVS	Münchener Vorderasiatische Studien
<i>NABU</i>	<i>Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
<i>OJA</i>	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta

<i>OLZ</i>	<i>Orientalische Literaturzeitung</i>
OPBF	Occasional Publications of the Babylonian Fund
OPSNKF	Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund
OrAntColl	Orientis antiqui collectio
<i>OrNS</i>	<i>Orientalia, Nova Series</i>
<i>OrS</i>	<i>Orientalia Suecana</i>
PAPS	Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society
PBS	Publications of the Babylonian Section, University of Pennsylvania
PBS 14	see Legrain 1925
PIHANS	Publications de l'institut historique-archéologique Néerlandais de Stamboul
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale</i>
<i>RE</i>	<i>Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
RGTC	Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes
RIM	Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia
RIMA	Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RIME	Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods
RINAP	Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
<i>RIA</i>	see Ebeling et al. 1928-2017
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAA 4	see Starr 1990
<i>SAAB</i>	<i>State Archives of Assyria, Bulletin</i>
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria, Studies
<i>Sam.</i>	<i>Books of Samuel</i>
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SCCNH	Studies on the Civilisation and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
StAT	Studien zu den Assur-Texten
StBoT	Studien zu den Boghazköy-Texten
StOr	Studia Orientalia
<i>Sumer</i>	<i>Sumer: A Journal of Archaeology (and History) in Arab World / Iraq</i>
<i>Syria</i>	<i>Syria: Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie</i>
TAPS	Transactions of the American Philosophical Society
TCL	Textes cunéiformes, Musée du Louvre
TCL 1	see Thureau-Dangin 1910
TCL 8	see Thureau-Dangin 1925
TCL 16	see de Genouillac 1930
TCS	Texts from Cuneiform Sources
<i>Topoi</i>	<i>Topoi: Orient–Occident</i>
UAVA	Untersuchungen zur Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie
UET	Ur Excavation Texts
UET 2	see Burrows 1935
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
WA	<i>World Archaeology</i>
WO	<i>Welt des Orients</i>

WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
YOS	Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts
YOS 10	see Goetze 1947
YOSR	Yale Oriental Series, Researches
YOSR 16	see van Buren 1930
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete/und Vorderasiatische Archäologie</i>
ZATU	see Green and Nissen 1987
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

### Museum abbreviations

AO	Collection of Antiquités Orientales of the Musée du Louvre, Paris
AP	Assur (excavation) Photo
Ass	Prefix of excavation numbers from the German excavations at Assur
Bab	Prefix of excavation photos from the German excavations at Babylon
BM	British Museum, London
BNUS	Tablets in the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg
CBS	Collection of the Babylonian section, University Museum, Philadelphia, PA
EŞ	Siglum of tablets in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum
FLP	Tablets in the collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia, PA
IM	Iraq Museum, Baghdad
K	Kuyunjik collection of the British Museum, London
M4	Tablet assemblage (library) from Babylon, Iraq
MLC	Morgan Library Collection, Yale University, New Haven, CT
MS	Siglum of tablets in the Martin Schøyen Collection
PTS	Siglum of tablets in the Princeton Theological Seminar, Princeton, NJ
Rm	H. Rassam collection of the British Museum, London
SAB Collection	Tell Sabi Abyad Collection, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden
SMN	Siglum of Nuzi tablets in the Semitic Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
VA	Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin
VAT	Tablets in the collection of the Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin
VS	Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der Königlichen/Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin
YBC	Babylonian collection of the Yale University Library, New Haven, CT

### Symbols and other abbreviations

*	unattested grammatical form/marker of note
+	between object numbers referring to physical join/after dimensions referring to part of object missing
(+)	referring to fragments from same object but without any physical join
x	in measurements/signifying not preserved cuneiform sign(s)



[...]	indicating reconstructed text
「...」	referring to partly readable cuneiform sign(s)
<...>	indicating scribal error (faulty exclusion) in text
<<...>>	indicating scribal error (faulty inclusion) in text
Abb.	Abbildung(en)
col(s)/Kol.	column(s)/Kolumne(n)
DN(N)	divine name(s)
dupl.	duplicate
ED	Early Dynastic
ed(s)/Hrgb(s).	editor(s)/Herausgeber(s)
ex(s).	exemplar(s)
Fig(s).	Figure(s) ( <i>internal</i> reference)
fig(s).	figure(s) ( <i>external</i> reference)
GN(N)	geographical name(s)
l(l)/Z.	line(s)/Zeile(n)
MA	Middle Assyrian
MB	Middle Babylonian
NA	Neo-Assyrian
NB	Neo-Babylonian
NN	unknown name
n(n)/Anm.	note(s)/Anmerkung(en)
no(s)/Nr.	number(s)/Nummer
NS/NF	Nova Series/Neue Folge
OB	Old Babylonian
obv./Vs.	obverse/Vorderseite
p(p)/S.	page(s)/Seite(n)
pl(s)/Taf.	plate(s)/Tafel(n)
PN(N)	personal name(s)
rev./Rs.	reverse/Rückseite
RN(N)	royal name(s)
var(s).	variant(s)
vol(s).	volume(s)

## Preface

It is with great pleasure that I can present this Festschrift to Olof Pedersén, Professor Emeritus of Assyriology at Uppsala University. The honoree has a long and productive career in Assyriology, focused e.g. on ancient Near Eastern archives and libraries, the cataloguing of cuneiform objects, and on regional maps and digital models of Babylon.

The contributors to his Festschrift are colleagues, friends, and former students. Reflecting the broad interests of the honoree, the contributions vary in terms of subject (ranging e.g. from notes on grammar to plans of archaeological reconstruction), source type (e.g. with contributions both on research history and based on the analysis of primary sources), time period (ranging from the Early Dynastic period down to the Neo-Assyrian period), and geography (including e.g. Egypt, Syria, and Iran, beside Sumer, Assyria, and Babylonia).

In the editing process, I did not revise the contributors' papers other than through formatting (texts and images), standardizing references, and correcting obvious errors or anomalies. The collected bibliography of Olof Pedersén is built upon the honoree's own list of publications. The references of the papers are collected at the end of the book, on the grounds of the coherence of the book and the reoccurrence of references in several papers.

The main title of the Festschrift (initially suggested by Jakob Andersson and taken over by me) is "The Rod and Measuring Rope". It alludes to the architectural background of the honoree and to his great attention to details and exactness in teaching and research.

Turning to acknowledgements, I want to thank Jakob Andersson, who initially acted as co-editor of this Festschrift but then decided to withdraw from his editorship – also formally and legally (the latter by not signing any contract). I also want to thank all the other scholars who have contributed to this book, for their kindness and patience. Lastly, I want to thank the publisher Harrassowitz, in particular Barbara Krauss, Michael Fröhlich, and Andrea Johari. I regret that I had to revise and restrict the number of contributions.

Finally, I wish the honoree a pleasant reading, and look forward to future additions to the collected bibliography of Olof Pedersén presented in the following section of this book.

Storvreta 2019-02-14

Mattias Karlsson

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# Do Not Study Assyrian! A Survey of Swedish Assyriological and Ancient Near Eastern Researchers ca. 1760–2000

Jakob Andersson

In Sweden, Near Eastern research into cuneiform cultures is mostly limited to the subject area of Assyriology, at present taught only at Uppsala University; there is as of yet no position for Near Eastern Archaeology. Only with the promotion of Olof Pedersén to Professor of Assyriology in the year 2000 has the discipline had the chance to be taught under stable terms. This brief and chronologically arranged overview of Swedish Assyriological and Near Eastern researchers, be they Cultural Historians, Exegetes, Linguists, Assyriologists or Near Eastern Archaeologists, is offered to the honoree with the hope that he will herein find some details of interest – maybe even a person or two about whose existence or nationality he was hitherto unaware.

It should be noted, that the biographical information available on the individuals herein mentioned is varied both in kind, and in quantity, and that no overarching narrative has been attempted.

## **Peter Forsskål (1731–1763)**

Swedish involvement in research into ancient Near Eastern cultures goes as far back as the Danish-sponsored Arabian expedition led by Carsten Niebuhr, whose painstaking work on Persian period inscriptions eventually led to the formation of the discipline of Assyriology.<sup>1</sup> In December 1765, Niebuhr correctly identified the site of Babylon and made measurements of its city walls.<sup>2</sup> Accompanying Niebuhr were two Swedes. One of them was Peter (sometimes Pehr or Petrus) Forsskål born in the Finnish provincial capital of Helsinki. Forsskål was a political philosopher, a student of Oriental languages and a natural scientist, a student of Linnæus. Forsskål had not made himself popular with the powers that be in Sweden; his doctoral thesis, written during his studies in Göttingen, focused on something as bold as civil liberties. Writing on the virtues of such, within the boundaries of moral, and with the good of the community kept in mind, Forsskål portrayed the threats against these liberties thus:

... the *greatest danger* is always posed by those who are the most powerful in the country by dint of their positions, estate, or wealth. Not only can they easily abuse the

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1 Messerschmidt 1903: 5–6; Hansen 1962: 314–324.

2 Hansen 1962: 330–331; Christian 1938–40: 40–41. Niebuhr made the mistake, though, as had others before and after him, of counting the ruins of Borsippa (Birs Nimrud) to the site he identified as Babylon.

power they hold, but also constantly increase their rights and strength, so that the other inhabitants must fear them more and more.<sup>3</sup>

These were bold words for his time, bearing in mind that Sweden was a monarchy and that every book to be published had to undergo censorship! After a few alterations and some altercations, Forsskål secured some kind of permission for a printed edition of his thesis. When it dawned on the Chancellors' College that Forsskål had pulled the wool over their eyes, they ordered the entire edition to be seized and destroyed. Even with the obliging assistance of Professor Linnæus, also serving as *Rector Magnificus* (Vice Chancellor) of the University of Uppsala, the authorities only ever managed to locate 79 copies out of the edition of 500. Forsskål no doubt in this way contributed to the Swedish Freedom of the Printing Press Act of 1766; effectuated 7 years after his thesis was published.<sup>4</sup> Forsskål succumbed to Malaria at the age of 31 in the village of Jerim, *en route* to Sana'a. He was buried hastily in a shallow grave which was violated shortly after the burial by locals who believed that the grave contained objects of considerable value, seeing since the deceased had been buried in a wooden coffin.<sup>5</sup> During the length of the expedition, and as long as he had the strength to do so, Forsskål primarily secured biological samples for sending back to Copenhagen, making substantial notes on the flora and fauna of the areas visited. But he also made extensive notes on the pre-Islamic history of the Arabian Peninsula, a comparison of the Cairo and Yemeni dialects, the religion of the Copts, among many other things. The fruits of Forsskål's labour, however, were bitter, in that much of his collected materials were either lost, irretrievably damaged in transit, or wilfully neglected on arrival in Copenhagen.<sup>6</sup> His diary from the years 1761–1763 was published in the middle of the last century; apart from the Swedish edition, it has so far only been translated into Finnish.<sup>7</sup>

The other Swedish member of the Danish expedition was Lars Berggreen (year of birth unknown, died 1763), a dragoon serving under a Swedish hussar colonel in Pommerania during the Seven Years' War. He lacked scientific education and mostly functioned as a servant of the group. Berggreen succumbed to malaria a month and a half after Forsskål on a ship headed for Bombay and was buried at sea.<sup>8</sup>

### Isidore Löwenstern (1810–1858)

A character of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century sometimes accused of being Swedish,<sup>9</sup> Isidore Löwenstern, can be credited as one of the very first to tackle the third, Babylonian, column of the Bisitun inscription in central western Iran, copied by Rawlinson. The other two columns – containing the Old Persian and Elamite renderings of the conquests of Darius I – had already been surveyed and treated with some success. Löwenstern may be recognized as one of the first to suggest that the third column was written in a Semitic language.<sup>10</sup>

3 Forsskål 2009: 14, § 4.

4 von Vegesack 2009: 23–38 (Swedish version); 23–39 (English version).

5 Hansen 1962: 264.

6 Hansen 1962: 268–278.

7 Forsskål 1950, 2003.

8 Hansen 1962: 50, 294–295.

9 See, e.g., Howardy 1907: 127–128.

10 Löwenstern used evidence from the Book of Genesis stating that Assur was the son of Sem, and thereby a sister language of Hebrew and Arabic, Löwenstern 1845: 13 and 30 note S; Rogers 1901: 180–181

Löwenstern was, however, not Swedish but Austrian,<sup>11</sup> although he was elected a foreign corresponding member of the The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities from 1848 until his death ten years later.

### **Herman Almqvist (also Almqvist; 1839–1904)**

Herman Napoleon Almqvist a native of Stockholm began his studies at Uppsala in 1856.<sup>12</sup> He defended his doctoral thesis in Uppsala ten years later on the Medieval traveller and geographer Ibn Battuta's travels.<sup>13</sup> He had received his schooling in Oriental languages in Paris and Leipzig, and also managed to travel extensively in the Near East and northeast Africa.<sup>14</sup> Among his lasting contributions to Swedish Semito-Hamitic philology were his travels in southern Egypt and Sudan, which generated an interest in comparative dialectal studies, and which opened up for in-depth study of Ethiopic languages by subsequent Upsalensian scholars.<sup>15</sup> In 1880 he was called as Professor of Comparative Philology in Uppsala, and between 1892–1904 he served as Professor of Semitic Languages at the same university. In the later years of his life, he sat down to learn cuneiform writing, and he incorporated Assyriological materials in his classes on comparative Semitic grammar.<sup>16</sup> Almqvist retired in late April 1904, and died in Uppsala only five months later.<sup>17</sup>

### **Oscar Montelius (1843–1921)**

Swedish archaeologist and cultural historian Gustaf Oscar Augustin Montelius was born in Stockholm in September 1843, and spent the duration of his studies in Uppsala, beginning in 1861. He was, however, never an employee at the university there. In the beginning he focused on botany, chemistry and mathematics, but later turned to the humanities.<sup>18</sup> In 1869 he earned his PhD, in the subject of History, as there was no independent subject called Archaeology at the time.<sup>19</sup> While studying in Uppsala, he served as an assistant to the National Antiquarian at the Swedish History Museum (1863–1868). He later accepted the offer for a position as Professor and later on as National Antiquarian at said museum, where he worked between 1888–1913. His work on chronology, albeit from a Scandinavian perspective, drew upon newly published Near Eastern sources, and served to date finds from the Nordic countries. Montelius is otherwise well-known for devising the chronological scheme which divided the Nordic Bronze Age into six phases.<sup>20</sup> In 1877, Montelius was

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(faultily referred to as “Loewenstein”); Zetterstéen 1914: 33–34.

11 See von Wurzbach 1866: 447–449 for biographical notes on Löwenstern.

12 Zetterstéen 1918: 439.

13 Almqvist 1866. Almqvist was an avid debater in favor of spelling reforms aiming to adapt the orthography to better suit spoken Swedish (Zetterstéen 1924: 12), and hence, a few years after his doctoral defense he changed the spelling of his name to Almqvist.

14 Zetterstéen 1924: 11–22.

15 Kahle 2007: 53–55.

16 Zetterstéen 1924: 18–20; Kahle 2007: 53, 58; Malmberg 2007: 35–36. According to Malmberg (2007: 35), Almqvist was the first to introduce Assyriology as a permanent course, but there is no indication as to which year this would have been.

17 Zetterstéen 1918: 439.

18 Gräslund 1985–87: 679.

19 Gräslund 1985–87: 679.

20 T. Dahl 1949: 329–330. An example of the application of Montelius' methodology in Near Eastern research, with a critical evaluation, can be found in Hrouda and Karstens 1967, esp p 256 footnote 3.

elected member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities. He declined an offer from Germany in 1907 to become the director of the Museum für Völkerkunde and instead retained his attachment to the Swedish History Museum which lasted his entire professional life.<sup>21</sup> In 1917, at the age of 74, he was elected member of the Swedish Academy, occupying chair eighteen. As one of the leading scholars of ancient history and cultures, he was in contact with many of the persons mentioned in this article.<sup>22</sup>

### **Esaias Tegnér the Younger (1843–1928)**

For most of the 1800's, Swedish research on the Orient revolved around the living languages of the region. But when texts began pouring out of the ground in the old cultural centers of Babylonia and Assyria they caught the interest of Esaias Henrik Vilhelm Tegnér the Younger, who in 1875 published a popularizing pamphlet on the discoveries in Mesopotamia, including a description of the Persian and Mesopotamian cuneiform writing systems, and a schematic overview of Neo-Assyrian history.<sup>23</sup> He was by that time a Reader (Swedish: Docent), having earned his doctoral degree at the age of twenty on a dissertation about nunation in Arabic.<sup>24</sup> Tegnér was called to the chair of Professor of Oriental Languages in Lund in 1879. The same year he was elected working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, and in 1882, at the age of 39, he was elected member of the Swedish Academy, occupying chair number nine. Most of his later career revolved around Nordic languages. In 1884, Tegnér was appointed member of the Swedish Bible Commission, instated by king Gustaf III already in 1773 to produce a new Swedish edition of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament to replace the edition from 1703 commissioned by king Karl XII. In 1917, only 144 years after its instatement, the commission had fulfilled its duty. Writing in 1924, Professor of Semitic Languages in Uppsala K. V. Zetterstéen ascribed the success of the commission to Tegnér almost single-handedly.<sup>25</sup>

### **Count Carlo Landberg (1848–1924)**

One of the more remarkable personas within Swedish oriental studies, Count Carlo (Carl) Landberg, born in Gothenburg, studied for a semester in Uppsala before departing for Paris in 1871, to study oriental languages and archaeology. He received his doctorate in Leipzig in 1883, and became Count through an Italian marriage in the following year. Landberg was appointed Chamberlain to H.R.H. the King of Sweden Oscar II in 1893. He is most well-known for his work on modern Arabic dialects.<sup>26</sup> His preoccupation with the Arabic-speaking world was triggered by his Paris studies in neo-European Linguistics, Sanskrit, Turkish, Hebrew and Archaeology under renowned Professor Jules Oppert and Ernest Renan.<sup>27</sup> The former had remarked during a class held in the winter semester of 1871/72 that Landberg did not know a single word of Arabic. According to the biographical notes of this self-confident Swede, he had quickly replied “Et bien! Demain je partirai pour l’Arabie”. And according to

21 Gräslund 1985–87: 679, 683.

22 I am grateful to Rolf Jonsson at the Norrköping City Archives, for affording me with scans of letters sent by Montelius to Anton Valfrid Hacklin, discussing lectures to be held at meetings of different associations in Norrköping in the years 1907–1910.

23 Tegnér 1875.

24 Tegnér 1865.

25 Zetterstéen 1924: 32.

26 T. Dahl 1948: 451–452.

27 Dederling 1977–79a: 231.

his own statements, the very next day he boarded a ship bound for Beirut. This was, however, no doubt an exaggeration on his part, as he seems to have arrived there only in the autumn of 1872.<sup>28</sup> Landberg received several significant international honorary orders on account of his services in the academic sphere, among others the Ottoman orders of the Medjidie and the Osmaniye; as well as Persian Lion-and-sun-order (Nishan-i-Homayoun).<sup>29</sup> There is, to be sure, a lot more to be said of the eccentric but talented Count, but that is perhaps best left to others,<sup>30</sup> or to himself, if one acknowledges the fact that he was in the habit of publishing *Festschriften* in honour of himself.<sup>31</sup>

### August Strindberg (1849–1912)

The survey would not be complete without a brief account of the most staunch opponent the budding science of Assyriology has had in Sweden – if not in all of Europe. The renaissance man, author and alchemist August Strindberg in some of his books launched a series of attacks on leading scholars in Assyriology, and on the general import of the discipline. For instance, he urged young people never to take up studies in the discipline: “Läs icke Assyrisk!” (Do not study Assyrian!), as a heading in his *En ny blå bok* reads.<sup>32</sup> His dislike for Assyriology (and indeed for Assyriologists), can be said to be founded in the disappointment of never coming to terms with the fact that the writing system employed a mixture of logographic and phonetic signs; where many signs would serve both purposes, and often sporting many different reading values. It is also telling that Strindberg used literature which was already hopelessly outdated in his time; and that he compared popular scientific works with specialist literature in German, French and English, hoping to be able to find either some consistency therein, or some inconistencies to pounce upon and deride.<sup>33</sup> Had Strindberg only lived to follow the developments of Assyriology in the 1920’s and 1930’s, he may have turned out more lenient in his total dismissal of the discipline. Strindberg’s study where he wrote his searing critique of Assyriology was located on Karlavägen 40, on the opposite end of the Humlegården park from the apartment of a future compatriot and orientalist, Wilhelm Riedel; both living at a comfortable walking distance from the National Library of Sweden.

### Anton Hacklin (1861–1923)

The continuing discoveries made in the ruin mounds of Mesopotamia led to an intensification of studies in Near Eastern cultures in the decades before the turn of the twentieth century. Born in Nora, Västmanland in January 1861, Anton Valfrid Hacklin was a licentiate of Semitic languages (1885), PhD (1887), and BA of Theology (1890). In 1886, he was the first Swedish scholar ever to hold propedeutic lectures in Assyriology,<sup>34</sup> and his survey of the

28 See Zetterstéen 1924: 42; 1945: 8–9.

29 Anonymous 1915: 74.

30 E.g. Zetterstéen 1945.

31 Notably the *Festschrift* in his own honour, commemorating his 40th anniversary as orientalist, entitled: *Jeder tut was ihm passt, denn reden werden die Leute immer*, Leiden 1909. Beneath the photograph of the honoree/only author of the volume is a caption: “Ein alter Schwede”.

32 Strindberg 1999: 764. Similar attacks are also found in books translated to English, e.g. Strindberg 1913: 232–233.

33 See, to this end, the sober comments by Pedersén in the Appendix section of Strindberg 1999: 1090–1092; Larsen 1989: 121–122; 1990.

34 Zetterstéen 1924: 37–38.

etymology and usage of the Hebrew preposition ל contained a brief overview of comparable Akkadian particles and prepositions.<sup>35</sup> As Hacklin continued to pursue his interests within Theology rather than Assyriology, he moved to Norrköping to fill a position as lecturer and later on as Principal of Norrköping's secondary school.<sup>36</sup> But he stayed in contact with Swedish scholars, as is illustrated by his correspondence with Oscar Montelius, now housed in the Norrköping city archives.

### **Olof Toffteen (1863–1929)**

Born in Hägsarve (Hexarfve) on the island of Gotland in June 1863, Olof (sometimes Olaf) Alfred Toffteen enrolled at Uppsala University in 1885 to study Theology before leaving for the U.S. in 1888. He joined the Protestant Episcopal Church and was ordained priest in 1893. He practiced his calling in Woodhull, IL, and Minneapolis, MN, where he founded six parishes. From there he went on to Chicago, where – apart from his priestly duties – he also pursued studies in Semitic languages at the University of Chicago. In 1905, he received his doctorate, and between 1906 and 1910 he was chair of Semitic languages at the Western Theological Seminary in the same city.<sup>37</sup> When Robert Francis Harper was on leave in 1906 – perhaps in connection with the death of his older brother, William Rainey Harper in January of the same year – Toffteen took over his teaching duties in Assyriology.<sup>38</sup> Toffteen's Assyriological output mostly focused on Near Eastern geographical and chronological issues.<sup>39</sup>

### **Sven Hedin (1865–1952)**

Sven Anders Hedin, Dr. *h.c. mult.*, native of Stockholm, world-renowned explorer, geographer and writer, wrote several books based on his extensive travels in partly uncharted territories of Central Asia; both scientific works and books were directed toward a young readership. Several of his books were written in English or German, or were translated into languages other than Swedish. He was ennobled in 1902 by H.R.H. the King of Sweden Oscar II, as the last person in Swedish history to receive this honour, and was furthermore elected member of many learned societies, among others the Swedish Academy, which he entered in 1913, at the age of 48, occupying chair number 6. He was a firm opponent of pre-revolutionary Russia, and later often spoke out in support of German National Socialist politics. Because of this, he was invited to speak at the grand opening of the XI Olympic Games in Berlin 1936.<sup>40</sup> In his book *Bagdad, Babylon, Ninive*,<sup>41</sup> Hedin describes in his usual, upbeat narrative style visits paid to modern and ancient cities and towns in Iraq. Besides those mentioned in the title of the book, he also made a brief stint to Assur, repeatedly referring to passages in the Hebrew Bible and the classical writers. During his tour of Babylon in mid-

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<sup>35</sup> Hacklin 1886.

<sup>36</sup> S. G. Dahl 1898: 105.

<sup>37</sup> Olson 1917: 572; T. Dahl 1955: 1. His doctoral thesis, however, was not published until three years later (Toffteen 1908).

<sup>38</sup> Olson 1917: 572. This leave of absence might help to explain the deterioration in the relationship between Edgar James Banks, the excavator of Adab-Bismayah, and Professor Harper, who left at least one of Banks' letters unanswered. See Wilson 2012: 24–25.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. Toffteen 1907; 1908.

<sup>40</sup> T. Dahl 1946: 360–363.

<sup>41</sup> Stockholm 1917. German and English translation with the same title (both Leipzig 1917 and 1918, respectively).

May 1916, Hedin was guided by none other than Robert Koldewey himself, who had stayed behind in Babylon even after the outbreak of the Great War to care for the excavation site.<sup>42</sup> Hedin was clearly awestruck by the erudite Koldewey and frequently refers to the latter's theories and thoughts. A number of objects of Near Eastern extraction, including a cuneiform inscription and potsherds said to have come from Samarra and Eridu, were donated by Hedin to the comparative collections of the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm.<sup>43</sup>

### **Knut Tallqvist (1865–1949)**

A person who deserves mention is one whose works served a Swedish-reading audience: Finnish scholar Knut Leonard Tallqvist. Apart from Tallqvist's works in Finnish, German and English, one notes a translation into Swedish of the Gilgamesh epic (1945; reissued 1962 and 1977; audiobook 2007); and a book on Babylonian hymns and prayers, *Babyloniska hymner och böner* (posthumously edited by Jussi Aro, 1953).

### **Karl Vilhelm Zetterstéen (1866–1953)**

Almkvist's successor to the chair of Semitic Languages in Uppsala, Karl Vilhelm Zetterstéen. An exceptionally gifted Arabist, Zetterstéen did not ascribe much importance to the cuneiform documentation; but he did manage to produce a sober synthesis of the history of cuneiform decipherment and research up until around 1914 which is well worth the read even today.<sup>44</sup> Zetterstéen was elected working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1933. As has been shown above, Zetterstéen was instrumental in furthering the career of Carl Axel Moberg and for ruining the career of David Wilhelm Myhrman.

### **David Myhrman (1866–1940)**

David Wilhelm Myhrman began his studies at a biblical seminar in Stockholm, after which he went to the United States and Chicago for studies in the Hebrew language and Old Testament exegesis, which ended in a BA in 1896. From Chicago, he went on to Cambridge, where, it seems, he first came into contact with Assyriology. His stay there ended with an MA in 1897. After a period of ill health, Myhrman went to Leipzig in 1899 where he studied under professors Zimmern and Franz Heinrich Weissbach, and he received his doctorate in 1902 on a work concerning the demoness Lamaštu (Labartu).<sup>45</sup> Myhrman seemed to be heading for a brilliant assyriological career, but this was cut short due in part to altercations with Professor Zetterstéen. Their falling out became a most public affair, where one of the leading Swedish newspapers sided with Myhrman, much to the annoyance of Zetterstéen.

42 Hedin 1917: 437–535. Koldewey finally left the site 10 months later, on 7 March 1917 (Pedersén 2005: 3).

43 Arne 1936, 106.

44 Zetterstéen 1914: 20–52.

45 Myhrman 1902. In an encyclopedic article (Myhrman 1904: 266), Myhrman argued that the discipline of Assyriology should in fact more correctly be called 'Babylonology'. He motivated this, saying that the discipline "occupies itself with the archaeology, languages, literature, art history and religion of ancient Babylonia and Assyria. More correct would be to call it babylonology, as the culture in question is Babylonian" [author's translation].



Over the course of a few years, the Myhrman Affair (*Myhrmanska saken*),<sup>46</sup> was fought, very much in public, in pamphlets, newspaper articles, and by means of personal correspondence; Myhrman had to fend off callous accusations of incompetence in the field of Arabic studies from his superior, Zetterstéen. The latter received ammunition as Myhrman's American patron Hermann Vollrath Hilprecht in tandem with Hugo Radau (1873–1954) claimed that Myhrman was both incompetent and academically dishonest. In their formal accusations, they suggested – among other things – that he had committed burglary at the University Museum in Philadelphia to avail himself of unpublished materials; and that Myhrman had not himself been responsible for the copies published in his 1911 volume of *Babylonian Hymns and Prayers*. Furthermore, not only had Myhrman accepted suggestions on readings and interpretations allegedly made to him by Radau without crediting the latter, he had also had the audacity to disregard some such suggestions!<sup>47</sup>

In a pamphlet Myhrman retorted the accusations,<sup>48</sup> and in it he supplied transcriptions of documents, signed by Hilprecht himself, by members of faculty and staff in Philadelphia, as well as many other internationally renowned scholars. The documents disproved many of the charges brought forward by Hilprecht and Radau, and which were then repeated by Zetterstéen. The many letters and telegrams paint a picture of a person of unassailable integrity, and of a scholar who was taken aback by the hostility with which the conflict between Hilprecht and the rest of Philadelphia's oriental scholars, save Radau, raged. Even though Myhrman had testified in defence of Hilprecht at the hearing of the university tribunal, he had no problem getting Hilprecht's opponents to vouch for his character, and confirm that Myhrman had not perpetrated any unlawful or immoral acts while visiting Philadelphia. Other parts of the accusations are harder to prove either correct or false.

Zetterstéen fired a salvo back at Myhrman and came up trumps.<sup>49</sup> Myhrman's academic credibility was all but over and done with.

Both Myhrman and Radau had testified in support of Hilprecht at the University of Pennsylvania tribunal in connection with the so-called Hilprecht-Peters Controversy.<sup>50</sup> Both had staked their reputations saying that the judgment of Hilprecht carried such weight that neither they, nor the academic world at large should have any reason to doubt it.<sup>51</sup> Both Myhrman and Radau came to leave the field shortly after Hilprecht had lost his footing in

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46 See Eskhult 2013 for an excellent analysis of the Myhrman Affair, in Swedish, with an English abstract.

47 The falling out between Myhrman and Radau appears to have been swift, as the last indication of an amicability of sorts is represented by an offprint, signed "With the best wishes Hugo Radau", dated April 20 1910 and then sent to Myhrman. The offprint is at present housed in the library of the present writer.

48 Myhrman 1912.

49 Zetterstéen 1912.

50 Hilprecht 1908.

51 For Radau's statement, dated April 22 1905, see Hilprecht 1908: 152–159; and in even less uncertain terms, *The New York Times*' issue of April 23, p. 6. For Myhrman's statement, see Hilprecht 1908: 167–168.

Philadelphia; in 1914 Myhrman went on pursuing a career as a clergyman in the Church of Sweden;<sup>52</sup> in 1915 Radau took up practice as a solicitor.<sup>53</sup>

### Wilhelm Riedel (1871–1961)

Another little-known scholar who has done some work within the field of Assyriology was Johann Wilhelm Riedel, born in Schwartau, outside of Lübeck.<sup>54</sup> He originally came from a background in Theology with a specialization in christian manuscripts. He did not publish much of his research into cuneiform languages and cultures,<sup>55</sup> which must have begun some time around 1910; because in 1913 and 1914, he was a frequent visitor to the British Museum, copying some 160 tablets, predominantly dating to the Old Babylonian period, and taking notes on several more.<sup>56</sup> None of these were ever published, however. During the Great War, Riedel served as an army reserve and shortly after the war, he moved with his family to Stockholm. He became extraordinary lecturer in Latin at an upper secondary school in nearby Eskilstuna in 1919, and became a Swedish citizen in 1921.<sup>57</sup> Riedel shared an apartment on Karlavägen 20 in Stockholm with his daughter Margaret Riedel, who was involved in the early Swedish theosophic movement and who was trained in Waldorf pedagogy. Much of Wilhelm Riedel's notes are kept in shorthand. His notes, drafts and copies, all diligently dated, along with notebooks from the 1920's and 1930's with comments on and treatments of text publications from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were donated to Uppsala University by his daughter and are now archived at the Department of Linguistics and Philology.<sup>58</sup>

### Pontus Leander (1872–1935)

Born in Holsljunga, Pontus Adalbert Leander, like Myhrman, pursued his assyriological studies between late 1897 and early 1903 in Leipzig under the freshly appointed Professor Heinrich Zimmern; and in Marburg under Professor Peter Jensen.<sup>59</sup> Leander wrote and successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on Sumerian loanwords in Akkadian at Uppsala University in 1903,<sup>60</sup> becoming a Reader in Assyriology in the same year. He was the first ever Swedish scholar of oriental languages to have specialized in Assyriology.<sup>61</sup>

52 Pedersén 1993–97.

53 Borger 2006–08.

54 *Nyheter från föreningen Eskilstunapojkarna* 1962/1, 3.

55 Riedel 1913, the publication of six Ur III texts from Puzriš-Dagān, forms the most eye-catching exception. During the Babel-Bibel-Streit at the beginning of the 20th century, Riedel filled a position in Greifswald. He appears to have penned a response of some sort to Delitzsch's first published lecture [not seen by present author], which at least merited inclusion in the English-language translations Delitzsch 1903a: 92; 1903b: 119.

56 Most tablets belong to the series BM 81500–, 81600– and 82000–. Documents from other periods include a Sargonic tablet (BM 80174) featured in a volume with copies by Theophilus G. Pinches published by Sollberger (1963 no. 48). Riedel's copy contained no improvements to that of Pinches.

57 *Nyheter från föreningen Eskilstunapojkarna* 1962/1, 3.

58 According to a memorial article on the 20th anniversary of Riedel's passing, he is said to have been preoccupied with Sanskrit during his stay at the British Museum. This, however, has left no trace in his copious notebooks, *Nyheter från föreningen Eskilstunapojkarna* 1981/2, 4.

59 Dederling 1977–79b: 410; Leander 1903: 4.

60 Leander 1903. Leander followed up on his thesis with an article on composite loanwords from Sumerian into Akkadian (Leander 1904–05); and he had previously also written a popularized account on the history of research into the oldest cultural layers of Babylonia and Sumer (Leander 1901).

61 Zetterstéen 1924: 37; Dederling 1977–79b: 410.

Leander would, however, be more remembered for his work on Hebrew grammar, and in 1910 he was appointed Reader in “Assyrian” and Hebrew in Lund. From 1917 until his death, he served as professor in Semitic Languages at the University of Gothenburg, then Gothenburg University College.<sup>62</sup>

### **Carl Axel Moberg (1872–1955)**

Carl Axel Moberg, born in Norrköping in June 1872 was a specialist in Arabic and Syriac, trained and active in Lund. Moberg was a former student of K. V. Zetterstéen during the time the latter filled the chair of Oriental Languages in Lund, while Tegnér was on leave for work with the Bible Commission. In 1908 Tegnér resigned his position permanently, and the offer to replace him first went to Moberg. But Zetterstéen wanted to give Myhrman a chance also, so the academic output of both scholars was examined by Zetterstéen, who arrived at the conclusion that Myhrman’s chosen field of study was less important than Moberg’s.<sup>63</sup> This decision was to become part of the underlying tensions between Zetterstéen and Myhrman culminating in the Myhrman Affair.

Among Moberg’s many publications one finds a well-researched pamphlet about the tower of Babel, written for the occasion of the doctoral promotion proceedings at Lund University in 1918,<sup>64</sup> the year when Efraim Briem (see below) was promoted doctor. He later returned to the subject with an article in English published in the *Festschrift* for Zetterstéen, taking into account literature from the years after the First World War.<sup>65</sup> Moberg was elected working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1934.<sup>66</sup>

Moberg is not to be confused with the Swedish archaeologist Carl-Axel Moberg (1915–1987), whose introduction to the archaeological sciences is widely known and has been translated into several languages.

### **Martin P:n Nilsson (1874–1967)**

Nils Martin Persson Nilsson, PhD, Dr. *h.c. mult.*, was born in Stoby to a family of farmers, being the first ever in his family to devote himself to academic studies.<sup>67</sup> Nilsson was a classical philologist, trained and active in Lund. He was enormously productive and his works spanned everything from classical philology, via classical archaeology and the history of religion. His acquaintance with the Near East comes to the fore in works like *Die Übernahme und Entwicklung des Alphabets durch die Griechen* (1918), *Orientens forntid* (1926); and *De arkeologiska upptäckterna i den klassiska södern och den forna orienten* (1933).<sup>68</sup> He was elected working member of the The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters,

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62 T. Dahl 1948: 500.

63 Vitestam 1985–87: 574–575; Eskhult 2013: 20–21.

64 Moberg 1918.

65 Moberg 1931.

66 Vitestam 1985–87: 574.

67 Gierow 1987–89: 743.

68 T. Dahl 1949: 448–449.

History and Antiquities in 1920, and held seven honorary doctorates from foreign universities.<sup>69</sup>

### **Carl Lager (1878–1949)**

Carl Herman Lager, whose work within Assyriology is known only from a volume posthumously edited by Daniel C. Snell,<sup>70</sup> came to the U.S. in 1905 to study at the University of Chicago. He was ordained Baptist pastor in 1909 and then spent some time at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem.<sup>71</sup> It was during this time that he bought a number of tablets which were bequeathed to the Yale Babylonian Collection upon his death. It appears he worked on the texts, copying and recopying them, in the 1910's, and in 1947.<sup>72</sup> He taught at Brandon College, originally a Baptist institution, in Manitoba, Canada as Professor of Old Testament studies, Hebrew, Swedish and German up until 1932,<sup>73</sup> when he withdrew from teaching to dedicate his time to the Swedish Baptist Church in New Bedford, Massachusetts where he ended his days.<sup>74</sup> In the 1940 U.S. Census, Lager happened to live on a street named after a compatriot, Jenny Lind Street in New Bedford. Lind was of course the world-renowned Swedish singer (originally named Johanna Maria) nicknamed "the Swedish Nightingale", who made a widely acknowledged tour of the U.S. in the early 1850s at the invitation of the infamous P.T. Barnum.<sup>75</sup>

### **Nils Nilsson (1880–1908)**

A third student – like Leander and Myhrman – who devoted himself to Assyriology in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Uppsala was Nils Nilsson, who enrolled at Uppsala University at the age of 18. His Uppsala mentors were Almkvist and Zetterstéen, but like Leander, Nilsson also went to Leipzig to study under H. Zimmern. Nilsson's studies in Semitic languages and cultures provided a stepping stone toward the history of religion; and his 1906 licentiate thesis revolved around the goddess Ištar. Sadly, Nilsson succumbed to illness in November 1908, and none of his many plans reached fruition. Posthumously, a part of his thesis, translated from Swedish into French, was published in the series edited by Professor of Slavic Languages J.-A. Lundell, with a foreword written by the illustrious theologian, Dr. *h. c. mult.*, Church of Sweden Archbishop of Uppsala, visiting Professor of Religious studies in Leipzig, Nobel Peace Prize laureate (etc., etc.), Nathan Söderblom.<sup>76</sup>

### **Tor Andrae (1885–1947)**

Tor Julius Efraim Andrae, was a scholar of the history of religion with a primary focus on Islamology. He had a background within Semitic Languages and the History of Literature. Beginning in 1929, Andrae served as a Professor of "Theological Prenotions and Theological Encyclopedia", which was later divided into the three disciplines of the History of Religion, the Philosophy of Religion and the Psychology of Religion. During 1934, he held a series of

69 Gierow 1987–89: 743.

70 Snell and Lager 1991. Previously, W.W. Hallo had begun working with compiling these texts, with the assistance of Baruch A. Levine, but had had to abandon the project (Hallo 1999: xvii).

71 Brown and Donovan 1912: 263.

72 See the detailed biography and information on the tablets in Snell and Lager 1991: 1–2.

73 *Brandon College Sickie* vol. 2, 1928–1929: 9; vol. 5, 1932: 21.

74 Snell and Lager 1991: 1.

75 T. Dahl 1948: 600–602.

76 Nilsson 1910. A review can be found in Nielsen 1913.

lectures on Mesopotamian religion at Uppsala University, but they never materialized into a printed work.<sup>77</sup> At the age of 47, Andræ was elected member of the Swedish Academy in 1932, occupying chair number sixteen, and he was subsequently elected a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1935. At the time of his passing, Andræ was the bishop of the Diocese of his native Linköping.

### **H. S. Nyberg (1889–1974)**

A character of the utmost importance for a Swedish stream of Near Eastern research was Professor of Semitic Languages at Uppsala, Henrik Samuel Nyberg. He was born in December 1889 in Söderbärke and came to spend most of his life in Uppsala. Already before the age of ten, he had studied Sven Hedin's stories of the latter's travels through Khorasan and Turkestan, and so his familiarity with the Orient was an age-old affair.<sup>78</sup> Nyberg was crucial for the formation of the sometimes-called Uppsala School of textual and cultural interpretation of Near Eastern materials where the text-critical assertions, to the effect that long-lived oral traditions preceded the writing down of texts across the oriental cultures.<sup>79</sup> This latter point was viewed by the adherents to the Uppsala School as a critical issue which would allow for common traditions surrounding the concept of sacred kingship to be able to crop up in different places during different periods. During his professional career, Nyberg was the examiner of 999 students in the Semitic and Persian languages and religions, and among them are found many renowned later Scandinavian professors in Semitic languages, the History of Religion, and Iranian Languages.<sup>80</sup> Nyberg was elected a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1935, and he was elected member of the Swedish Academy in 1948, at the age of 59, occupying chair number three.

### **Efraim Briem (1890–1946)**

Efraim Briem, born in Helsingborg, was a student and scholar within the field of the History of Religion, active exclusively in Lund, where he first enrolled in 1909.<sup>81</sup> One of his teachers was Professor Carl Axel Moberg. He furthermore studied "Assyrian" under Professor Pontus Leander. His PhD thesis, defended the next year, centred on Mesopotamian mother goddesses.<sup>82</sup> Briem's thesis was divided in two main sections. In the first, he provided a textual survey of Ninḫursaĝa (Ninḫarsag), Nanše (Ninā), Bau, Inana (Innanna), and what he termed "vegetation goddesses (vegetationsgudinnor)." The second part was made up by a survey of the different local aspects of the goddess Ištar, namely Ištar of Akkade, Babylon, Aššur, Nineve, Arbela and Uruk, along with a survey of Ištar in poetic texts. The work is representative of the level of research at the time, and does not come across as a piece of research any less informed than works produced in continental Europe at the time. Had it been written in English, Briem would no doubt have been far more well-known than is now the case. He continued to produce works focusing on ancient Near Eastern religion and more

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77 One of the main points of his series of lectures appears to have been the flexibility of gender regarding the conception of high-gods, so according to Widengren 1945: 93–94 with footnote 104, p. 94.

78 Toll 1990–91: 643.

79 See, e.g. Nyberg 1935: 6–12, especially pages 7–9.

80 Toll 1990–91: 648.

81 Norlind and Olsson 1939: 45.

82 Briem 1918: iv.

general introductions to the field of religious thought,<sup>83</sup> but as opposed to other works in his bibliography, none of these was ever translated into another language.

### **Gustaf Lorentz Munthe (1896–1962)**

Gustaf Lorentz Munthe was an Art Historian and the Curator of the Röhsska museet in Gothenburg between the years 1924–1946. In the late 1920s, Munthe undertook a journey through Turkey, Syria and Mesopotamia, ending in Jerusalem. His travels were then published in printed form in 1928.<sup>84</sup> Munthe was guided around the area of Baghdad by the Scottish-born director of the Iraqi Department of Antiquities Richard S. Cooke. The latter held the position only briefly between 1927–1928, succeeding the illustrious Gertrude Bell. Far less illustrious than Bell or Koldewey – more infamous than famous – Cooke was implicated in a smuggling ring, involving an American archaeologist working at the Harvard University excavation of Nuzi.<sup>85</sup> The section on Munthe's visit to Babylon is consequently much less of an elaborate affair, as compared to Hedin's book.<sup>86</sup> In 1931, under Munthe's time as curator of the Röhsska museet – and thanks to two generous private donations from Elin Jansson and Gustaf Werner – the museum was able to acquire two reliefs from Babylon from the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, one from the Ishtar Gate section of the Street of Procession depicting a dragon, the other from the throne room of Nebuchadnezzar II depicting a lion, tail turned upwards.<sup>87</sup>

### **Hans Henning von der Osten (1899–1960)**

German-born Hans Henning von der Osten was a Near Eastern Archaeologist of great repute who came to spend about ten years teaching at the Uppsala University. His late teens were spent as a lieutenant on the German western front, where he was severely hurt. His future preoccupation with the cultures of the Near East had begun already in the trenches, where he had acquainted himself with Delitzsch's work on Akkadian grammar. While on leave from the army, he began his university studies at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin, following courses in Archaeology, Ancient History and Assyriology.<sup>88</sup> In the early 1920's, von der Osten moved to the United States, where he continued his studies; first in New York, later in Chicago, where he received his Ph. D. in 1928.<sup>89</sup>

The early career of von der Osten was spent working in Anatolia for the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, which resulted in a swarm of publications. During his many years in the young Turkish state, von der Osten made many valuable acquaintances in the top echelons of Turkish society, including Kemal Atatürk himself. And when the Oriental Institute decided to stop funding his excavations in Turkey, von der Osten accepted a teaching position at Ankara Üniversitesi, where he taught from 1936 to 1939,<sup>90</sup> when he was charged

83 T. Dahl 1942: 463–464. Other works focusing on Near Eastern religion include *Kultur och religion i Babylonien och Assyrien*, Stockholm 1926; and *Babyloniska myter och sagor: Med kulturhistorisk inledning*, Stockholm 1927.

84 Munthe 1928.

85 Rothfield 2009: 11.

86 Munthe 1928: 140–154.

87 <http://emp-web-35.zetcom.ch/>; <http://rohsska.se/>.

88 Bittel 1962: 105.

89 Bittel 1962: 105; Gorny 2003–05: 149.

90 Goode states that von der Osten was handed the position without having any formal academic

with espionage and jailed.<sup>91</sup> Upon his release in 1950, he worked on a private collection of stamp and cylinder seals, with a few sealed objects, amulets and pearls located in Istanbul.<sup>92</sup> In 1951, von der Osten accepted a position offered to him by Uppsala University, at the initiative of Professor Axel Persson,<sup>93</sup> who passed away that same year.

Having immersed himself in the study of Iran and the Persian culture, the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut gave von der Osten the task of surveying the important Sassanid era site of Takht-e Soleyman, Old Persian Shiz, in northwestern Iran; a task set to pave the way for a joint German-Swedish expedition. The results of the survey carried out in 1958–1959 were encouraging, and the DAI decided upon appointing von der Osten as head of their Abteilung in Teheran. In 1959, Uppsala University awarded von der Osten with an honorary doctorate. On the night before the departure for a second season of excavations at the site, on June 30, von der Osten died from a heart attack in his home in Uppsala.<sup>94</sup> He was survived by his wife Hedwig, who remained in Uppsala.<sup>95</sup>

### **Herman Wohlstein (1903–1985)**

Herman Wohlstein, was born in Malmö, Sweden, and took up the position of orthodox rabbi, following in the footsteps of his father Josef Wohlstein. He authored a number of articles in English, German and Esperanto, and a monograph, pretty much all centered on matters concerning the history of religion in the ancient Near East, and especially the Sumero-Akkadian god of the sky An/Anum.<sup>96</sup> The monograph suffered in part from a poorly informed choice of publishing house, as it turned out that diacritics and letters like *ä* and *ö* were consistently left unmarked; making the work a difficult read, to say the least.<sup>97</sup> Other works include articles on Near Eastern magical traditions,<sup>98</sup> and contributions in Swedish to the journal distributed by the association Erevna, initiated by the Lund Professor of Old Testament Exegesis Hugo Odeberg (1898–1973). The latter has otherwise been accused of

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credentials (2007: 50), but von der Osten's academic track record can hardly be disregarded in this connection.

91 See, e.g. details noted in the correspondence of F. R. Kraus, edited in Schmidt 2014. In a letter dated Dec 25 1939, Kraus informed B. Landsberger, about rumours linking von der Osten to the German government (Schmidt 2014: 456); and in a letter dated 25 Jan 1942 Landsberger informs Kraus that von der Osten "hat mich in sein idyllisches Gefängnis nahe den bahçeli evler eingeladen" (Schmidt 2014: 784).

92 von der Osten 1957.

93 Boehmer 1999: 613.

94 Bittel 1962: 107–108.

95 The name of von der Osten's wife is actually never mentioned in the literature, but Hedwig, as she was called, was von der Osten's third spouse, see Boehmer 1999: 612. Hedwig passed away on 5 October 1988 and is buried alongside her husband in the Old Cemetery at Uppsala. Her name is given as Hete on the headstone.

96 E.g. Wohlstein 1961, 1963, 1969, 1971, 1976. It is not clear when he defended his doctoral thesis, but it must have been in or prior to 1963, as he is referred to as Wohlstein, Hermann, Dr. Malmö/Schweden in Wohlstein 1963: 850.

97 Furthermore, as Arnaud (1978: 80) remarked in his review of the book, Wohlstein had relied too heavily on dated materials and treatments, disregarding newer findings, and even more recent, basic literature.

98 E.g. Wohlstein 1944. A collection of various essays and book reviews in Swedish covering a broad range of subject matters, published between the years 1929–1945, are conveniently assembled in Wohlstein 1945.

entertaining anti-semitic ideas.<sup>99</sup> Wohlstein contributed, for instance, translations into Swedish of pieces written by the Dutch scholar F.M.Th. de Liagre Böhl.<sup>100</sup>

### **Ivan Engnell (1906–1964)**

The previously mentioned Uppsala School took form at the faculty of Theology in the end of the 1940's. It consisted of a group of Uppsala historians of religion and language scholars who met and debated central issues in the Hebrew Bible in order to produce a well-founded basis for exegesis. The topics of cult and sacred kingship were central points. The Professor of Old Testament Exegesis, Ivan Engnell was a central figure. Born in Linköping, enrolled at Uppsala in 1928 and receiving a doctorate in Theology in 1943,<sup>101</sup> Engnell's thesis on Near Eastern kingship (1943) helped fuel discussions and debates amongst the participants at the recurrent seminars. Some of the participants are well-known for their individual contributions to the Scandinavian branch of the traditio-historical school, as the Uppsala School has come to be called.<sup>102</sup>

### **Alfred Haldar (1907–1986)**

Alfred Ossian Haldar was born in Kristianstad, in the southern part of Sweden. He studied Theology at the universities in Lund and Uppsala, and was ordained priest in the Church of Sweden in 1936.<sup>103</sup> He later chose to withdraw in order to pursue studies in Semitic languages. He defended his doctoral thesis on the subject of *Associations of Cult Prophets among the Ancient Semites* in Uppsala in 1945. This was followed by an exegetical work on the book of Nahum, incorporating many observations on the biblical text taken from Ugaritic, Akkadian and Sumerian literary sources.<sup>104</sup> Further work included his investigation of *The Notion of the Desert in Sumero-Accadian and West-Semitic Religions*, and a translation into Swedish of *Enuma elish*.<sup>105</sup> In 1952, Haldar managed to secure rights for an excavation in Syria. The target was the site of Tall aš-Šāliḥīya on the eastern rim of the Damascus valley. The excavation team, apart from Haldar himself, consisted of Hans Henning von der Osten, accompanied by his wife Hedwig, and Else Nordahl (1925–2011), later Nordic Archaeologist.<sup>106</sup> The dig was commenced on 3 January 1953. Both Haldar and Nordahl were, however, taken seriously ill, and had to spend the whole term of the six-week excavation season in hospital,<sup>107</sup> with von der Osten and his wife doing the grunt of the work. The short excavation led to the founding of the short-lived Swedish Syria-Committee, with the task of securing funds for further research in Syria.<sup>108</sup> But no such funding ever materialized, and no further excavation work was carried out in Tall aš-Šāliḥīya or elsewhere

<sup>99</sup> Åkerlund 2008: 559–561.

<sup>100</sup> Wohlstein 1953a and 1953b.

<sup>101</sup> Dintler and Lindqvist 1953: 141.

<sup>102</sup> Good introductions to the scholarly climate of Uppsala and of the era in which the Uppsala School gradually took form, are given by Merrill and Spencer 1984; and Soggin 1989: 101–107.

<sup>103</sup> Harnesk 1964: 308.

<sup>104</sup> Haldar 1947.

<sup>105</sup> Haldar 1950 and 1952, respectively. More on Haldar's publications and his collection of cuneiform tablets can be found in Andersson 2008.

<sup>106</sup> Nilsson, Oscarsson, Eklund, Kuhlberg, Källman, Tesch and Claesson 2012: 73.

<sup>107</sup> Nyberg 1956: v–vi.

<sup>108</sup> Nyberg 1956: vi.



in Syria by a Swedish expedition. Haldar continued to publish, mostly in the form of articles, until the early 1970s.

### **Geo Widengren (1907–1996)**

Geo Widengren, born in Stockholm, began his higher studies at the University College of Stockholm in 1926, and enrolled at Uppsala University in 1931, where he defended his doctoral thesis on Akkadian and Hebrew psalms of lamentation in 1936.<sup>109</sup> In between his studies, he served as an underofficer in the Swedish army, and during the Second World War he briefly served as a lieutenant in the Finnish army as part of the Swedish Volunteer Corps during the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union. His commission lasted between February and early April 1940.<sup>110</sup> Immediately after this, he was appointed Professor of the History and Psychology of Religion. Between 1950–1960, he was vice-president of the International Association for the History of Religion, and between 1960–1970 he was the president of the same organization.<sup>111</sup> Most of his later career he spent researching Indo-Iranian cultures. In 1960, Widengren served as the second faculty opponent at the doctoral defense of Assyriologist Åke Sjöberg, putting special focus on the theological implications of Sjöberg's thesis about the Moon-God Nanna-Suen. Widengren was elected a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1971.

### **Helmer Ringgren (1917–2012)**

K.V. Helmer Ringgren, born in Åla on the island of Gotland, enrolled at Uppsala University in August 1936 and became doctor of Theology in 1947 at Uppsala University. He was active in Uppsala as Reader in the History of Religion between 1947–1959, also spending time in Åbo, Finland, and at the Garrett Biblical Institute in Evanston. Between the years 1964–1983, he served as Professor of Old Testament Exegesis at Uppsala,<sup>112</sup> where he would remain and live out his days. Much of his work focused on Biblical and Islamic studies, but he also authored a couple of introductory books on ancient Near Eastern religions,<sup>113</sup> and edited the first volume of the series *Historia Religionum*.<sup>114</sup>

### **Gösta Ahlström (1918–1992)**

Gösta Werner Ahlström, Professor of Old Testament studies at the Divinity School and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department of the University of Chicago. Ahlström's primary concern was ancient Israel/Palestine, but his survey of Palestinian history, published posthumously, was far more than what the title stated. In essence, it represents a 900+ page synthesis of the pre- and early historical cultures in the Eastern Mediterranean and Near Eastern area, seen from both a textual and archaeological point of view.<sup>115</sup> In his eulogy for Ahlström, Åke Sjöberg reminisced about how they both were members of the student's choir in Uppsala, and that the time when they became friends for real were during the Old

109 Widengren 1936; Dintler and Lindqvist 1953: 598–599.

110 Dintler and Grönberg 1975: 653–654.

111 Maier 2007: 353.

112 Dintler and Grönberg 1975; Uddling and Paabo 1992: 923.

113 Ringgren 1967 (English translation 1973; German translation 1979); Ringgren 1987.

114 Ringgren 1969.

115 Ahlström 1993.

Testament seminars headed by Ivan Engnell. During a period in the late 50s to early 60s, Sjöberg was Ahlström's teacher during a seminar in Assyriology.<sup>116</sup>

### **Frithiof Rundgren (1921–2006)**

Gustaf Frithiof Rundgren was born in Stockholm on Christmas Day 1921. He began his academic career as a student of the classical languages, first Latin, which he could study at Stockholm University College, but in order to study Greek, he had to enroll at Uppsala University.<sup>117</sup> In the early 1940s, he attended seminars led by H. S. Nyberg, who soon suggested that "I think Rundgren should come over to me", meaning that he should come and pursue his linguistic interests under Nyberg, which he, of course, did.<sup>118</sup> And so he went through a considerable and wide curriculum, encompassing not only the most significant Semitic languages, but also Iranian languages, which were all treasured by his competent mentor. In 1955 he defended his thesis on *s/š-* and *n-t-*demonstratives in Semitic,<sup>119</sup> and among his early production one finds a few works focusing on Akkadian linguistic issues ranging from lexicography to morphology and syntax.<sup>120</sup> In 1964 he succeeded H. S. Nyberg as Professor of Semitic Languages, and for more than 20 years, he was the sole editor of the Uppsala journal *Orientalia Suecana*, besides his many administrative and honorary commitments. He was elected a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1966.<sup>121</sup> Rundgren retired in 1987, but upheld a steady stream of academic output, as varied as his academic background and interests.<sup>122</sup> Among his many students one may note one Olof Pedersén, who has remarked that Rundgren took an interest in, and was quite supportive of, his own academic work.

### **Åke Sjöberg (1924–2014)**

Åke Waldemar Sjöberg,<sup>123</sup> Prof. Dr., Dr. *h.c.* in Theology at Uppsala 1994, has a track record too great to be summarized in a few lines, and references to his generosity with regards to granting publication rights of Nippur tablets kept in Philadelphia, as well as his and his wife Gunnil's hospitality, strewn over books and articles testify to his scholarly integrity and his warm personality.

Sjöberg's road to the Near East began during the early 1930's in his native Sala, when he received tutoring in Greek by a curate in the town church. He graduated from Fjellstedtska skolan in Uppsala in 1946, with grades in Latin, Greek and Biblical Hebrew. Later the same year he enrolled at Uppsala University to study Semitic languages under Prof. H.S. Nyberg, among others. Sjöberg received his BA in 1953, and went on to study under Adam Falkenstein in Heidelberg during seven semesters between 1953 and 1959. Sjöberg was

116 Sjöberg 1995.

117 Ö. Dahl 2007: 31.

118 Eskhult and Isaksson 2006: 5; Ö. Dahl 2007: 31.

119 Rundgren 1955a.

120 E.g. Rundgren 1955b, 1959a, 1959b, 1963. In other titles also, Akkadian figures prominently in studies of etymologies and cultural historical issues, or for comparisons.

121 Ö. Dahl 2007: 32.

122 Eskhult and Isaksson 2006: 5; Ö. Dahl 2007: 31–32. Bibliographies of Rundgren are collected in Riad 1984–86: 513–524; and Isaksson and Riad 1996–97: 217–220.

123 Consistently referred to by himself and others as Waldemar, his passport actually stated Valdemar. An excellent photo of Sjöberg is found in his first Festschrift, Behrens, Loding and Roth 1989: 592.

awarded his Licentiate (MA) degree in 1955.<sup>124</sup> Classes in Heidelberg were held six days a week, with Saturdays reserved for Near Eastern archaeological studies.<sup>125</sup> In 1960, Sjöberg defended his doctoral thesis, for which he received a three-year Readership. Sjöberg soon went to the United States; first to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in 1963,<sup>126</sup> and then on to Philadelphia in 1966, where, two years later, he succeeded Samuel Noah Kramer as Clark Research Professor in Assyriology.<sup>127</sup> He officially retired in 1996, though he did not cease working on his Akkadian files until a few months before his passing. Åke and his wife Gunnil were permanent residents in the States for some 40 years before returning to Sweden. Two *Festschrift* volumes were published in Sjöberg's honour,<sup>128</sup> and these contain detailed bibliographies of his scholarly output spanning a remarkable seven decades.<sup>129</sup>

### **Carl Nylander (b. 1932)**

Carl Nylander is an archaeologist with a predominant interest in the early historical Mediterranean and in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium cultures of Iran. He defended his doctoral thesis in 1970 on the Greek influences on Achaemenid architecture.<sup>130</sup> Nylander's production also includes investigations into the area of intersection between these regions, as is demonstrated by his preoccupation with the bronze head of a potential Sargonic period ruler found at Nineveh (IM 11331).<sup>131</sup> According to Nylander himself, his career choice had been influenced to no small degree when spending time at the German-Swedish excavations at Takht-i-Suleiman in northwestern Iran, under the auspices of Hans Henning von der Osten and Rudolf Naumann. His words in fond remembrance of von der Osten in the foreword to his popular and highly personal book *The Deep Well* summarizes his lasting impressions of von der Osten as follows:

In our often bloodless and pedantical world of learning, this German aristocrat was a strange bird, always surrounded by an aura of adventure, both of the spirit and the senses. The image of a bird seems to suit him and his destiny; even in his worn Turkish sheepskin jacket, with his dishevelled hair and his burning eyes, he recalled the impassive nobility of a hunting falcon. Again in his relationship to the practical world and its problems, he could on occasion resemble Baudelaire's albatross, whose great wings hinder it from moving easily on the ground, or the condors of poetry which rise high above the earth but are forced down by the winds of hunger to live on the charity of the Inca people. Those who have not only had the experience of being lifted by him over Asia and over history, but also of being with him in everyday situations, cannot forget this intensely vital person. We carry, like an abiding gift from the years with

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124 Dintler and Grönberg 1975: 538.

125 Åke Sjöberg (personal communication).

126 Dintler and Grönberg 1975: 538.

127 Eichler 2006: 100.

128 Behrens, Loding and Roth 1989; Sassmannshausen 2013.

129 An obituary is Andersson 2015; a lengthier one is set to be published in an upcoming issue of the journal *Orientalia Suecana*, Andersson forthc.

130 Nylander 1970a.

131 Nylander 1980a, 1980b.

him, the echo of his irrepressible enthusiasm and of his vision of the past, his multifarious humanism, his warmth and his consideration.<sup>132</sup>

Nylander is a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities since 1979.

### **Jöran Friberg (b. 1934)**

A name that is inseparable from Near Eastern research, but with a background within the natural sciences is Jöran Friberg, Professor of Mathematics (History of Science and Technology) at Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg. Friberg began as a mathematician in the traditional sense, writing and defending his doctoral thesis in 1963.<sup>133</sup> His first contact with pre-classical mathematics came during a visiting assistant professorship at the University of Minnesota in the academic year 1965–1966. For his MA, Friberg had had to learn Russian which came in handy when he began studying A. A. Vajman's writing on Babylonian mathematics. Friberg has published several monographs and a number of articles on matters concerning Mesopotamian mathematics, and was one of the driving forces behind the deciphering of the proto-cuneiform and proto-Elamite systems of numerals and metrological notations.<sup>134</sup>

### **Tryggve Mettinger (b. 1940)**

Nils Daniel Tryggve Mettinger has time and again preoccupied himself with questions of text interpretation, and admits to having been influenced by some researchers within the Uppsala school, but he deliberately chose another path of exegesis.<sup>135</sup> His work includes important investigations of the descensus motif central to certain Near Eastern mythologies.<sup>136</sup> He is a working member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities since the year 2000.

### **Cecilia Grave (b. 1945)**

Ingrid Cecilia Henschen Grave is an Orientalist active mainly in the 1970s and early -80s. She had her training at Lund University, and her field of interest was mainly in the Eastern Mediterranean languages and cultures, with a special focus on the Amarna period letters from Tyre. This interest resulted in a few articles published in international scholarly journals.<sup>137</sup> She began writing a doctoral thesis on the subject, but there is no evidence suggesting that it was ever submitted.<sup>138</sup> Grave is the daughter of acclaimed poet Elsa Grave.

Which brings us up to the pleasant conclusion, and the honoree Olof Elias Pedersén, born in 1946, promoted professor in 2000, and to whom this brief overview of his peers and predecessors is warmly dedicated.

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132 Nylander 1970b: 9–10.

133 Friberg 1963.

134 Englund 2004: 23 footnote 1; 30–33.

135 Mettinger 2004: 18, 23, 25.

136 Mettinger 2001 and 2005.

137 Grave 1980a, 1980b, 1982.

138 Siddall 2010, 31 note 5.

# Two Cylinder Fragments from Assur with a Late Assyrian Royal Building Inscription

Eckart Frahm

## Introduction

The past two and a half decades have seen a remarkable explosion in editions and studies of cuneiform texts from Assur, and no one has played a more crucial role in triggering this renewed interest in the written records from Assyria's ancient capital than Olof Pedersén. Two of his major works, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur*,<sup>1</sup> and *Katalog der beschrifteten Objekte aus Assur*,<sup>2</sup> the former a catalogue of clay tablets, the latter of other inscribed objects found at Assur, have served as starting points for almost everyone who has worked on texts from Assur since the late 1980s. The present writer is no exception. My volume on historical and historical-literary texts from Assur profited significantly from both of the aforementioned studies.<sup>3</sup> Again and again, I was compelled to admire the discipline that Pedersén had shown when he stuck to his project of cataloguing the many thousands of Assur texts, instead of yielding to the temptation of studying particularly interesting ones more closely. It was this cardinal virtue of the cataloguer – paired, of course, with an ability to speedily identify and read texts dating to very different periods and representing highly diverse genres – that allowed Pedersén to finish his projects so successfully and in such a remarkably short period of time.

The present article provides an edition of two clay cylinder fragments from Assur that came to my attention because they are mentioned in Pedersén's 1997 catalogue. Both are now housed in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin. The fragments are, in all likelihood, manuscripts of the same text, since the text portions preserved on them overlap. For the very same reason, the fragments must derive from two different cylinders.

Olof Pedersén had identified one of the fragments, VA 7505, as belonging to a royal inscription of a "Sargonid" king ("eines Sargoniden"), while classifying the other, VA 15465, as a Neo-Assyrian royal inscription.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s, during my time as a research associate at the Assur-Forschungsstelle founded by Stefan M. Maul at Heidelberg, I had the opportunity to study VA 15465 more closely, first by using a print of the Assur photo AP 5852, which had been taken by the excavators at Assur, and then by looking at the original

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1 Pedersén 1985, 1986.

2 Pedersén 1997.

3 Frahm 2009.

4 Pedersén 1997: 208, 210.

in the Vorderasiatisches Museum. I prepared a copy and an edition of the fragment for my aforementioned book,<sup>5</sup> tentatively ascribing it to Esarhaddon.

Late in 2008, while the book was in press, I took a closer look at prints of a number of photos of the other fragment, VA 7505, that Marianne Kosanke had taken for the Heidelberg Assur project. Before long, I realized that the fragment duplicated VA 15465. While it was too late to include VA 7505 in my own edition of the latter piece, I did send transliterations and translations of both fragments to Erle Leichty, who was able to use them for his new corpus of royal inscriptions from the reign of Esarhaddon.<sup>6</sup> Leichty's volume presents a composite text of the two pieces on pages 290-91 (no. 1006) and provides a score transliteration on the CD-ROM accompanying the book.

Even though the two fragments are therefore, strictly speaking, no longer unpublished, a new edition of them seems warranted, and is provided here. Besides the commentary and a few improved readings, the most substantial contribution of this article is the cuneiform copy of the badly damaged text on VA 7505, which is based on my examination of the original in Berlin in 2009. It is hoped that this copy will enable some reader, perhaps the honoree himself, to solve at least a few of the remaining mysteries of the text and to finally establish whether it can indeed be attributed to Esarhaddon. For the time being, this attribution remains unproven, and the only thing that can be said with certainty is that Pedersén was completely right when he claimed that the text was written in the name of a Sargonid king.

For permission to work on the two fragments and to publish a copy of VA 7505 in the present volume, I would like to thank Beate Salje, former director, and Joachim Marzahn, former curator, of the Vorderasiatisches Museum. To Stefan Maul, I am indebted for providing the photos of VA 7505 that allowed me to identify the piece as a duplicate to VA 15465. Finally, I would like to thank Cornelia Wunsch for last-minute collations in Berlin and for sending me new photos of a few particularly difficult lines.

## Edition

### A: VA 7505

Fragment of the left part of a two-columned hollow clay cylinder, 110 × 72 mm, Late Assyrian script, in places very worn. Based on the curvature of the object, one can estimate that roughly half the lines of column i are entirely lost, which means that, originally, each column comprised some 35 lines.

Excavation number: Ass. 3509. Findspot: Assur, kA4I, river bank wall, near the stone block wall ("Ufermauer, bei der Steinblockmauer").

Copy: fig. 1. Earlier edition: Leichty 2011: 290-91 (no. 1006, ex. 1). Additional literature: Pedersén 1997: 206.

### B: VA 15465

Fragment from the middle section of a two-columned hollow clay cylinder, 77 × 65 mm, Late Assyrian script.

<sup>5</sup> Frahm 2009: no. 58.

<sup>6</sup> Leichty 2011.

Excavation number: Ass. 18945. Findspot: Assur, ziggurat, gC4IV, 3 m north of the wall of 2,40 m breadth, ca. 1,50 m below the top edge of its stone foundation (“3 m nördlich der 2,40 m breiten Mauer, ca. 1,50 m unter deren Steinfundament-Oberkante”).

Copy: Frahm 2009: 245. Earlier edition: Frahm 2009: 113-14 (no. 58); Leichty 2011: 290-91 (no. 1006, ex. 2). Additional literature: Pedersén 1997: 208.

col. i (beginning lost)

1'

A 1' [nīš] ʾIGI<sup>III</sup> <sup>d</sup>+En-líl mal-ku ʾpit<sup>21</sup>- ʾqu<sup>1</sup>-d[u (x)]

---

2'

A 2' [x (x)]- ʾú<sup>1</sup>-ma ik-tar-ra-bu x [x (x)]

---

3'

A 3' x-du-šú SIPA ke-e-nu [x x (x)]

---

4'

A 4' [(x)] x UZU UN.MEŠ ú-ṭib-bu x x x

---

5'

A 5' ʾGÌR<sup>1</sup>.ARAD KÁ.DINGIR.RA<sup>ki</sup> MAN KUR ʾEME<sup>1</sup><GI<sub>7</sub>> u ʾURI<sup>ki</sup>

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6'

A 6' na-ʾram<sup>1</sup> <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU u <sup>dr</sup>Zar<sup>1</sup>-pa-ʾni<sup>1</sup>-t[u<sub>4</sub>]

---

7'

A 7' [ḥa]-ʾas<sup>1</sup>-su mu-du-u ib<sup>2</sup>/ ʾlu<sup>21</sup> [x (x)] x [x]

---

8'

A 8' [x] x-ti <sup>dr</sup>AG<sup>21</sup> [(x)] x [x x x (x)]

---

9'

A 9' [eṭ]-lu<sub>4</sub> qar-du ʾša<sup>21</sup> [<sup>d</sup>Ištar Ninua<sup>ki</sup>]

B 1'

[<sup>d</sup>] ʾ15<sup>11</sup> ʾNINA<sup>11ki</sup>

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10'

A 10' [GAŠA]N<sup>2</sup> GAL-tu x x x ʾe<sup>21</sup>-ʾtel<sup>21</sup> ʾkal<sup>21</sup> [malkī]

B 2'

[<sup>e</sup>]-tel<sup>2</sup> kal mal-ki

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11'

A 11' [ša<sup>di</sup>] <sup>ngirr</sup> ʾ15<sup>1</sup> LÍMMU-īl be-lut KUR.KUR tu-ma-al-ʾlu<sup>1</sup>-u

B 3'

[be-lu]t KUR.KUR tu-ma-al-lu-u

---

12'

A 12' qa-tu-šu LUGAL kul-lat k[i]b-rat LÍMMU-ti

B 4'

[LUGA]L kul-lat kib-rat LÍMMU-ti

13'	
A 13'	<i>mi-gir</i> DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ <sup>dr</sup> šam <sup>1</sup> -šu kiš-šat UN.ME[Š]
B 5'	[ GA]L.MEŠ <sup>d</sup> šam-šu kiš-šat UN.MEŠ
14'	
A 14'	<sup>r</sup> ša <sup>1</sup> ep-še- <sup>r</sup> tu <sup>1</sup> -šú UGU ka-la DINGIR.MEŠ ṭa-a-bu
B 6'	[ ep-še-t]u-šú UGU ka-la DINGIR.MEŠ ṭa-a-bu
15'	
A 15'	[ša(?) pu <sup>2</sup> ]- <sup>r</sup> luḥ <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> -ti DINGIR. <sup>r</sup> MEŠ <sup>1</sup> GAL.MEŠ ra-biš
B 7'	[ pu <sup>2</sup> -lu]ḥ <sup>2</sup> -ti DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ ra-biš
16'	
A 16'	[īdū(?) p]u <sup>2</sup> -tuq-q[u] DINGIR-su-un
B 8'	[i <sup>2</sup> -du <sup>2</sup> ]- <sup>r</sup> u <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> pu-tuq-qu DINGIR-su-un
17'	
A 17'	[ ] x [x x]
B 9'	[ ] x x x x x x lacuna
col. ii	
1'	
B 1'	x [ ]
2'	
B 2'	al-l[u <sup>2</sup> ]
3'	
A 1'	<sup>r</sup> i <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> -[ ]
B 3'	il-b[i <sup>2</sup> -nu <sup>2</sup> libnāti(?)]
4'	
A 2'	šá q[é <sup>2</sup> - ]
B 4'	šá qé-reb [ ]
5'	
A 3'	<sup>r</sup> šu <sup>1</sup> -[ ]
B 5'	šu-bat-su [ ]
6'	
A 4'	<sup>r</sup> qaq <sup>1</sup> -[ ]
B 6'	qaq-qa-ru [ ] A breaks off



7'		
B 7'	É ba-x [	]
8'	<hr/>	
B 8'	TA UŠ <sub>8</sub> <sup>12</sup> -[šū adi gabadibbīšu / naburrīšu]	
9'	<hr/>	
B 9'	ar-ši[p <sup>2</sup> ušaklil(?)	]
10'	<hr/>	
B 10'	ši-ṭir <sup>2</sup> [šumija(?)	]
11'	<hr/>	
B 11'	x [	]
	B breaks off	

beginning lost

<sup>i 1'</sup>[object of] Enlil's (benevolent) gaze, *prudent* king, [...] <sup>2'</sup>[...] ... *they* constantly blessed ... [...] <sup>3'</sup>[...] ... the true shepherd [...] <sup>4'</sup>[...] ... (who) provided physical well-being to the people ..., <sup>5'</sup>governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, <sup>6'</sup>beloved of Marduk and Zarpanitu, <sup>7'</sup>intelligent, knowledgeable ... [...] <sup>8'</sup>[...] ... *Nabû* ... [...], <sup>9'</sup>valiant young man, *whom* Ištar of Nineveh, <sup>10'</sup>the great *lady*, ..., *hero among* all kings, <sup>11'-12'</sup>in whose hands Ištar of Arbela entrusted power over the lands, king of all of the four quarters, <sup>13'</sup>favorite of the great gods, divine sun of all of the people, <sup>14'</sup>whose deeds are pleasing to all the gods, <sup>15'-16'</sup>[*who*] *knows* how to greatly revere the great gods and respects their divinity, <sup>17'</sup>[...] ... break

<sup>ii 1'</sup>... [...] <sup>2'</sup>*hoe* [...] <sup>3'</sup>*they made* [*bricks* ...] <sup>4'</sup>which (is/was) inside [...] <sup>5'</sup>its site [...] <sup>6'</sup>ground [...] <sup>7'</sup>*house* ... [...] <sup>8'-9'</sup>I built [and completed it] from [its] foundation [to its parapets ...] <sup>10'</sup>inscribed [with my name ...] <sup>11'</sup>... [...] rest lost

## Commentary

Both fragments edited here derive from two-columned hollow clay cylinders. Both are written in Assyrian script and have horizontal rulings that separate lines. The beginning of the text is lost in both manuscripts; it must have included the name and some titles of the king who commissioned it. The preserved portion of the text starts off with a rather long and poetic self-representation of that king, which emphasizes his cordial relationship with Babylonian as well as Assyrian deities. After a gap of some twenty-five or thirty lines, the text continues with a report on a building project whose exact nature remains unclear. The last section of the text is again lost.

Clay cylinders were used for recording Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions from the reign of Sargon II onwards, which provides a fairly reliable *terminus a quo* for the dating of our two fragments. That they stem from the reign of Sennacherib can be excluded with some confidence because of the Babylonian titles provided in the text (i 5'-6') – such titles are

attested for Sargon<sup>7</sup> and Esarhaddon,<sup>8</sup> but not for Sennacherib. They were also not used by Assurbanipal,<sup>9</sup> during whose reign Babylon was first ruled by his brother Šamaš-šumu-ukin and then by Kandalanu.

The most likely candidate to have commissioned the text is Esarhaddon (680-669 BCE). As documented in the line by line commentary below, the text offers a number of pronounced phraseological parallels with royal inscriptions of that king. Clay cylinders written in the name of Esarhaddon have, in fact, been found at Assur. They include VA 7511, VA 8412, and VA 15471,<sup>10</sup> likewise two-columned, which are inscribed with a text about the restoration of Aššur's Ešarra temple; and the one-columned EŠ 6703,<sup>11</sup> which was discovered in the area of the Aššur temple but deals with a building project outside that city, the construction of a palace for the crown prince Assurbanipal in Tarbišu.

As will be shown below in the notes to column ii, there are some hints that our new text may describe work on a palace as well, but whether this palace was the one in Tarbišu is far from certain, and for the time being, the question of the text's purpose remains wide open. Unfortunately, the – potentially secondary – findspots of our two fragments, east of the enclosure wall of the Aššur temple and in the area of the zigurat, do not help to settle the issue.

The following notes have benefitted from the possibility to perform electronic searches of the corpus of Esarhaddon's inscriptions at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/rinap4/corpus>.

col. i

1': The reading of the beginning of the line, based on a reexamination of photos of the text, is new and not yet to be found in Leichty 2011. The royal epithet *nīš īni* DN is attested twice in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon, in Leichty 2011: no. 48, l. 62 (where it is accompanied by the divine name Aššur) and no. 76, obv. 3 (probably again combined with Aššur). Elsewhere, it is rare in Assyrian royal inscriptions (see Seux 1967: 207). *Malku pitqudu* is otherwise known only from inscriptions of Sargon II and Sennacherib (see CAD P, 441b), but *pitqudu* is also attested as an epithet of Esarhaddon (Leichty 2011: no. 45, i 2, no. 76, obv. 9).

2': Possible restorations of the beginning of the line include [*u<sub>4</sub>-me-š*]am-ma “daily” and [*šu*]-*ū<sup>1</sup>-ma* “(is) he.” For the gap at the end of the line see the note on i 1'-3'.

3': Perhaps *ī<sup>1</sup>-du-šū* “at his side.” At first glance, this reading may seem problematic because it requires us to believe that the scribe felt no need to indicate the doubling of the final *š* (the normalized form would be *iduššu*). But we find the same phenomenon in *qa-tu-šu* in i 12, another noun in the locative-terminative followed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. sing. suffix. *Rē'ū kēnu* (note the Assyrian form of the adjective) is attested as an epithet of Esarhaddon quite often, *inter alia* in Leichty 2011: no. 1, i 4; but it is, of course, also known from royal inscriptions of other kings.

<sup>7</sup> See the overview in Fuchs 1994: 374.

<sup>8</sup> See Seux 1967: 278.

<sup>9</sup> The putative exceptions listed in Seux 1967: 278 are all from problematic and damaged passages.

<sup>10</sup> Leichty 2011: no. 59, ex. 1-3.

<sup>11</sup> Leichty 2011: no. 93.

1'-3': It is difficult to restore the gaps in these lines in a meaningful way and disentangle the syntax of the section. The following reconstruction is very tentative:

A 1'      [nīš] ᵀIGI<sup>111</sup> d+En-līl mal-ku ᵀpīᵀ-ᵀqu<sup>1</sup>-d[u ša(?)]  
 A 2'      [u<sup>4</sup>-me<sup>2</sup>-š]am-ma ik-tar-ra-bu-š[u illakū(DU.MEŠ?)]  
 A 3'      ᵀi<sup>1</sup>-du-šú SIPA ke-e-nu [x x (x)]

[object of] Enlil's (benevolent) gaze, the *prudent* king, [whom] they (the gods) have constantly blessed *on a daily basis* [(and)] *at whose side* [they are marching], the true shepherd [...].

The subject of the relative clause could also be the god Enlil alone.

4': The verbal expression *šīr nišī ṭubbu* is used several times in the Laws of Hammurapi (see CAD Ṭ, 40a for references) and may have been borrowed from there. It is, so far, apparently not attested in any other Late Assyrian royal inscription. At the beginning of the line, one expects [š]a, but such a reading is difficult to reconcile with the traces.

5': The Babylonian titles mentioned in this line are very common in Esarhaddon's inscriptions; see, for instance, Leichty 2011: no. 1, i 2-3.

6': This epithet is also attested in Leichty 2011: no. 43, obv. 6, and no. 44, obv. 2.

7': The sequence *ḥassu mūdū* is also found in Leichty 2011: no. 1, ii 19. According to CAD Ḫ, 128, it is not attested in royal inscriptions of other kings. I do not know how to restore the end of the line; ᵀlu<sup>1</sup>-[li-mu eršu] "wise stag" seems unlikely since the only Neo-Assyrian king who uses this epithet is Sennacherib.

8': The beginning of the line remains uncertain. Perhaps [ḫi-ši]ḫ-ti "the one desired (by Nabû)" – note that Leichty 2011: no. 1, ii 18 calls Esarhaddon ḫi-šiḫ-ti DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ "the one desired by the great gods," and in the following line, ii 19, *ḥassu mūdū*, the same epithet that is found in our text in i 7' (see also Leichty 2011: no. 48, l. 62). Less likely, for orthographic reasons, is a reading [ni-ši]t-ti "chosen by," based on ni-šit ᵀAG ᵀAMAR.UTU in Leichty 2011: no. 1, i 87 and elsewhere. At first glance, another possibility would be to restore [mušte'û] at the end of i 7' and read at the beginning of i 8': [áš-r]a-ti ᵀAG [u Tašmētu] "[who is assiduous towards] the shrines of Nabû [and Tašmetu]" (cf. Leichty 2011: no. 43, obv. 7), but there is most probably not enough room in i 7'.

9': The epithet *eṭlu qardu* "valiant male" is otherwise not attested in Esarhaddon's inscriptions, but note *zikaru qardu* "valiant male" in Leichty 2011: no. 1, ii 13. After reading B 1' in Frahm 2009 as [...] ᵀkal<sup>1</sup> ᵀmal<sup>1</sup>-ki, I suggested to Leichty to restore A 9' as [eṭ]-lu<sup>4</sup> qar-du ᵀa<sup>1</sup>-[šá]-ᵀred<sup>1</sup> [kal malkī(?)], which Leichty accepted in his 2011 edition. Upon reflection, however, and after a reexamination of the traces, I have come to the conclusion that a more likely reading of B 1' is ᵀ15 ᵀNINA<sup>1ki</sup> and that a title of that goddess should be restored at the beginning of the following line. There is no ᵀa<sup>1</sup>-[šá]-ᵀred<sup>1</sup> in A 9'. The text, after highlighting the king's good relationship with the major Babylonian deities in i 6'-8', returns in i 9'-12' to the Assyrian pantheon, with a focus on the protection the ruler received from the two most important Assyrian avatars of Ištar, that of Nineveh and that of Arbela.

10': There are only modest traces of [GAŠA]N<sup>2</sup>, but I cannot provide an alternative reading. In light of the 3<sup>rd</sup> fem. sing. form used in i 11', the *tu* after GAL could also introduce a verbal form. Unfortunately, the correct reading of the three signs following *tu*, which would settle the issue, remains unclear to me. The epithet *etel kal malkī* is otherwise only attested in

inscriptions of Sennacherib (see CAD E, 382a), and the reading is not entirely certain; alternatively, one could assume that *kal malkī* serves as a direct or indirect object of the verb used in the middle of the line to describe Ištar's actions.

11'-12': Once I had discovered the duplicate, it became clear that the reading *kul-la*]*t* KUR.KUR in B i 3' (thus Frahm 2009) had to be given up. For a phrase similar to the one used in the present lines, see Leichty 2011: no. 59, i 13-14: *be-lu-ut* KUR.KUR [*tu*]-*šad-gi-lu pa-nu-uš-šú* "(whom) [you] (Aššur and Mullissu) entrusted with the lordship of the lands."

The preformative *tu* in *tumallû* is an Assyrianism.

13': For *migir ilāni rabûti*, a common royal epithet, in inscriptions of Esarhaddon see, for instance, Leichty 2011: no. 1, i 4. The epithet (<sup>d</sup>)*šamšu kiššat nīšē* is attested for several Middle and early Neo-Assyrian kings (see CAD Š/1, 337a), but among the Late Assyrian rulers, only Esarhaddon seems to use it (Leichty 2011: no. 48, l. 46, no. 50, l. 3'; Seux 1967: 284).

15'-16': Cf. Leichty 2011: no. 1, iii 66-67 and no. 7, i' 7': *aššu anāku pu-luḥ-ti Bēl u Nabû idû*. This and similar phrases are otherwise only known from Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions (see CAD P, 509). According to CAD P, 513-14, within the corpus of Assyrian royal inscriptions *putuqu* is only attested in Esarhaddon texts, in Leichty 2011: no. 38, obv. 29', no. 104, i 15, no. 109, i 8', and no. 117, l. 3'.

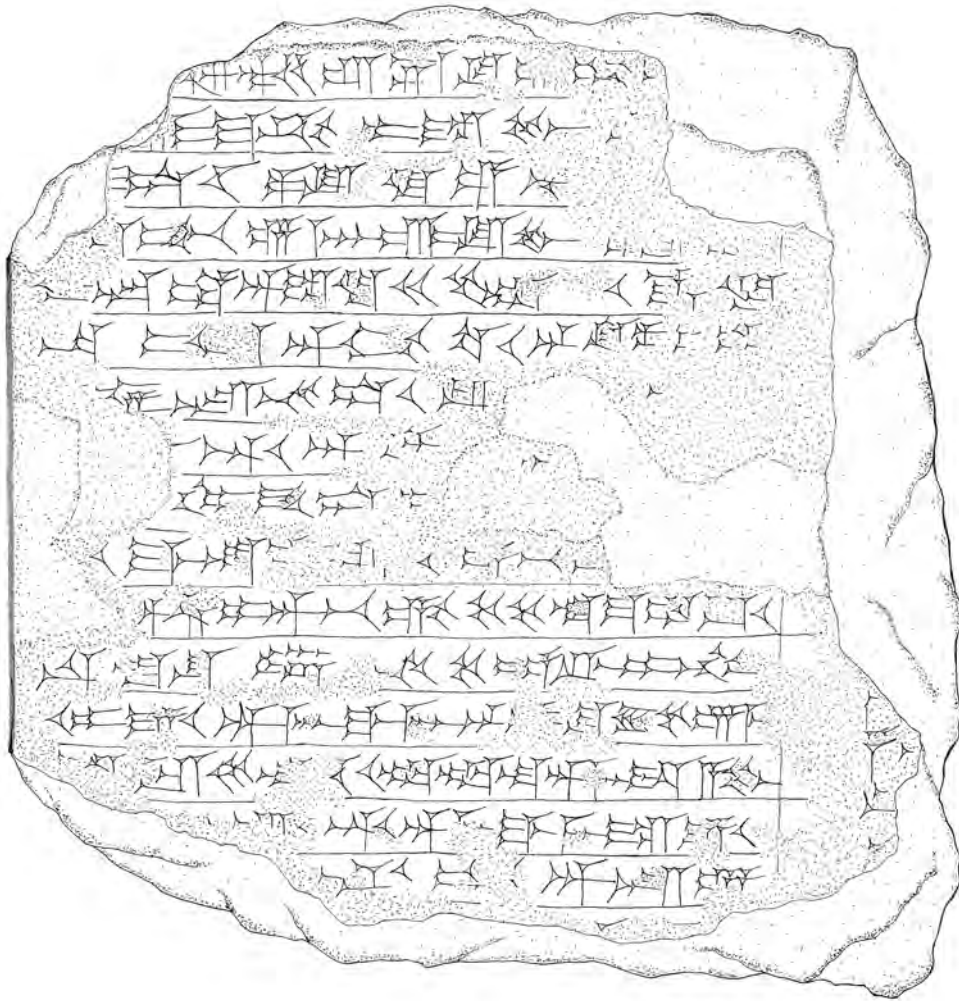
col. ii

2'-3': The word *allu*, usually followed by *tupšikku*, is attested several times in the context of building activities of Late Assyria kings (see CAD A/1, 357); for pertinent Esarhaddon texts, see, *inter alia*, Leichty 2011: no. 1, v 48, no. 2, iv 45, and no. 57, iv 14. My original assumption, accepted in Leichty 2011, that B ii 3' is to be read as *il-k[u]* seems now rather doubtful to me, not the least because the word *ilku* is otherwise not attested in Esarhaddon's inscriptions. The reading *il-b[i'-nu]*, however, has parallels in Esarhaddon's texts, and occurs together with *allu*. Note, for instance, Leichty 2011: no. 1, v 49: *al-lu tup-šik-ku ú-šá-áš-ši-šú-nu-ti-ma il-bi-nu* SIG<sub>4</sub> (on the armory palace in Nineveh).

3'-6': This section is similar to Esarhaddon's description of his building of a palace in Tarbiṣu (Leichty 2011: no. 93, l. 22-23): *'ina' 'u<sup>4</sup>-me-šu-ma é-gal-tur-ra ša qé-reb <sup>ur</sup>tar-bi-ši šá šu-uḥ-ḥu-rat šu-bat-sa qaq-qa-ru at-ru ki-ma a-tar-tim-ma* UGU *maḥ-ri-ti ú-rad-di-ma*. See also the Nineveh armory palace inscription Leichty 2011: no. 2, iv 47-48, which refers to the demolition of the previous palace: *é-gal-tur-ra šu-a-tu a-na si-ḥi-ir-ti-šá aq-qur-ma*. Cf., moreover, *qaq-qa-ru pu-še-e* "a cleared track of land" in an inscription of Esarhaddon's mother Naqia (Leichty 2011: no. 2003, ii 15').

7': This line is a crux. One would expect that it starts off with É *šul-šá-a-tu* or perhaps *é-gal-tur-ra*, but the traces preclude these readings. After reexamining the line with the help of photos sent to me by Cornelia Wunsch, it seems clear that the sign after É is really a BA, which, in turn, is followed by a sign that begins with three horizontal wedges. A look at George 1993: 69 indicates that the signs can hardly form the beginning of a Sumerian temple name; the only one that would fit is (é).ba.gára, and this third millennium temple of Ningirsu at Lagaš is not likely to be mentioned here. The assumption that BA is a mistake for DINGIR and that É is followed by a divine name is fraught with difficulties as well. Neither <sup>d</sup>Š[EŠ.KI] nor <sup>d</sup>A[a-gan], both possible on epigraphic grounds, seem probable readings. The former is not at all attested in Esarhaddon's inscriptions, the latter only once, in obscure context in Leichty 2011: no. 54: 31'. This leaves the possibility that the signs form an Akkadian word,





**Fig. 1:** VA 7505: Hand-copy.

# Spuren moderner Textkritik oder Bewahrung der Tradition? Bemerkungen zu einer Textkorrektur in *bīt mēseri* II 31-32

Nils P. Heeßel

Schreibfehler sind ein Ärgernis. Dies gilt heute, wie es vor 2500 Jahren galt, auch wenn im Zeitalter der elektronischen Textverarbeitung entdeckte Fehler schneller und einfacher zu beseitigen sind als früher, jedenfalls solange der Text noch nicht gedruckt vorliegt. Während heute wenige Tastenanschläge reichen, mußte früher die fehlerhafte Stelle mechanisch korrigiert werden; sei es, daß die Tinte von Pergamenten oder Papyri abgekratzt oder der Ton der Tontafel mit dem Finger geglättet, sei es, daß die Tippfehler bei einer Schreibmaschine mit Korrekturpapier behoben werden mußten. Bei dieser mechanischen Korrektur bleibt der Schreibfehler jedoch mehr oder minder sichtbar – was für die Schreiber und Kopisten eine Zumutung darstellte, ist für den modernen Forscher oft ein Glücksfall, ermöglichen diese Schreibfehler doch Rückschlüsse über den Umgang der antiken Schreiber mit den Texten und ihren Schriftträgern. Über relativ simple Korrekturen von Flüchtigkeitsfehlern hinaus erlaubt insbesondere die Art und Weise, wie Kopisten mit vorgefundenen Fehlern in ihren Vorlagen umgingen, Einblicke in ihre Arbeitsweise. Denn ein entdeckter Fehler in einem Text stellt denjenigen, der ihn abschreibt, vor das Problem, wie er damit umgeht: Soll er ihn ignorieren oder korrigieren, die Erkenntnis, daß es sich um einen Fehler handelt, kenntlich machen oder verschweigen, und wenn er es kenntlich macht, wie stellt er sich dann zum Originaltext? Eine solche aufschlußreiche Textkorrektur findet sich in einem Manuskript der 2. Tafel der Ritualserie *bīt mēseri*, das auf einer Tontafel in der Stadt Assur gefunden wurde. Diese kleine Studie sei in Dankbarkeit dem Jubilar gewidmet, dessen grundlegende Arbeiten zu den Archiv- und Bibliothekszusammenhängen der Assur-Texte den Weg gebahnt haben, auf dem wir heute bei der Edition dieser Texte wandeln.

Seine Erstbearbeitung der zweiten Tafel der Serie *bīt mēseri* hat Gerhard Meier auf den recht umfangreichen Text der Tafelfragmente VAT 13666 + VAT 13860 gestützt, den er in Umschrift und Übersetzung darbot;<sup>1</sup> eine Keilschriftkopie der Tafel wurde bislang nicht publiziert. Das durch den wohl bereits früh erfolgten Textzusammenschluß entstandene Tafelbruchstück VAT 13666+ stammt aus der Mitte einer auf jeder Seite zwei Kolumnen aufweisenden Tontafel, deren oberer und unterer Teil zwar leider weggebrochen ist, deren erhaltener Teil aber in jeder Kolumne immerhin noch jeweils ca. 35 weitgehend vollständige Zeilen aufweist. Die Tafel stammt, durch die Fundnummern Ass. 17722 do + Ass. 17722 co eindeutig zuzuordnen, aus einer in einem Privathaus aufbewahrten Bibliothek, die eine Familie am Assur-Tempel tätiger „Beschwörer“ (*mašmaššu*) zusammengetragen hatte, und die der Jubilar mit dem – mittlerweile in den assyriologischen Sprachgebrauch überangenen

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1 Meier 1941–1944: 139–152.

– Kürzel „N4“ versehen hat.<sup>2</sup> Vom Kolophon der Tafel ist nur die Angabe der Serienzugehörigkeit weitgehend unbeschädigt erhalten, der Name des Schreibers läßt sich in der sehr beschädigten letzten Zeile nicht mehr eindeutig entziffern.<sup>3</sup>

In den Zeilen 6'–8' der ersten Kolumne weist VAT 13666+ nun eine interessante Abweichung von dem Duplikat aus Ninive auf, die den Umgang des Schreibers mit einem von ihm entdeckten ‚Fehler‘ anschaulich illustriert. Gerhard Meier hat diese Zeilen, die den Zeilen 31–32 des von ihm rekonstruierten Texts der zweiten Tafel der Serie *bīt mēseri* entsprechen, folgendermaßen wiedergegeben:

31 <sup>d</sup>lugal-gir-ra dingir-ri-e-ne-meš

32 <sup>d</sup>lugal-gir-ra mašmaš il<sup>meš</sup> ka-li-šú-nu

31 Lugalgirra, der zu den Göttern gehört!

32 Lugalgirra, Beschwörungspriester aller Götter!

In einer Anmerkung zu Zeile 31 gibt er dann an, daß VAT 13666+ (Textvertreter C) noch: + <sup>d</sup>ditto šá il<sup>meš</sup> aufweise. Unser Interesse wurde von dieser Anmerkung geweckt, da sich die Frage stellt, warum der Schreiber dieses einen Manuskripts einen solchen Zusatz als nötig erachtet, während der Kopist des Ninive-Manuskripts dies nicht tut.

Eine Kollation der Stelle brachte nun das Ergebnis, daß der Schreiber in VAT 13666+ i 6' nach dem Gottesnamen <sup>d</sup>lugal<sup>1</sup>-ir<sub>9</sub>-ra<sup>4</sup> und vor dem Epitheton dingir-re-e-ne-meš noch – recht schmal und klein – die Zeichen MAŠ.MAŠ eingefügt hat. VAT 13666+ i 6'–8' bietet damit:



6' <sup>d</sup>lugal<sup>1</sup>-ir<sub>9</sub>-ra                      maš-m[a]š                      dingir-re-e-ne-meš

7'                      <sup>d</sup>MIN    šá DINGIR.MEŠ

8' <sup>d</sup>LUGAL.IR<sub>9</sub>.RA MAŠ.MAŠ                      DINGIR.MEŠ ka-li-šú-nu

2 Pedersén 1986: 41–76; VAT 13666+ ist auf S. 74 als N4: 572 gebucht. Siehe zu dieser Bibliothek auch Pedersén 1997: 135–136 und Maul 2010: 189–228, 2011: 9–50.

3 Hier soll der Edition des Tafelfragments, die für einen Band in der von Stefan M. Maul herausgegebenen Reihe *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts* vorgesehen ist, nicht vorgegriffen werden. Die Bemerkungen zur Tafel dienen lediglich dazu, den Hintergrund für die Interpretation der Textstelle in Kol. I, Z. 6'–8' deutlich zu machen. Prof. Dr. Stefan M. Maul gilt mein Dank für die Möglichkeit, ein Foto von VAT 13666+ einzusehen.

4 Zur Lesung Lugal-irra anstelle des älteren Lugal-girra siehe Lambert 1987–1990: 143–145.



Ein Vergleich mit den Zeilen des Duplikats K. 4644+ aus Ninive<sup>5</sup> zeigt die Unterschiede in den Zeilen 31–32 der 2. Tafel von *bīt mēseri* deutlich auf:

31	K. 4644+ i 25'	<sup>d</sup> lugal-ir <sub>9</sub> <sup>1</sup> -ra	dingir-re-e-ne-meš
	VAT 13666+ Vs. 6'	<sup>d</sup> lugal <sup>1</sup> -ir <sub>9</sub> -ra maš-m[a]š	dingir-re-e-ne-meš
31a	VAT 13666+ Vs. 7'	<sup>d</sup> MIN	šá DINGIR.MEŠ
32	K. 4644+ i 26	<sup>d</sup> LUGAL.IR <sub>9</sub> .RA MAŠ.MAŠ DINGIR.MEŠ	ka-li-šú-nu
	VAT 13666+ Vs. 8'	<sup>d</sup> LUGAL.IR <sub>9</sub> .RA MAŠ.MAŠ DINGIR.MEŠ	ka-li-šú-nu

Der Kopist von VAT 13666+ hat also zum einen in Z. 31 ganz dünn und fein ein maš-maš hinzugefügt und zudem die hier als 31a bezeichnete Zeile eingeschoben. Doch was hat ihn dazu bewogen, seine Abschrift gegenüber dem Duplikat derart abzuändern?

Nun könnte man vermuten, der Kopist des Manuskripts VAT 13666+ habe schlicht seine Vorlage getreu abgeschrieben und in dieser Vorlage erschienen diese Zeilen bereits abweichend von dem Ninive-Manuskript. Dagegen spricht aber entschieden die auffällig kleine und dünne Schreibung der Zeichen maš-maš in Z. 31, die vielmehr darauf hindeutet, daß der Kopist des Assur-Manuskripts hier eine eigenständige Veränderung durchgeführt hat. Denn dieser Schreiber erkennt eine auffällige Diskrepanz zwischen der sumerischen und der akkadischen Version dieser Textzeile: Während in der sumerischen Zeile 31 wörtlich das ängstliche “Lugal-irra, der den Göttern (zugehörige)” steht, hat die akkadische Version “Lugal-irra, der *mašmaššu* aller Götter“. Gerhard Meier hat diesen Unterschied in seiner Edition dahin gehend aufgelöst, daß die Zeilen 31–32 nicht als Interlinear-Übersetzung anzusehen und damit unterschiedlich zu übersetzen seien. Dies widerspricht jedoch dem Aufbau der Beschwörung, die in den Zeilen 25/26, 27/28 und 29/30 jeweils Interlinearübersetzungen bietet und ab Zeile 33 dann einen rein akkadischen Text. Da die Zeile 31 in Sumerisch und Zeile 32 in Akkadisch abgefaßt ist, muß dem Schema entsprechend auch hier eine Interlinearübersetzung angenommen werden.

Dies wird auch der Schreiber von VAT 13666+ erkannt haben. Er fügt in den sumerischen Text die Zeichen maš-maš ein und zeigt damit eindeutig, daß für ihn das Akkadische in Z. 32 eine Übersetzung des sumerischen Textes von Z. 31 sein sollte. Seine Vorlage erschien ihm demnach fehlerhaft, und er korrigierte das Manuskript so, daß Z. 32 die Interlinearübersetzung von Z. 31 darstellt.

Diese kleine Abweichung des Assur-Manuskripts der 2. Tafel der Serie *bīt mēseri* von seinem Duplikat aus Ninive ist ein schönes Beispiel für eine Textkorrektur, die nur selten so anschaulich in den Texten deutlich wird. Infolgedessen erlaubt dieser Fall uns, Rückschlüsse über die Kompetenzen des Schreibers zu ziehen, die im Allgemeinen schwer zu treffen sind.

<sup>5</sup> Zu den Manuskripten von *bīt mēseri* siehe Borger 1975: 195–196. Die beiden uns hier interessierenden Zeilen sind in dem Manuskript K. 4644+, etc. erhalten, in K. 2538+ erfolgt der Bruch in der ersten Kolumne unmittelbar vor diesen Zeilen.

Martin Worthington bemerkt dazu:<sup>6</sup>

„The significance which we attribute to errors on extant manuscripts varies with how we think transmitters dealt with errors they found on the exemplars. If we could be certain that they corrected errors which they recognised, then when they transmit errors we could be certain that they were not recognised. Errors of transmission would thus serve as indicators of ignorance or somnolence in the transmitters. If on the other hand we are to envisage transmitters faithfully reproducing their exemplars as seen, errors and all, even though they recognised the errors as such, then the errors no longer attest to incompetence.“

Unser Beispiel zeigt nun, daß der Schreiber von VAT 13666+ seine Vorlage nicht blindlings abschreibt, sondern daß er den Text versteht. Dies ist die Voraussetzung dafür, daß ihm die Auslassung in Z. 31 überhaupt auffällt. Da er nach Zeile 31 eine ‚wörtliche‘ akkadische Übersetzung des vorgefundenen Textes in einer eigenen Zeile (31a) einschiebt, bevor er mit dem Text von Zeile 32 fortfährt, wird klar, daß ihm diese Auslassung nicht erst bei der Kopie von Zeile 32 aufgefallen ist, sondern bereits vorher; dies ist ein eindeutiger Hinweis darauf, daß er die Zeilen 31 und 32 als Einheit wahrgenommen und gelesen hat, bevor er sie abschrieb.<sup>7</sup>

Schließlich verändert er den Text nicht so, daß der „Fehler“ ausgemerzt wurde und dadurch nicht mehr erkennbar war. Vielmehr fügte er die Zeichen *maš-maš* ganz dünn und fein hinzu, so daß der Unterschied zur normalen Schriftgröße und -tiefe auffällig bleibt. Weiterhin setzte er mit Z. 31a einen eigenen Einschub dazu, der <sup>d</sup>MIN *ša ilānī* (DINGIR.MEŠ) „Der Gott dito (Lugalirra), der der Götter“ lautet und eine akkadische Übersetzung des ursprünglichen, nicht korrigierten Textes der Vorlage darstellt. Damit macht er sowohl den Ursprungstext als auch seine Änderung, sein anderes Verständnis der Zeile deutlich; diese schon philologisch anmutende Genauigkeit ist ein großes Glück für uns, da sie uns erlaubt, die Textänderung nicht nur zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, sondern detailliert nachzuvollziehen.

Diese Textkorrektur belegt, daß es zwischen den beiden grundsätzlichen von Worthington angeführten Möglichkeiten, mit einem entdeckten Fehler umzugehen, noch weitere Nuancen gibt: In diesem Fall entdeckt der Schreiber aus Assur einen Fehler in seiner Vorlage und korrigiert diesen nicht einfach, sondern macht sowohl seine Änderung durch eine veränderte Schriftgröße und -tiefe deutlich als auch durch eine eingeschobene Zeile mit akkadischer Übersetzung des vorgefundenen Textes. Der Schreiber von VAT 13666+ entscheidet also nicht endgültig über den als fehlerhaft wahrgenommenen Text, sondern bietet einen ihm korrekter erscheinenden Text an, ohne den Originaltext zu verschleiern. Diese Veränderung

6 Worthington 2012: 140.

7 Dies unterscheidet diese Textkorrektur von anderen Fehlerberichtigungen, etwa wenn nach der Abschrift festgestellt wurde, daß ein Zeichen oder eine Linie versehentlich ausgelassen wurde. Zum Umgang der Schreiber mit ausgelassenen Zeilen siehe Hallo 1977: 101–103. Auslassungen einzelner Worte konnten, wenn der Fehler frühzeitig entdeckt wurde, nachträglich korrigiert werden; vgl. etwa das nachträglich in ein Rezept zur Heilung von Zähneknirschen eingefügte *šu-a-ni* in VAT 13725 (Köcher 1963: Nr. 30) Vs. 21'. Gelegentlich wurden auch nachträglich entdeckte fehlerhafte Schreibungen am Rand der Zeile mit dem Zeichen *kür* versehen, siehe dazu Lambert 1982: 173–218, hier 216 zu IV 24; Farber 1989: 22 Fußn. 21 sowie George, und Finkel *apud* Geller 2000: 225–258, hier 254 zu Z. 4.

des Textes zeugt von der hohen Kompetenz des Schreibers, der den Text liest und auch inhaltlich versteht, bevor er ihn kopiert, und der nicht davor zurückscheut, ihn dort zu verändern, wo es ihm nötig erscheint.

Die Motivation zu dieser Form der Textkorrektur, die gleichzeitig der Änderung wie dem Original Rechnung trägt, bleibt jedoch im Dunkeln. Wir können nur darüber spekulieren, warum der Kopist hier den Originaltext so deutlich hervortreten ließ: Lag es an dem hohen Stellenwert, den das niedergeschriebene, überlieferte Wissen zu seiner Zeit genoß, so daß er sich nicht traute, den wahrgenommenen Fehler einfach zu korrigieren, oder geschah es aufgrund von ‚philologischem‘ Interesse, seine Änderung nachvollziehbar zu machen und dem Leser somit die Möglichkeit zu geben, zu einem eigenen Textverständnis zu gelangen? Wäre letzteres der Fall, so dürfte diese Stelle einer der frühesten Belege für eine geradezu modern anmutende Art der Textkritik darstellen.

# A Misunderstood Biblical Hebrew Participle Clause in Genesis 33.13 and Its Clause Linking Context in a Complete Utterance

Bo Isaksson

The Standard Biblical Hebrew narrative of how Jacob flees from Laban in Paddan Aram and meets his brother Esau at Peniel contains a passage where Jacob excuses himself of not going further with Esau and his 400 men. Their newly achieved friendly relation is fragile and tense and Jacob prefers to return home, alone with his own family and cattle. It is a carefully prepared utterance of Jacob, after that Esau has suggested, ‘Let us be on our way; I’ll accompany you’ (Gen. 33.12; NIV). Jacob avoids the threat of Esau’s company by saying:<sup>1</sup>

Pattern: [Snoun-PA + [kī-NCl] + [(kī-)NCl + [we-Vsuff] + [we-Vsuff]]] + VprefS+[Spron-VprefA + [CONJ-VprefL]];

"וְאָדָנִי יָדָעַ  
[כִּי־הַיְלָדִים רַפִּים]  
[וְהַצֹּאן וְהַבְּקָר עָלֹת עָלַי]  
[וְדַפְקוּם יוֹם אֶחָד]  
[נִמְתּוּ כָל־הַצֹּאן] 14 :  
יַעֲקֹב־גָּא אָדָנִי לִפְנֵי עַבְדּוֹ  
[וְאָנִי אֲחַנְנֶהָ לְאִטִּי לְרֶגֶל הַמֶּלָּאכָה אֲשֶׁר־לִפְנֵי וְלֶרֶגֶל הַיְלָדִים]  
[עַד אֲשֶׁר־אָבֹא אֶל־אָדָנִי שְׁעִירָה]:"

‘[As my lord knows, [that the children are tender] [and that the flocks and herds are nursing by me – [if overdriven for even a single day], [the whole flock will die]]] let my lord, then, go before his servant, [and then I will proceed more slowly at the pace of the livestock before me and at the pace of my children, [until I join my lord in Seir]]’ (Gen. 33.13-14).

The whole utterance by Jacob is a clutter of clauses, but only one stands out as a main line clause.<sup>2</sup> This is the jussive *ya ‘ābōr-nā* ‘let my lord, then, go before his servant!’. That is the main message, the rest, before and after are reasons for this action and follow-up clauses. Jacob wants the potential threat of Esau with his 400 men to depart. The remaining clauses are a follow-up of this main line short prefix verb clause. The same kind of ‘tense-shift’ from a short yiqtol to a cohortative (VprefA) was encountered earlier in the text, when the intention

1 The abbreviations used here are practically the same as in Isaksson et al. 2009: Vsuff = suffix verb morpheme, VprefL = long prefix verb morpheme, VprefS = short prefix verb morpheme, VprefA = ‘cohortative’ verb morpheme, Snoun = subject noun, NCl = noun clause (without finite verb), CONJ = conjunction.

2 For the concept of main line, see Isaksson 2013, 2014. Unlike narrative prose there is in direct speech no fixed customary coding of the main line.

of Esau is quoted as the threatening *yīqrəḥū yāmē 'ēḥel 'āḥī wə- 'aharḡā 'et Ya 'āqōḥ 'āḥī* (NAB: 'Let the time of mourning for my father come, so that I may kill my brother Jacob!').<sup>3</sup>

The first participle clause *'āḡōnī yōḡḡā* 'introduces a clause cluster that describes the reasons why Esau should go before. 'As my lord knows' could also be translated 'Since my lord knows'. Esau has been politely presented to Jacobs family and property of sheep and cattle. Esau is supposed to know the circumstances of Jacobs family and cattle.

The content of Esau's knowing is expressed by two noun clauses with one initial conjunction *kī*: *yālāḡīm rakkīm* ('the children are tender') and *we-ḥaṣ-ṣōn wə-hab-bāqār 'ālōt 'ālāy* ('the flocks and herds are nursing by me'). The conjunction *kī* marks what Esau is expected to know: that the children are tender, and that the sheep and cows are nursing. Esau is himself a shepherd, he should understand.

The second of the two content clauses has been misunderstood by the exegetes. All interpreters take this clause, *we-ḥaṣ-ṣōn wə-hab-bāqār 'ālōt 'ālāy*, as a noun clause in which the prepositional phrase *'ālāy* ('on me, by me', in pause) constitutes the predicate of the clause, the sheep are 'on me' = '(an obligation) on me' (NAB: 'are a concern to me').<sup>4</sup>

The problem with this interpretation is that the participle *'ālōt* (in feminine plural with the root *'wl* 'nurse'), is supposed to function as an attribute: 'the flocks and herds giving suck' (thus JPS) in spite of the fact that it is coded without definite article. The flocks and herds are supposed to be known by Esau and are thus syntactically determined by the definite article. An accompanying attributive participle should be coded with definite article as well. The most natural interpretation is that the *we-ḥaṣ-ṣōn wə-hab-bāqār 'ālōt 'ālāy* clause parallels the preceding one: *yālāḡīm rakkīm* is a noun clause with adjective predicate, and the following is a noun with an active participle as predicate, that is, 'the flocks and herds are nursing by me'. The prepositional phrase *'ālāy* is just an adverbial locator, 'by me' or 'with me'.

The two *we-qatal* clauses that follow refer to and qualify the immediately preceding noun clause. The driving too much and the risk of dying pertains primarily to the sheep and cows that are nursing. How are we to understand the way the two *we-qatal* clauses work in this context? According to a previous study of mine, a *we-qatal* clause is an addition in the sense of R.M.W. Dixon: "A clause link may include two pieces of information (one in each clause) which are not in a Temporal relation, or in a relation of Condition, Consequence, Possible consequence, Alternatives, or Manner. We refer to this as Addition".<sup>5</sup> The type of addition

3 Some other examples of a shift VprefS/VprefA are Gen. 18.30 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak'; Gen. 18.32 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once'; Gen. 24.57 'Let us call the young woman and ask her'; Gen. 26.41. The examples of switches IMP/VprefA in which VprefA describes a follow-up action in relation to the imperative are more numerous, of which only a few are 1 Sam. 11.3, Deut. 32.1, Gen. 12.2. Do this and then I/we will do that.

4 Thus also Westermann 1981: 637.

5 Dixon 2009: 26.

that a we-qatal clause expresses is ‘accompanying action’.<sup>6</sup> The we-qatal clauses describe a potential accompanying action to the fact that the sheep and cattle are nursing. But this accompanying action is only hypothetical, it is not a fact in the now of the speaker. It is something that could happen, something Jacob is afraid might occur. The example shows that a we-qatal clause can express modal nuances. The sheep and cows are nursing and thereby one might drive them too much and thereby they die. By inference, the two we-qatal clauses code a conditional linking: ‘if overdriven for even a single day, the whole flock will die’. The conditional linking with an implied protasis (*ū-ḏəpāqūm yōm ʿeḥāḏ*) and an implied apodosis (*wā-mēlū kōl haš-šōn*) is syntactically unmarked: neither the protasis nor the apodosis is marked as such.<sup>7</sup> The only syntactic mark is two (potential) actions accompanying the nursing of the sheep and cows.<sup>8</sup>

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6 Isaksson 2015.

7 Nyberg 1972: § 97e:2.

8 There is no need to analyse the last clause in the utterance. The conjunction ‘*ad*’ *ʾāšer* explicitly makes the following clause a temporal one: ‘until ...’. It is a non-main temporal clause linked to the preceding cohortative clause.

# Babylon in Egyptian Hieroglyphs

Mattias Karlsson

## Introductory remarks

The studies on Babylon by Olof Pedersén are widely acknowledged.<sup>1</sup> In this contribution to his *Festschrift*, I take his interest in Babylon as a starting point and then draw from my own partly Egyptological background.<sup>2</sup> As a result of these priorities, this article is focused on the toponym Babylon in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Also in their pictorial character, the signs of Egyptian hieroglyphs convey valuable information on the world view of Egyptian culture, just like Mesopotamian cuneiform serves as an illuminative expression of Mesopotamian culture.<sup>3</sup> This is especially true of signs functioning as logograms (alternatively ideograms) and determinatives.<sup>4</sup> The role of determinatives in the hieroglyphic script is especially important, because of the fact that only consonants (and some semi-vowels) were written down, thus opening up for different interpretations in an extent surpassing Mesopotamian cuneiform where, probably due to Sumerian influence,<sup>5</sup> also full-vowels were written down.

Both script and the toponym Babylon are centred on in this article. Regarding the latter component of this study, the Mesopotamian city of Babylon naturally does not need any lengthy presentation. Suffice it to say that it was a great and powerful city starting with the reign of Hammurapi in the early half of the second millennium BCE and culminating in the Neo-Babylonian period in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE when Babylon was the centre of a state formation that encompassed much of the region.<sup>6</sup>

However, Babylon is not only the name of this great city by the Euphrates but also the name of a district of present-day Cairo known as Old Cairo, situated on the eastern bank of the Nile. The first remains of planned settlement at this site date to the sixth century BCE and the Graeco-Persian era of Egyptian history.<sup>7</sup> The native name of Egyptian Babylon (so called

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1 Notably Pedersén 2005.

2 Expressed e.g. in Karlsson 2016b and 2018.

3 The stylized Mesopotamian cuneiform signs of later times have a pictorial background. For illustrations of the pictorial backgrounds of every cuneiform sign, see Labat 1988.

4 Clarifying these two terms, logogram signs convey a whole word, while determinative signs serve to classify and clarify phonetically or logographically written words.

5 The non-Semitic Sumerian is the firstly attested language of this script (Kuhrt 1997: 26). As is commonly known, vowels are often not expressed in the writing of Semitic languages.

6 For an overview of the history of Babylon, see e.g. Kuhrt 1997: 108-17, 332-48, 573-622.

7 Sheehan 2010: 23-34. It should be noted, though, that the city is *textually* attested earlier than that, e.g. on a stela of the Kushite ruler Piye from the eighth century BCE (Pierce 1994: no. 9, ll. 100-101).

by the Greeks) is believed to be *hry-ḥ3*.<sup>8</sup> The Romans transformed this settlement under the emperor Trajan around 110 CE by creating grand-scaled riverine infrastructure in the shape of a stone-made canal and harbor, linking the Nile to the Red Sea, and later on by building a still standing fortress close to the said canal and harbor under emperor Diocletian around 300 CE.<sup>9</sup> During early Medieval times and following the Arab-Muslim conquest of Egypt in the seventh century CE, the relevant fortress settlement then formed the nucleus of the city *al-Fustat* around which present-day Cairo was built in the tenth century CE.<sup>10</sup>

My aim with this modest and greatly delimited study is to present and discuss how these two Babylons are written in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. The discussion will centre on whether the various writings of the toponym Babylon carry *positive*, *negative*, or *neutral* connotations. For example, can phenomena like ethnocentrism and xenophobia be detected in the hieroglyphic writing of the toponym? The ancient Egyptians are often described as “nationalistic” and “chauvinistic”,<sup>11</sup> and one may expect to find such expressions in the sources centred on here. Below, the hieroglyphic writing of the two Babylons will be presented, followed by an analysis and some reflections based on this presentation.

### Sources and attestations

Egypt and Mesopotamian Babylon were in direct contact with each other in several historical periods, not the least in the Amarna-period when the rulers of Egypt and Babylonia were “brothers” and sent letters of diplomacy (in Akkadian) to each other. Direct contact is also attested in the Neo-Babylonian and Egyptian Saite periods when Egypt and Babylonia clashed in competition over the control of the Levant, against the background of the collapse of the Neo-Assyrian empire, which at times had dominated them both.<sup>12</sup>

In the collecting of attestations for the hieroglyphic writing of Mesopotamian and Egyptian Babylon, I focused on dictionary entries and toponym lists in dictionaries. Regarding toponym lists, the ones in the German-Egyptian and Egyptian-German concise dictionaries of R. Hannig served as starting points.<sup>13</sup> I also (but with due caution) paid attention to the toponym list in the dated dictionary of E. A. Wallis Budge.<sup>14</sup> The standard dictionary on the ancient Egyptian language compiled by A. Erman and H. Grapow were also checked,<sup>15</sup> and so were the dictionaries specialized on Old Egyptian, Middle Egyptian, and Late Egyptian edited by Hannig and L. H. Lesko.<sup>16</sup> All but the two concise dictionaries provide source references. Only the dictionary on Late Egyptian does not include a toponym list.

8 Wb III / Erman and Grapow 1971 [1929]: 394, Budge 1978 [1920]: 1030, Hannig 2000: 1604.

9 Sheehan 2010: 35-76.

10 Sheehan 2010: 77-96.

11 As noted by e.g. Loprieno (1988: 1-13). By contrast, Mesopotamian culture in general, and Assyrian imperialism in particular, have been found to be more inclusive and pragmatic (Bottéro 2001: 96, Karlsson 2016a: 202-11). The fight between good and bad in Assyrian state ideology does not focus on ethnicity (Bagg 2011: 281-95, 301, Karlsson 2017).

12 Kuhrt 1997: 339-48, 643-45.

13 Hannig 2000: 1603-15, Hannig 2006a: 1101-1212.


14 Budge 1978 [1920]: 947-1065.



15 Wb I-VII / Erman and Grapow 1971 [1926-61].



16 Hannig 2003 (Old Egyptian), Hannig 2006b (Middle Egyptian), and Lesko 2002-04 (Late Egyptian).





To begin with the likely logogram<sup>23</sup>  (D34)<sup>24</sup> that is used to write the name for Egyptian Babylon (3A-C), it is to be transliterated as *ḥ3*,<sup>25</sup> expressing a word that conveys the notion of fighting,<sup>26</sup> evidently so considering the sign's illustration of human arms holding a shield and a mace or axe.<sup>27</sup> If this sign should be understood as a logogram, violence expressing is part of the toponym. With the preceding nisbe-adjective *ḥr(y)*, the Egyptian name for its Babylon then was “the one who is under fighting” (*ḥry-ḥ3*),<sup>28</sup> perhaps referring to a defensive, border character of this urban settlement. This speculative interpretation would see negative connotations of foreigners, in the sense of Egyptians regarding foreigners as violent to be confronted by weaponry.


Turning to the alternative determinatives in the writing of Egyptian Babylon noted above, the sign  (Z30) which is used and which arguably depicts a butcher's “knife-sharpener” seems semantically unclear in this context.<sup>29</sup> Its role of determining the words for “knife, be sharp, pronounce a name, cut, slaughter, carve” appears partly irrelevant here.<sup>30</sup> Possibly, this determinative alluding to violence can be grasped from the native name of Egyptian Babylon which contains the above-discussed sign and word which probably refers to “fighting”. The sign  (D40) which also is tied to the writing of Egyptian Babylon<sup>31</sup> functions as a determinative for “every action where an effort is needed”,<sup>32</sup> without it having a consistently negative connotation. In fact, it is e.g. used to write the positively-laden adjective “strong”. This determinative also associates with violence, here in its representation of an arm holding a stick, implying coercion.<sup>33</sup> Also this determinative may be viewed in the light of the native name for Egyptian Babylon, possibly referring to the confronting of foreign invaders. The city may then be seen as a military outpost.

Moving on, the single vertical stroke  (Z1) which is used in the writing of Mesopotamian Babylon (1A-C, 2) is a determinative which simply marks the preceding word as logographic in function, but it can also be used merely as a filler of space.<sup>34</sup> Since there are not any logograms attested above, it is definitively the latter function which is expressed here. Similarly, the determinative  (Z2) which is used to indicate plurality is here (2) superfluous

23 It is a *likely* logogram because the sign in question is not attested as a determinative and because it is seldom used as a phonogram (Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 453, Hannig 2006a: 165-66).

24 The sign code in the sign list of Gardiner (1994 [1957]: 442-543).

25 Another phonetic value for the sign is unproven (Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 453).


26 For this meaning, see Hannig 2006a: 165-66. It is unlikely that the word for the Nile perch, also spelled out *ḥ3* through D34 (but with a fish determinative  (K5)), is alluded to here (Hannig 2006a: 166).

27 Gardiner (1994 [1957]: 453) identifies the latter tool as “battle-axe” or “mace”.

28 Similarly, Pierce (1994: no. 9, ll. 100-101) translates the toponym as “Battle-field”. The city also had a *religious* significance, related to the sun-cult of Heliopolis, and the religiously-laden toponym “House of the Ennead” (*pr-psdt*) may be another name for *ḥry-ḥ3* (Gardiner 1947: 131-44).

29 Judging from the entry in Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 515.

30 For these meanings, see Englund 1995: 113.


31 Although the attestation of this sign comes from the dated dictionary of Budge, this word (*ḥ3*) for “fighting” is often written with D40 or the sign (A24) “man with a stick”  (Hannig 2006a: 165).


32 Englund 1995: 88.

33 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 455.

34 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 534-35.

and purely graphical.<sup>35</sup> A word transliterated as *szn* is non-existent in the *Wörterbuch*.<sup>36</sup> In sum, none of the four determinatives examined so far say anything for sure on the relative value of Egyptian or Mesopotamian Babylon. Put differently, and using the analytical terms of this study, they can all be classified as “neutral”, although it is possible that the likely logogram and the two determinatives which are (or may be) employed to write Egyptian Babylon express a “negative” connotation. This negative evaluation was then not directed at the city but at its potential attackers.


Turning to the determinative  (N25) which depicts “a sandy hill-country over edge of green cultivation”<sup>37</sup> and is used in the writing of Mesopotamian Babylon (1B-C, 2),<sup>38</sup> it functions as a determinative for the words “hill country, foreign people and land, desert, necropolis, upland tomb”.<sup>39</sup> By contrast, this determinative undoubtedly says something about the relative value of in this case Mesopotamian Babylon from an Egyptian viewpoint. The Egyptians contrasted the alluvial plains of the Nile valley and delta with the hilly foreign lands, observing that the fertile Nile valley in many cases runs parallel to barren mountain ridges, lining the edge of cultivation. These ridges were then seen as hostile and foreign.<sup>40</sup> The word for desert could also be written with the hill determinative, since this landscape, like the hilly regions, was a part of the foreign area known as “the Red Land” (*dšrt*) as opposed to “the Black Land” (*kmt*) of Egypt, here referring to the colours of the desert sand and the alluvial soil respectively.<sup>41</sup> Lastly, the tomb connection of the hill determinative is obvious in light of the common phenomena of Egyptian rock tombs. In sum, the discussed hill determinative says something about the foreign nature of Mesopotamian Babylon in the eyes of the Egyptians, at least in terms of geographic characteristics,<sup>42</sup> namely that this metropolis by the Euphrates was regarded as being essentially different. Any land signified by the sign was “on the outside”.

The writing of Egyptian Babylon is by contrast not rendered (3A-C) with the hill determinative but with the sign  (O49) which depicts a village or city with cross-roads.<sup>43</sup> This sign is used as a determinative in the writing of the words “village, town, estate”.<sup>44</sup> Its complementary role in relation to the hill determinative is apparent in its function of determining the word “inhabited region” (and not the desolate desert and mountain regions), exemplified in its use for writing the name of Egypt.<sup>45</sup> It is therefore natural to assume that

35 For the notion of plurality, see Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 535-36.

36 As evident in *Wb* IV / Erman and Grapow 1971 [1930].

37 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 488.

38 This sign was also used in the writing of Assur/Assyria (e.g.  / *i-s-sw-w-r-D-D*), another great Mesopotamian centre that Egypt had substantial contact with (Hannig 2000: 1604, 2006a: 1119).

39 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 488.


40 Loprieno 1988: 1-34.

41 Loprieno 1988: 1-34. This topography-based approach caused peripheral Egyptian toponyms, such as the oases, mines, and quarries, to be written with the hill determinative (Hannig 2000: 1611, 1613). The writing of the border (and cataract) city Elephantine with N25 is another example (Hannig 2000: 1606).


42 Despite the fact that also Mesopotamia formed an alluvial plain. Ironically, also the people in Mesopotamia characterized the foreign lands as hilly and mountainous (Glassner 1984: 17-20).

43 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 498.

44 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 498.

45 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 498. Egypt is typically written  / *km-m-t-D* (Hannig 2006a: 1196).

the dichotomy civilization / barbarism dwells in the varying usage of the two signs in question. While the foreign lands were merely mountains and deserts and thus symbolic of a barbaric and uncivilized condition, Egypt was the home of a sophisticated urban culture, indicative of high culture and civilization. This interpretation would be in line with the common notions of the Egyptians as an ethnocentric people, as given at least in official discourse.<sup>46</sup> When surveying through the various list of toponyms in scholarly literature, it is striking that the town determinative is consistently avoided in the writing of foreign toponyms, even if these beyond doubt primarily were *cities* and not countries or regions.<sup>47</sup> This impression is strengthened by looking at maps over the Ancient Near East with toponyms written in hieroglyphs on these.<sup>48</sup> Summing up, the hill and town determinatives may be identified as complementary, telling of the differing geography (and perhaps also civilization) profile in the evaluating of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian Babylons. The former had negative connotations while the latter had positive ones.


Moving on to the seventh and final determinative, the sign  (T14) which depicts a “throw-stick” or a “club as a foreign weapon of warfare”,<sup>49</sup> and which is used in the writing of Mesopotamian Babylon (1B),<sup>50</sup> is used as a determinative for “throw-stick”, for the verbs “to throw, to beget, to distinguish”, and it came to be employed in denoting all foreign peoples and countries, although especially the words for Libyans, Asiatics, and Nubians are being classified by this sign.<sup>51</sup> By contrast to the hill determinative, this throw-stick determinative clearly has a devaluating notion, connoting to the perceived wild, fierce, and barbarous nature of these semi-sedentary peoples. The foreigner *topos* (in contrast to reality-centred *mimesis*) is expressed here.<sup>52</sup> The relevant sign is e.g. used to write the word *pḏty* which can be translated as “foreigner, barbarian, bowman”,<sup>53</sup> clearly indicative of derogation. Related to the hieroglyph depicting a bow,<sup>54</sup> the throw-stick determinative alludes to the concept of “the Nine Bows”, i.e. the eternal enemies of Egypt from all corners of the world.<sup>55</sup> Tellingly, the throw-stick determinative is not used in the writing of words meaning “the Egyptians”.<sup>56</sup> Thus, Mesopotamian Babylon was seen both as different (through the hill determinative) and inferior (through the throw-stick determinative). By contrast, the Egyptian Babylon was regarded as expressing the perceived civilized status of Egypt (through the town determinative and the absence of the former ones).

46 Noted e.g. by Loprieno (1988: 1-13).

47 See e.g. Hannig 2000: 1603-15. To exemplify, if the eastern border city Sile is written with the town determinative, the city on the other side of the border, i.e. Gaza, is written with the hill determinative.

48 See e.g. Hannig 2006a: maps 1-20 (in particular maps 18-20).


49 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 513.

50 It seems also to have been used as a sign (along with the complementary name and people determinative  (A1), i.e. the “seated man”) in the writing of the word “Assyrian(s)” (Budge (1978 [1920]: 964).

51 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 513.

52 Loprieno 1988: 22-34.

53 Hannig 2006a: 319.

54 That is, the sign  (T10).

55 Loprieno 1988: 22-34.

56 Gardiner 1994 [1957]: 513.

## Summary and reflections

Summing up the above analysis, one likely logogram and seven different determinatives have been examined in this article on the writing of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Babylons in the Egyptian hieroglyphic script. As for the said logogram, it may associate the foreign side with disapproved, negative violence. Four of the determinatives were identified as unclear or superfluous (and therefore “neutral”),<sup>57</sup> while the remaining three were recognized as carrying positive or negative connotations. Unsurprisingly, the writing of Mesopotamian Babylon carries negative ones, while the writing of Egyptian Babylon carries positive ones.

As for these identified negative connotations associated with Mesopotamian Babylon, which centre on difference and inferiority and revolve around this city’s or country’s perceived hilly topography and barbaric culture, the Egyptians were surely aware of the plain topography and advanced culture of Babylon(ia), but the negative imagery in question was a standard ideological feature of official, propagandistic sources in Egypt.<sup>58</sup> In postcolonial terminology, Mesopotamia here functioned as a “subaltern”, i.e. as something both different and inferior. The prevailing mental map rather defined the Egyptians and Egypt as the people and land in the centre of the world.<sup>59</sup> This world view tells of the foreigner seen through the lens of *topos*.

At the same time, it should be recognized that more mundane Egyptian sources carry another, and more realistic and pragmatic, image of foreigners.<sup>60</sup> At least in classical times (roughly the Old, Middle, and New kingdoms), foreigners were not stigmatized in society but simply regarded as “the Other” in a notion of plain alterity. Ethnic or nationalistic markers did not form concepts that expressed sense of social belonging. Rather, family and village or town functioned as the main markers of identity.<sup>61</sup> This world view tells of the foreigner seen through the lens of *mimesis*.

Although the results of this study are expected, in that they point to a commonly noted ethnocentrism on the part of the Egyptians, the results also (and perhaps more importantly) indicate what great potential logograms and determinatives in hieroglyphs have in the understanding of Egyptian texts. This latter insight is also valid for Mesopotamian cuneiform and texts, although the above-mentioned stronger role of phonograms in cuneiform modifies this somewhat. Hopefully, this study has contributed to a fuller appreciating of logograms and determinatives and of the integration of text and image in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

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57 Although the two alternative, violence connoting determinatives that serve to write the name for Egyptian Babylon may point to a negative evaluation, directed at border threatening foreigners.

58 Loprieno 1988: 22-34, Liverani 1990: 160-65.

59 In glaring contrast to the Babylonian map of the world which naturally has Mesopotamian Babylon as its focal point. For this aspect of Babylonian cosmology, see Horowitz 1998: 325-26.

60 Loprieno 1988: 14-21, 60-72, Assmann 1996: 97.

61 Assmann 1996: 97.

# Causerie on the Coils of the Colon: Evidence for Middle Babylonian Extispicy from the “House of the Seer”

Ulla S. Koch

The *Archive und Bibliotheken in Babylon* is a magisterial volume. Olof Pedersén's meticulous catalogue of the cuneiform tablets found during the German excavations at Babylon between 1899 and 1917 is certainly a very valuable contribution to the study of ancient libraries. But not only that. Even though most of the tablets themselves remain unpublished,<sup>1</sup> the inventories of the excavated archives and tablet collections give us a new perspective on the city of Babylon through the ages, and a basis for studying the changes and fluctuations of literary and scholarly pursuits in Babylonia.

Due to the high level of the ground water table at the site of Babylon today, excavations of the Old and Middle Babylonian strata have only been sporadic. Pedersén (2011: 56) estimates that the German excavations covered about 0.5 % of the original Middle Babylonian city. Generally, the Middle Babylonian and Cassite periods are very meagrely represented in the published cuneiform sources for scholarship from Babylonia proper. This is the more vexing since a transformation of the written tradition seems to have taken place during the last centuries of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE. Many texts became fixed and the large series, which were transmitted in relatively stable versions throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium, began to be formed. This textual transformation can also be observed in all genres of divination. Even though extispicy is better represented than other forms of divination from this period, much still remains to be investigated. The tablets from the “House of the Seer” (Reuther 1926: 59) are, among other things, a source to an otherwise little documented period in the history of divination.

The tablet assemblage found in the “House of the Seer” is perhaps the abandoned remnants of a Middle Babylonian library. It probably belonged to a seer (*bārû*), Ṭāb-šilli-Marduk, and some of his colleagues. Pedersén<sup>2</sup> dubbed it M4 “*Bibliothek einiger Opferschauer*” in *Archive und Bibliotheken in Babylon*. Unfortunately, the tablets of M4 are today scattered over the world, and some of them have disappeared from public view altogether.<sup>3</sup> The

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1 A research project to publish them all is in the planning stages.

2 Pedersen 2005: 78–82. Pedersén has described the library elsewhere as well: Pedersén 2011: 56–59, Pedersén 1997: 110–112, and Pedersén 1999b: 313 where it is called “Babylon 7”. Tablets from the library will be referred to as M4: 1 etc.

3 A study on the tradition, transmission and formation of the lore on coils with an edition of the M4 texts is in preparation by B. Böck and I. Márquez Rowe and will be submitted for publication by the end of 2015: “Clay Models and Illustrations of the Sheep’s Coils. A Contribution to Ancient Mesopotamian Extispicy”. A preliminary survey directed to the Spanish audience and containing a new interpretation and identification of the “palace of the coils” is in press, “La aruspicina en la antigua Mesopotamia: Nuevos datos e interpretaciones,” in A. Bernabé and J. A. Álvarez-Pedrosa (eds.), *Orientalística en*

majority, 33, are in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, nine are in Istanbul, two in the Morgan Library Collection (part of the Babylonian Collection at Yale), and one is in Field Museum in Chicago. This means that 16 tablets are unaccounted for, and the only evidence available today are the unpublished photographs and excavation notes which form the basis for Pedersén's work. Even though the majority of the 61 tablets are still unpublished, and even though the photographs from the excavation were not available for my perusal, some observations can be made.

M4 was found in a private house parts of which were excavated in the trenches 26 n2 and 27 n2 (Reuther 1926: 18, 59 and pls. 13 and 14). The 61 excavated tablets had been re-used as building material, placed in the sand fill between two layers of flooring in a long narrow room (approximately 6×2 meter). The room had a door at the end of the southern wall close to the south-western corner. The doorway probably led to another room, not a court yard. The upper flooring was covered with asphalt, and dates to the late Cassite period as do most of the tablets. On the upper floor itself were found a pot and some pebbles. M4 is thus not a library in any sense of the word: the tablets were not in a room that appears to have been used as library or scriptorium (no light), they were not stored in a basket, a clay container, or on shelves, and their exact ownership and original context and use cannot be established with certainty. Around half the tablets are quite large, and 20 of these are almost intact, the rest are fragments of various sizes. Koldewey (1908: 15) described the writing on the tablets as beautiful and dense (*eng*) and the published photographs confirm the impression of a high quality of penmanship (see for instance Pedersén 2005: 79 fig. 34).

As J. Taylor (2011: 21) points out, once a tablet had lost its usefulness, it was just a piece of clay in a house and a city made of clay and recirculation of tablets as building material is not unusual. The circumstance that they were apparently not thrown into the fill<sup>4</sup> and broken to pieces in the process, suggests that the tablets may have retained some sort of value, sentimental if nothing else. But of course this should not be over-interpreted. Perhaps whoever laid the second flooring was simply a meticulous workman. The tablets and fragments were not the only things left in the layer of sand. Other stuff found in the same layer as the tablets includes eight clay pots and a piece of shell.

### The Contents of M4

As mentioned, only two archival texts were found in M4 (one letter M4: 58 and a bulla M4: 11), thus the context and ownership of the tablets is not certain. As Pedersén points out, considering the topic of the majority of the tablets, the owners were probably seers (*bārû*). However, only one of the three persons known from the colophons actually has the title seer. This is Ilīma-aḫi, the writer of a tablet concerning the Palace of the Coils of the Colon (M4:

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*tiempos de crisis. Actas del VI Congreso Nacional del Centro de Estudios del Próximo Oriente*, Madrid 2015. Neither of these works has been available to me.

4 Pedersén (2005: 78) does not offer any interpretation of why the tablets were placed between the floors. Reuther described the state of the tablets as *sorgfältig plaziert* and (2011: 56) as “hidden”, which could indicate that they were placed between the floors with the intention to preserve them, rather than merely recycling them as building material. However, Koldewey (1908: 15) described them as *unregelmässig in eine Sand- und Lehmsschicht gebettet*.

3). This text has no less than two duplicates from M4, and all three even have preserved colophons which mention the scribe. X-Enbilulu was the scribe of one of the duplicates (M4: 20) and Ṭab-šilli-Marduk wrote the second duplicate (M4: 2). Ṭab-šilli-Marduk was also the scribe of another tablet concerned with the Coils of the Colon (M4: 26). The only other person mentioned in the M4 tablets is the sender of the letter M4: 58, but the name is unfortunately damaged.

Neo Babylonian exercise tablets found under the floor of the small temple of *Nabû ša harê* in Babylon were written as votive offerings to the god, and were perhaps intended as bricks from the start.<sup>5</sup> The colophons of the M4 tablets do not indicate that this was the case here, but the fact that one text is attested in no less than three copies made by different scribes, suggests that the tablets had been copied as an exercise. Perhaps the seers copied the tablets as part of their tertiary education when scholars would copy texts extensively as part of their training.<sup>6</sup>

An overview of the contents of M4 (see table 1) shows that the number of manuscripts concerned with extispicy is significantly higher than the number of manuscripts pertaining to any other text genre represented. Of course, the unidentified omen fragments (M4: 8, 47, 50, 54, 55), which are all unpublished, may on inspection turn out to be joins with manuscripts of either of the genres represented.

Some of the other divinatory texts may well have been of relevance for the practice of extispicy, even if that is not their primary concern. This is true for the three calendrical texts M4: 16, 18, and 30. The so-called Astrolabe (M4: 18, published as VS 24 120)<sup>7</sup> contains a Sumerian month calendar (menology) of which only the first 6 months are preserved. The menology was incorporated into “Astrolabe B”, but this Cassite version does not contain any names of stars associated with the months, as do the first millennium versions of the Astrolabe. M4: 18 is therefore a purely ritualistic calendrical text rather than a text of astrological/astronomical interest. Even though it was later used in the composition of “Astrolabe B”, it would be more precise to classify it as a menology. Concepts of time, the meaning and regulation of days and months were of central concern to divination including extispicy.<sup>8</sup> Not only was the performance of extispicy itself guided by the calendar, but one of the main purposes of extispicy in public life was to establish and confirm the most auspicious time for an undertaking. Calendrical texts were therefore very relevant for the seer. M4 contains two other calendrical texts. One (M4: 30) is a manuscript of *Iqqur īpuš* arranged according to months (*série mensuelle*) published by R. Labat.<sup>9</sup> The manuscript originally held omens for the whole year, but only months 8, 9, and 12 are preserved. The other manuscript (M4: 16) remains unpublished. The three manuscripts containing omens pertaining to malformed births (M4: 7, 17, and 19)<sup>10</sup> could also be relevant to the seer, since

<sup>5</sup> George 1986: 12–16.

<sup>6</sup> The tertiary education of scribes and scholars has been discussed recently by Robson 2011 and 2008: 240–260, see also Gesche 2001: 213–218.

<sup>7</sup> See Horowitz 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Livingstone 1993, Koch 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Published and edited by R. Labat. See Labat 1965: 17–18, 218–236 (edition) and pls. 41–43 (copies) and 49–50 (photographs).

<sup>10</sup> Published in Leichty 1970: 130–134 (tablet 11), 101–113 (tablet 8), and 166–170 (tablet 17).



the main topics of the omens are sheep giving birth to malformed or weird-looking lambs. Finally, the dream omens, and especially the lexical lists, were, if not relevant to the art of the seer, at least part of the scribal education, and could be found in the tablet collection of any scholar.

As mentioned, extispicy forms by far the largest single group of texts both among the divinations texts and in M4 in general. The M4 extispicy texts concerned all the major organs used for divination: the liver, the gall bladder, the lungs, the intestines and the heart (see table 2). From this perspective, M4 is quite representative of the extispicy omen compendia, a seer would have to be familiar with.

However, it is immediately striking that the Coils of the Colon are strongly represented in M4. Even though it was frequently included in reports on acts of extispicy and a whole chapter in the standard extispicy series was devoted to it, this organ was never of high importance for divinatory purposes. The Heart, on the other hand, seems to have been all but forgotten in the omen compendia from the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium, and the two tablets do not have any successors in the standard series.

The Liver was of course the focus of the seer's attention and the manuscripts treat all the most significant marks on the Liver. The manuscripts pertaining to the part of the Liver called the Finger (M4: 21, 22, 45, 53) are all unpublished. On inspection, they may turn out to be concerned with certain parts of the Lungs instead, which were also called fingers. But in either case, these features remained central to extispicy also in the first millennium. Similarly, the Gall Bladder (M4: 5, 15, 43, 61) continued to play a part. A whole chapter of the extispicy series was devoted to the Finger, the Lungs and the Gall Bladder respectively. The same is true for the two markings on the Liver called the Path (M4: 60) and the Presence (M4: 4, 14, 25, 52).<sup>11</sup> These were the two most important elements inspected, and it is not surprising that there were four manuscripts concerned with the Presence. The groove called the Presence, or "position" (*manzāzu*), was an indication that the god had been listening. If the divine ear had not been tuned in on the diviner's prayer, there would be no Presence on the Liver and the extispicy had failed. The manuscripts concerned with the Presence retain the Old Babylonian orthography KI.GUB for the feature. The other two parts of the Liver represented, the Yoke (M4: 59) and the Well Being (M4: 23) were of minor importance. They did not have their own chapters in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium standard series concerned with extispicy, *Bārûtu*, but were part of the chapter which collected odds and ends and accordingly was called *The Front of the Pouch*, i.e. the surface of the liver.<sup>12</sup>

Two of the unpublished manuscripts are concerned with the Heart, its parts, and adjacent entrails (M4: 6, 44). The Heart was apparently once of some significance in extispicy. At least three Old Babylonian omen compendia<sup>13</sup> deal with it, and its environment. This included for instance the Lintel of the Heart (*tal libbi*) which is probably the diaphragm.<sup>14</sup> This fits the relatively frequent mention of the Heart in Old Babylonian reports, which mostly however

<sup>11</sup> M4: 14 is published as YOS 10 63.

<sup>12</sup> Koch 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Jeyes 1989 nos. 13 and 14, YOS 10 42.

<sup>14</sup> For a discussion of the Heart, its parts, and adjacent entrails, see Jeyes 1989: 77–78.

only record that the Heart was sound.<sup>15</sup> This same simple observation of the condition of the Heart is attested once in a single Middle Babylonian extispicy report (YOS 10 2).<sup>16</sup> In the second millennium reports, the observation of the Heart comes before the count of Coils of the Colon. In the first millennium standard series, there were no individual tablets concerned with the Heart, though individual omens pertaining to the Heart and related entrails continued to be incorporated into the series. The only observation of the Heart ever recorded in the first millennium reports is “The Heart of the ram (udu.níta)/sheep (udu) is sound” which is included 52 reports.<sup>17</sup> Ulla Jeyes (1989: 78) suggested that the term the “Heart is sound” (ša udu.(níta) silim) should rather be translated as “the entrails of the ram were favourable”. This suggestion makes sense. Since the phrase in the first millennium reports invariably comes at the end of the observation of the entrails, even after the Coils of the Colon, the term could have changed meaning from a concrete observation into a form of *pars pro toto* summing up.

### The Coils of the Colon

As many other technical terms of extispicy, the reading of the logogram ša.nigin as *tirānu* was first made clear by the Old Babylonian sources. Already in the earliest publications<sup>18</sup> it was however recognized that it was a description of part of the winding intestines. Boissier (1905: 88–93) suggested that it was the ileum and Goetze (YOS 10: 8–9) suggested the translation “convolutions of the intestines” and identified *tirānu* as the colon.<sup>19</sup> The meaning of the term was narrowed down to the “arcs of spirals of the colon” by R.K.G. Temple (1982). Temple studied the intestines from freshly slaughtered lambs and noted that the small and large intestines are difficult to observe, slippery and malodorous if squeezed, and they have to be removed before observation of the liver and gall bladder is possible. During his experiments, he discovered that the only way to make sense of the bloody mess was to remove the intestines carefully and spread them out on a flat surface. This procedure would make the colon appear as a spiralling configuration. If the arcs of all the convolutions were counted from top to bottom (Temple 1982: 22) they would of course always make an even number. Most often this was 10 or 12 in lambs under one year old. Temple assumes that 14 or 16 arcs would be possible in older sheep. The Old Babylonian and Cassite reports invariably lists 10–14 Coils, Neo Assyrian reports record as many as 16. The Coils of the Colon were always recorded at the very end of the extispicy reports. Presumably this reflected the order in which the entrails were observed.<sup>20</sup> Temple suggests a physiological reason for leaving the

15 Reports which mention a sound Heart, sometimes listed with other organs: Goetze 1957 no. 8 obv. 9, no. 6 rev. 12, CT 4 34b obv. 8, YOS 10 8 obv. 23, rev. 36, YOS 10 19 rev. 20, Nougayrol 1967: 220 (C obv. 8), 225 (J rev. 19), 229 (M obv. 18, rev. 29), 230 (N rev. 28'). Only one report seems to mention a part of the Heart: left side of the Heart YOS 10 7 obv. 7.

16 Edited by Kraus 1985: 153–154.

17 SAA 4 3 rev. 17 obv. 7, rev. 10, 20 rev. 20, 35 rev. 4, 41 rev. 10, 12, 42 rev. 10, 43 rev. 16, 43 rev. 24, 45 rev. 8, 48 rev. 16, 64 rev. 13, 64 rev. 16, 66 rev. 8, 71, rev. 12, 73 rev. 8, 78 rev. 13, 79 rev. 12, 86 rev. 7, 87 rev. 5, 88 rev. 17, 92 rev. 7, 130 rev. 13, 131 rev. 6, 142 rev. 14, 149 rev. 18, 155 e. 1, 159 rev. 17, 181 rev. 2, 186 rev. 4, 213 rev. 4, 213 rev. 6, 228 rev. 3, 234 b.e. 7, 279 obv. 9, 280 obv. 13, 282 obv. 11, 287 obv. 10, 292 obv. 8, 296 obv. 15, 4 298, 5, 300 obv. 3, 301 obv. 11, 305 obv. 3, 316 obv. 3, 318 obv. 5, 319 obv. 12, 320 rev. 4, 323 obv. 9, 326 obv. 11, 345 obv. 9, 347 obv. 10.

18 Jensen 1900: 456.

19 As did Starr 1983: 92–94.

20 For the “order of inspection” in Old Babylonian and Cassite extispicy reports, see Nougayrol 1967 and Starr 1983: 69.

observation of the Coils of the Colon till last. When the intestines are removed they are covered in slippery fat which obscures the view. However, after some 20 minutes the fat has hardened and turned white which actually enhances the appearance of the colon itself making it stand out in texture and colour. So how do we account for the uneven number which do occur not only in the omen compendia but also in reports on acts of extispicy? Temple observed that, if the lamb suffered some disease, a part of the Colon could be discoloured white and would therefore be more difficult to see against the white lard. This phenomenon explains why some reports mention an uneven number of Coils of the Colon – a physiological impossibility – but if the point was to count only clearly visible convolutions an uneven number is perfectly possible.

The Coils of the Colon were the topic of chapter two in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium standard extispicy series, *Bārûtu*. The chapter consisted of at least 8 tablets. The *Bārûtu* more or less follows the order in which the parts of the sacrificial lamb would have been removed from the carcass, and not the order in which they were inspected and recorded. Chapter two has not been edited yet, but the lay-out can be reconstructed from colophons and catch-lines (Starr 1992: 50–51). So far, the tablets belonging to *Šumma tirānu* can only be partly reconstructed. The best preserved is a late Babylonian manuscript of tablet 3 (BRM 4 13). Tablet 8 seems to have been concerned with the Palace of the Coils (é.gal šā.nigin) which is the topic of the duplicate manuscripts (M4: 2, 3, and 20).

Of the 19 manuscripts concerned with the Coils of the Colon in M4 (see table 3) no less than 12 are graphical representations of the organ's spiralling shape. Five are cuneiform tablets with illustrative drawings and seven are round in shape, almost models.

Illustrated Coils of the Colon texts and models are known already from the Old Babylonian period.<sup>21</sup> Graphical representations of the Coils of the Colon (see table 4) are drawings of labyrinthine figures. These could either be made on regular, i.e. rectangular, tablets, or on round flat plaques. Sometimes they are supplied with captions which describe the appearance which the drawing is intended to illustrate, rarely with complete omens with protasis and apodosis. Even rarer are three-dimensional models, indeed YOS 10 66, CUSAS 18 38 and Böhl 1935 fig. 13 are the only real models I know of, and they are all quite different.

Clay liver models are among the oldest known extispicy texts.<sup>22</sup> The Coils of the Colon illustrations are however the only kind of models which are attested throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium from Mesopotamia itself. All other types of models known so far from the Middle Babylonian period stem from the neighbouring regions.

Jan-Waalke Meyer (1987: 265–266) pointed out that liver models could be classified either as omen compendia or as representations of livers observed during an actual performance of extispicy, in other words, the model is a form of report. I think it is fair to add that the liver models – and of course models of other organs – of the both kinds, which are more or less true to life, were more than omen compendia and reports. They are also the earliest kind of

<sup>21</sup> See George 2013, 273–275.

<sup>22</sup> The famous liver models from Mari published by Rutten 1938, see Meyer 1987: 44–46.

explanatory text. At least in the case of the compendia kind of model, the illustrations must have been made for the purpose of study, teaching, or learning. In the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium, graphical representations of details of changes in the appearance of parts of the liver were incorporated into the extispicy commentaries (e.g. CT 31 9–12). So far, there are no *mukallimtu*-commentaries with illustrations of the Coils of the Colon. VAT 984 and M4: 31, 32, 33, 34, and 37, probably all functioned as explanatory texts, but the colophon is not preserved on any of the fragments, so we cannot know whether they were actually classified as commentaries in antiquity.<sup>23</sup> Sometimes these drawings were supplied with the caption “this is how it looks”.<sup>24</sup> The round flat plaques from M4 without captions (M4: 38–41) could conceivably be reports as could the small plaque VAT 744 (Weidner 1916: 191) which has a drawing on one side while the other is uninscribed. Since the M4 plaques are unpublished, I am not sure whether they were illustrated on both sides like the Old Babylonian YOS 10 65 and the Middle Assyrian KAL 5 9. Since the illustrations on YOS 10 65 and KAL 5 9 are different on each side, I tend to classify them as belonging to the compendia type. Pedersén does not mention whether both obverse and reverse of the M4 plaques were used, so I cannot rule out that they recorded a single observation made during an act of extispicy. However, since an extispicy did not make sense without observations of the liver, I find it highly unlikely that any of the graphical representations of the Coils of the Colon functioned as reports even though they may be representations of actual observations. Probably the purpose of all the representations was explanatory.

As mentioned, in the known Old Babylonian and Cassite reports, the diviners counted between 10, 12 or 14 coils. Even though a simple count is the most common, they on occasion quote more detailed observations of the Coils being turned, recessed, protuberant or separated.<sup>25</sup> The diviners of the Neo Assyrian court were only a little more adventurous (see table 5).

So far, there are no published Old Babylonian compendia concerned solely with the Coils of the Colon.<sup>26</sup> They are rarely even mentioned in composite texts (YOS 10 11 vi 15–19). The variation in observations quoted in reports, Old Babylonian, Cassite, or Neo Assyrian, does not in any way do justice to the richness and variation of the Cassite and later compendia. Tablet 3 of *Bārātu* chapter 2 was for instance concerned with the Coils of the Colon looking like various objects and shapes – apparently purely as an academic exercise. Tablet 3 is known from an almost completely preserved Late Babylonian manuscript (BRM 4 13)<sup>27</sup> and

23 Rm2, 144, Rm2, 331 and 83-1-18, 418 (all unpublished) are the only *mukallimtu*-commentaries to chapter 2 of *Bārātu* known so far (according to Starr 1992: 52), and no illustrations are preserved on them. A rather unusual commentary is the Seleucid tablet published by Goetze (1954: 147–148). It contains omens on the obverse and explanations (*šutābulu*) on the reverse but again without illustrations.

24 E.g. Koch 2000 no. 42: 68 *an-ni-tum* giš.ḫur-šú.

25 The report published by Ungnad (1908, see Koch 2002: 133–134) mention Coils that are *zaqru* “protuberant” and *naḫsu* “recessed”. BM 26594 (Richardson 2002: 240) mention Coils that are *turru* “bent” on the left. *Parsu* “separated” Nougayrol 1947: 50.

26 Perhaps the unpublished Old Babylonian mentioned by A.R. George (2013: 275) from the papers of W.G. Lambert is one such.

27 Other manuscripts for tablet 3 are K 3805 (partly published by Boissier 1905: 91–92) and BM 54635 (unpublished).

interestingly it is attested in both a Middle Assyrian (KAL 5 10) and a Middle Babylonian / Cassite version from M4, M4: 24. These manuscripts are divided by more than a millennium. As pointed out by Weidner (1952–53: 74) this offers a unique opportunity for studying the formation and serialization of the standard series. Unfortunately M4: 24 remains unpublished, but Weidner made some observations of variations between the older and the younger text, and Nils Heeßel has commented on the differences between KAL 5 10 and BRM 4 13. The overall impression is one of remarkable textual stability. There are a few omens that were left out and added, a few apodotes had changed and the orthography diverges, but otherwise the older texts are very close to the Late Babylonian version. Sometimes, errors seem to have sneaked into the later text, e.g. *šal-gu* has become *sal.šeš* which given the context must be a mistake (Weidner 1952–53: 74). A single line is accessible to me in all three versions and must serve as illustration:

BRM 4 13: 13            be ša.nigin gim *el-lam-ku-ši* bal nun kúr-ir ušá kur man-ni

KAL 5 10: 9'            [be ša.nigin k]i-ma *e-lam-gu-š*[i x x x x x x x]

M4: 24: 11<sup>28</sup>            - - - - - *il-l[a]-gu-ši* - - - - -

The Late Babylonian version is closest to the Sumerian “ellamkuš” from which it is derived while the older versions presumably reflect pronunciation. Recently the late Ulla Jeyes presented a comparative study of manuscripts pertaining to the Gall Bladder from the Middle Babylonian, Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian periods respectively. She concluded (Jeyes 2000: 372) that the Neo-Assyrian versions only showed evidence of minor editing and that the Late Babylonian manuscript was an uncritical copy. These findings seem to be supported by the manuscripts and forerunners for tablet 3 of the Coils of the Colon.

Just as there are no observations of the Coils of the Colon looking like something else cited in any known reports, the feature known as the “Palace” of the Coils of the Colon is not mentioned in reports from any period. Nevertheless, it formed the subject of tablet 4 of chapter 2 of the standard series according to the catch-line of tablet 3 (BRM 4 13: 79). A forerunner to this tablet is present in M4 in no less than three copies as mentioned: A BRM 4 16 (M4: 2); B BRM 4 15 (M4: 3) and C Pedersén 2005 fig. 34. The manuscripts M4: 2 and M4: 3 (BRM 4 16 and 15) were almost completely preserved when they were originally photographed (Weidner 1952–53: 73). The excavation photographs should therefore provide a better source for the texts than the copies Clay made after the tablets had been damaged somewhere along their journey across the continents. Without access to the photographs, there is not much point in presenting more than a small sample for comparison here:

A rev. 9            be i+na é.gál ti-ra-ni šà at-rum um-ma-tam ib-ni dumu nu.mu.su g[iš.gu.z]a dib-bat

B rev. 11'            be ina é.gál ti-[ra-ni] uzu.šà at-ru [u]m-ma-[tam] ib-ni dumu al-ma-at-ti giš.gu.za dib-at

C rev. 8            (be) ina e-kal ti-ra-ni šà dir um-ma-ta ib-ni dumu nu.mu.su giš.gu.za dib-bat

28 Only one word of the line is quoted by Weidner (1952–53: 74).

If in there is an extra bowel in Palace of the Coils of the Colon and it creates a bulk: The son of a widow will seize the throne.

A rev. 10      be *i+na* è.gal *ti-ra-ni* babbar *ina* zag gar-*in* è.gal nun kúr ti-*qé*

B rev. 12      be *ina* è.gal *ti-ra-ni* babbar *ina* zag gar-*in* [è.gal] nun lú.kúr *i-liq-qé*

C rev. 9      (be) *ina e-kal ti-ra-ni* babbar *ina* zag gar-*in* è.gal nun kúr ti-*qé*

If there is a white spot on the right in the Palace of the Coils of the Colon:  
The enemy will take the palace of the prince.

Manuscripts A and C are closest but not identical. To judge by the three manuscripts, the contents of the text was quite stable even though the orthography does not suggest that the manuscripts were written after dictation. The text itself was not yet part of a series according to the colophons of A and B which do not refer to any series (C is broken at this point), but simply state that they contain 60 omens concerned with the Palace of the Coils of the Colon.

To sum up: the small tablet assemblage M4 is interesting in many ways. It supplies the single largest source of models of the Coils of the Colon indicating that some of them were recording of actual observations (reports) and some were compendia and among the earliest explanatory texts. The manuscripts which duplicate each other and later texts can throw light on the development of textualization and serialization of *Bārûtu*. They illustrate that already in the Middle Babylonian period, the compendia contained enormous amounts of omens that were never used in reports and were the result of academic speculation rather than empirical observation. One can only speculate on why they were discarded. Clearly they were not outdated so why did they become surplus to requirements? We will probably never know.

*Table 1: Overview of the contents of M4.*

Genre	Manuscripts
Administrative total	2
Astrolabe B	1
Dreams	1
Extispicy	38
Hemerology	2
Izbu	3
Omens?	5
Divination total	50
Scholarship total	7
Unidentified total	2
<b>M4 Total</b>	<b>61</b>

*Table 2: Overview of extispicy topics of M4.*

Genre	Manuscripts
Divination total	50
Extispicy total	38
Coils of the Colon	19
Finger	4
Gall Bladder	4
Heart	2
Lungs	2
Path	1
Presence	4
Yoke	1
Well Being	1
<b>M4 Total</b>	<b>61</b>

*Table 3: The Coils of the Colon manuscripts from M4.*

M4	Format	Contents	Id.	Publication/Notes
31	Tablet	Drawings Captions	Bab 36411	
32	Tablet	Drawings Captions	Bab 36412	
33	Tablet	Drawings Captions	Bab 36413	Pedersén 2011 fig. 7, see Pedersén 2005: 82.
34	Tablet	Drawings	Bab 36414	
37	Tablet	Drawings	Bab 36417	
35	Round flat plaque	Drawings Captions	Bab 36415	Pedersén 2005 fig. 35.
36	Round flat plaque	Drawings Captions	Bab 36416	
38	Round flat plaque	Drawings	Bab 36417A?	
39	Round flat plaque	Drawings	Bab 36417B?	
40	Round flat plaque	Drawings	Bab 36417C?	
41	Round flat plaque	Drawings	Bab 36418	
42	Round flat plaque	Drawings	Bab 36419	
2	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36384	BRM 4 16 (MLC 2615), Duplicates 3 and 20. Scribe: Tāb-šilli-Marduk.
3	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36385	BRM 4 15 (MLC 2614), Duplicates 2 and 20. Scribe: Ilīma-ahi.
20	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36400	Pedersén 2005 fig. 34, Duplicates 2 and 3. Scribe: X-Enbilulu.
24	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36404	Duplicates BRM 4 13: 1–37, cf. Weidner 1952-53: 74–75.
26	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36406	Scribe: Tāb-šilli-Marduk.
27	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36407	
57	Tablet	Omens	Bab 36442	



*Table 4: Published Coils of the Colon graphical illustrations.*

Format	Contents	Period	Id.	Publication/Notes
Figurine	Model	OB	YBC 3000	YOS 10 66; YOSR 16 no. 1078, fig. 274.
Figurine	Model	OB?	Leiden	Böhl 1935 fig. 13.
Figurine	Model	OB?	MS 3195	CUSAS 18 no. 38; Friberg 2007: 223.
Figurine Humbaba mask	Model Caption	OB	BM 116624	Smith 1924: 107–114; YOSR 16 no. 1070. Humbaba omen cited on reverse, Nougayrol 1972: 144.
Figurine Humbaba mask	Model	OB	BM 116737	Smith 1926: 440–442 and pl. V.
Tablet	Drawings Captions	OB		CUSAS 18 no. 32, Sea-Land dynasty.
Tablet	Drawings Captions	OB	MLC 1716	YOS 10 64.
Tablet	Drawings Captions	OB?	AO 3073	Ref. Böhl 1935: 20; YOSR 16 no. 1075 (unpublished).
Tablet	Drawings Captions	OB?	AO 6033	Ref. Böhl 1935: 20; YOSR 16 no. 1075 (unpublished).
Tablet	Drawings		YBC 2167	YOSR 16 fig. 273.
Tablet	Drawings	OB?	CBS 6742	YOSR 16 no. 1074; PBS 14 no. 1060; <sup>29</sup> Nippur.
Round flat plaque	Drawings	OB	YBC 2168	YOS 10 65. Drawings on both sides.
Round flat plaque	Drawings		YBC 2166	YOSR 16 no. 1076 (unpublished).
Round flat plaque	Drawings		YBC 2168	YOSR 16 no. 1076, fig. 272.
Round flat plaque	Drawings Captions	OB	BNUS 370	Frank 1928 no. 370; Charpin and Durand 1981 pl. 61 no. 152. Omens on reverse. <sup>30</sup>
Square flat plaque	Drawings	MB	MS 3080	CUSAS 18 no. 37. Drawings on both sides.
Round flat Plaque	Drawings Captions	MA	VAT 9560	KAL 5 9. Drawings on both sides, omens cited.
Tablet	Drawings Captions	NA	VAT 8687	KAR 431; KAL 5 12.
Round flat plaque	Drawing	NB?	VAT 744	Weidner 1916: 191 fig. 1; YOSR 16 no. 1073.
Tablet	Drawings Captions	NB?	VAT 984	Weidner 1916: 192 fig. 2; YOSR 16 no. 1072. Babylon.

29 Photograph on-line at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/dl/photo/P230840.jpg>.

30 Photograph on-line at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/dl/photo/P414653.jpg>.

*Table 5: Observations of the Coils of the Colon in the reports from extispicies performed at the Neo Assyrian court (SAA 4).*

Observations <sup>31</sup>	Count of observation
The Coils of the Colon ....	11
The Coils of the Colon are 10 in number	2
The Coils of the Colon are 12 in number	9
The Coils of the Colon are 14 in number	28
The Coils of the Colon are 15 in number	3
The Coils of the Colon are 16 in number	23
The Coils of the Colon are 18 in number	2
The Coils of the Colon are 24 in number <sup>32</sup>	1
The Coils of the Colon are damp	3
The Coils of the Colon are double on the [le]ft, and [.....].	1
The Coils of the Colon are doubled	1
The Coils of the Colon are turned	1
The Coils of the Colon are turned on the right	1
The Coils of the Colon are turned on the left	2
The Coils of the Colon are ... and turned,	2
The Coils of the Colon are elevated and turned on the left	4
The Coils of the Colon are elevated and turned on the right	1
The Coils of the Colon are of equal height	1
The Coils of the Colon are recessed on the right	1
The Coils of the Colon are twined on the right.	1
The Coils of the Colon lie crosswise.	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>

<sup>31</sup> These are individual observations some of which are combined in the reports.

<sup>32</sup> This very unlikely number is quoted in SAA 4 331 rev. 1. The fragment is written in tiny script and the number is unclear but it is definitely at least 20. SAA 4 331 has in the meantime been joined to SAA 4 299 (K 1423 + K 8880) see <http://cdli.ucla.edu/dl/photo/P238071.jpg>.

# The Urban Topography of Iron Age Hama

Stephen Lumsden

In view of Professor Pedersén's interest in ancient Near Eastern cities I offer this study of Iron Age Hama in fond memory of my time teaching in Uppsala. My proposal is somewhat speculative, but I hope that I can bring enough evidence to bear to convince the reader of its plausibility, at least. I have not been to Hama, so my argument is based solely on the information published in the excavation reports and from plans, maps, and photos from the time of the excavations in the 1930s stored at the National Museum of Denmark.

Hama is located in the middle Orontes Valley and, as Hamath, was the southernmost of the Syro-Hittite kingdoms (Fig. 1). It controlled most of west central Syria at least from the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century until it was destroyed towards the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE, probably by Sargon II in 720.<sup>1</sup> A Danish expedition under the direction of Harald Ingholt excavated the site from 1931 to 1938.<sup>2</sup> The base of the mound at Hama measures about 300 by 400 meters, while at the summit it measures approximately 215 by 336 meters (Fig. 2). The mound rises some 46 meters above the surrounding town and gardens on the left bank of the river. A group of monumental buildings, dating to Period E (c.900-720 BCE), was uncovered on the mound, and contemporary cremation burials were found in random sondages in the built-up area south and southwest of the mound (Fig. 3). No evidence was found for a lower town in this period.<sup>3</sup>

The best-preserved part of the Iron Age level on the mound was in the southern section, in what the excavators called "The Royal Quarter". Four monumental buildings were uncovered here, arranged around a large central plaza, and all devastated by the intense heat of the fire that destroyed them (Fig. 4). All also seem to have been decorated with gate lion sculptures, but with no other decorated orthostats. Building I was a large gate structure that gave access to the Royal Quarter. Gilibert suggests comparison – as a "gatehouse placed across a grand stairway" – with the Great Staircase that ascended the citadel mound at Carchemish.<sup>4</sup> The way on to the citadel through the gate apparently progressed from the northeast along the northern tower (as illustrated in Fig. 5), forcing any attackers to expose their vulnerable side to defenders on the walls, as at the King's Gate at Hattusha and the City Gate at Megiddo.<sup>5</sup>

Building II is located on an elevated position on the southwestern edge of the mound and is the largest Iron Age structure uncovered in the excavations, measuring approximately 73 by

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1 Hawkins 1975: 67-70; 2000: 402, 413-414.

2 The main publications of the Iron Age findings are Fugmann 1958, Riis 1948, and Riis and Buhl 1990.

3 Fugmann 1958: 264-265; Riis 1948; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

4 Gilibert 2011: 35-36. See also Harmanşah 2013: 137, 143.

5 Fugmann 1958: 153.

30 meters. The excavators considered this structure to be the royal palace, the residence of the ruler.<sup>6</sup> Most of the bottom floor rooms uncovered in the excavation were used for storage; however, evidence for upper floor(s) was found, in the form of stairways and of collapse into the bottom floor. This upper floor collapse included fragments of painted plaster.<sup>7</sup> Vestiges of what the excavators described as a small sanctuary were discovered directly in front of the outer wall of Building II (see Figs. 4 and 5). Some of the basalt architectural features found in the central plaza may originate from this structure.<sup>8</sup>

Building III is a large structure located across the plaza from Building II, on the eastern edge of the mound. It was only partially excavated and may have extended for a considerable distance to the north. The content of most of the cuneiform tablets and Aramaic graffiti associated with Building III convinced the excavators that it functioned as a temple.<sup>9</sup> The eastern part of the building had been destroyed by later constructions, and its northern extension is unclear (squares L15-17 were not excavated), although walls having the same orientation and fragments of basalt sculpture in square K15 may indicate that Building III extended this far (see Fig. 2).<sup>10</sup>

The final structure uncovered in the Royal Quarter is Building IV, reconstructed as a gate into this area from the town in the central and northern parts of the mound.<sup>11</sup> Fragments of two basalt gate lions have been associated with the eastern entrance, “porch C”.<sup>12</sup> At the end of its use, at least, the rooms in Building IV seem to have been used to store wooden furniture with bone inlays.<sup>13</sup>

Building V was located outside the Royal Quarter, along the western edge of the mound (see Fig. 2). It was only partially excavated, but was clearly an important building. It succumbed presumably to the same intense fire that destroyed Buildings I-IV. The bottom floor was uncovered; two staircases led to an upper floor. The richness of the finds in these storerooms

6 Brown 2008: 420; Fugmann 1958: 24, 232-233. Matthiae 2008: 210 has suggested royal residential, administrative, and storage roles for Building II.

7 Fugmann 1958: 209, 232.

8 Fugmann 1958: 195-205. Gilibert suggests instead that this structure may not have been a building at all but rather a later extension of the Building II terrace into the plaza, 2012: 118-119, note 37.

9 Fugmann 1958: 190-191; Riis and Buhl 1990: 10, 20. Parpola insisted that a cuneiform letter to Urtamis, king of Hamath, found in the building indicated that it was a palace, Parpola 1990: 257, note 2. De Maigret also argued for an administrative role for Building III, de Maigret 1979: 73-74, 91. Matthiae suggested that Building III served as the audience hall of the citadel, based on Old Syrian precedents, 2008:209-211, while Gilibert has proposed that Building III served as the gate onto the citadel before Building I was constructed, and then later was transformed into an administrative building, 2012: 114, note. 24.

10 Riis and Buhl 1990: 20, 46 and Fig. 20, 56 and Fig. 24.

11 Fugmann 1958: 237; Riis and Buhl 1990: 24-25. The northern tower of the gate is missing, presumably located in the adjacent unexcavated sector. Ussishkin argued that the excavated portion of Building IV was, in fact, a temple, Ussishkin 1966: 104-110. Davey seems unconvinced of Ussishkin's argument, Davey 1980: 113-115. Matthiae dismissed both reconstructions, 2008: 209.

12 Fugmann 1958: 245.

13 Fugmann 1958: 244; Matthiae tentatively suggested a “treasury”, 2008: 209.

led the excavators to designate Building V a palace, perhaps of someone connected to the royal family.<sup>14</sup>

Artifacts dating to Period E were abundant in all investigated areas in the central and northern parts of the mound. However, architectural evidence was less common, apparently destroyed or damaged by the foundations of Hellenistic Period buildings. It is here that the excavators located the domestic structures of the town at Hama.<sup>15</sup> As already noted, the random sondages that revealed the Bronze and Iron Age burials in the town southwest and west of the mound did not expose any habitation layers from these periods.<sup>16</sup> The earliest evidence for the spread of the town off the mound into these areas dates well into the Roman Period (Period C1, ca.200-300/334 CE).<sup>17</sup>

Since the excavated part of the Royal Quarter covers an area of about 90 by 160 meters – and it may have extended at least another 70 meters to the north<sup>18</sup> – the residential districts of the town behind the Royal Quarter at Hama may have covered only about 4-6 hectares. This seems rather small for a place that played such a significant role in Iron Age Syria. The excavators, in fact, argue that there is evidence that the mound would have been considerably larger in this period than it is now.<sup>19</sup> A medieval text states that the mound was cut over many years to make it more defensible,<sup>20</sup> and all associated with the excavation and its publication associate this work with the current shape of the mound. This cutting away of the mound and the digging of a 3 meter-deep moat probably took place between 1191 and 1220 under Malik al-Muzaffar I.<sup>21</sup> Although the medieval text offers no specific details, it is usually argued that the southwestern and southern sections of the mound were special targets for trimming, thereby forming a triangular-shaped citadel familiar at other Ayyubid towns (Aleppo, Homs, etc.), and separating the citadel from the rocky ridge directly to the south (al-Bashura).<sup>22</sup>

The Iron Age mound is usually reconstructed as being more circular than it is now, based both on the notion that the western part, especially, must have been cut away pretty drastically in the Medieval Period, and apparently on Iron Age material found in sondages 2 and 17 immediately to the west of the southern tip of the mound.<sup>23</sup> The north-south extent of the mound at its base, at ca.400 meters, seems set by the bend of the Orontes in the north (although see below for the bed of the Orontes) and the “natural depression” separating the

14 Fugmann 1958: 257-258. De Maigret suggested that the number of weapons stored in this building pointed to a military function, 1979: 54-55, 79.

15 Fugmann 1958: 264-265; Riis 1948; Riis and Buhl 1990. Riis, in his popular book on the excavations, explicitly places the town on the mound, behind the Royal Quarter, Riis 1987: 74.

16 Fugmann 1958: 264-265; Riis 1948; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

17 Ploug 1985: 79, 85.

18 Riis 1987: 74.

19 Fugmann 1958: 2, 264-265; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9. See also Pentz 1997: 23, 29, 97; Ploug 1985: 7.

20 Riis and Poulsen 1957: 303, n. 6.

21 Pentz 1997: 23.

22 Fugmann 1958: 2, 6-7; Pentz 1997: 23, 27, 29, 97; Ploug 1985: 7; Riis 1948: 1, note 3.

23 Fugmann 1958: 2; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9. For the assertion that the material from sondage 17, at least, must represent an extension of the mound cut by the Ayyubids, see Riis 1948: 2, 17; see also Fugmann 1958: 265. More likely, it seems to me, is that this material probably originated from the mound, having been displaced by erosion or the medieval cutting of the edge of the mound.

southern end of the mound from the rocky ridge of al-Bashura,<sup>24</sup> so perhaps a mound with a maximum diameter of 400 meters may have been possible (and thus an area of 16 hectares for the Iron Age town). Riis and Buhl's suggestion of a diameter of ca.650 meters is mystifying.<sup>25</sup>

The so-called "Hama Stones", 9<sup>th</sup> century Luwian Hieroglyphic display inscriptions carved on stone blocks, have also been brought into this discussion (Fig. 6). They were found in the town in close proximity to the mound and are usually said to have been originally associated with a ceremonial road leading to the mound,<sup>26</sup> or with gateways,<sup>27</sup> or with buildings in the Royal Quarter.<sup>28</sup> Riis and Buhl suggest that numbers 2 and 3, located just north of the tell (see Fig. 6), may have been originally located at a hypothetical northern gate, perhaps in squares B-C 7-12, which would have been destroyed by the cutting of the mound in the Medieval Period.<sup>29</sup>

This, then, has been the standard reconstruction of Iron Age Hama – a large Royal Quarter with a small town behind it, all confined to a raised mound that in that time might have extended to 16-20 hectares. In the following, I would like to offer an alternative to this narrative, in two parts – the mound and the lower town.

## The Mound

Ingolf Thuesen has noted that the presence of an internal gate (Building IV) may represent "a subdivision of the citadel into walled quarters, as attested at Zincirli".<sup>30</sup> Brian Brown, while noting Fugmann's reconstruction of Building II as the royal palace, with living spaces located above storage facilities, wonders whether this structure may simply have functioned as "the storage building of an extended palatial complex over the entire mound".<sup>31</sup> These suggestions point to part of the solution to the problem of the settlement at Iron Age Hama, that is, that the mound was covered entirely by a "palatial complex".

Already at Hattusha, the capital of Hama's Late Bronze Age Hittite overlords, the buildings on the citadel were arranged along a series of courtyards (Fig. 7).<sup>32</sup> The gate to the citadel gave access to administrative buildings; a further gate led to ceremonial space represented by a columned hall and a temple; and, finally, the residential palaces were located farthest from the entrance to the citadel. Alessandra Gilibert, Stefania Mazzoni, and Marina Pucci have emphasized the "scenographic" character of the new urban design of Iron Age Syro-Hittite towns – including Hama - in which the walled city center was divided into a more accessible ceremonial plaza filled with ritual installations and dominated by a single large building, and

24 Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

25 Riis and Buhl 1990: 9. Especially since this statement is made immediately after claiming that the length of the mound is set at around 400 meters. Perhaps it is connected to the finds in sondage 17.

26 Fugmann 1958: 171

27 Hawkins 2000: 414.

28 Fugmann 1958: 209 (Building II); Riis and Buhl 1990: 10 (Hama Stone 4 in Building III).

29 Riis and Buhl 1990: 10.

30 Thuesen 2002: 51.

31 Brown 2008: 420.

32 Neve 1982: Beilage 36.

a more private residential section where royal palaces and other official buildings would have been located.<sup>33</sup>

This arrangement fits very well at Hama.<sup>34</sup> The excavated portion of the “Royal Quarter” seems to indicate that Building II dominated the open plaza space. The evidence of two staircases and upper floor collapse with painted wall plaster surely suggests that this building accommodated public ceremonial space (perhaps as well as domestic quarters) in addition to the storage space on the bottom floor. Building II, then, may have functioned as the main ceremonial building on the citadel, equivalent to the columned hall at Hattusha, or other large dominating structures in similar arrangements at contemporary places such as Carchemish, Tell Halaf, and Zincirli.

In addition, Gilibert notes that “monumental art was employed to mark important thresholds along the main avenues of access from outside the city to inside the city center . . .”.<sup>35</sup> As noted already, two basalt gate lions may have decorated the eastern entrance into Gate Building IV,<sup>36</sup> perhaps indicating that one was leaving the Royal Quarter for an area just as, or more, important. Buildings IV and V are in alignment, so it seems reasonable to suggest that in fact Building IV gave access to Building V and the area to the northwest of the Royal Quarter. These two buildings are apparently older than the 8<sup>th</sup> century resurfacing of the central plaza and the additions to, or rebuilding of, the other structures in the Royal Quarter, so perhaps representing the remnants of an earlier arrangement of the citadel.<sup>37</sup>

Building V was very badly damaged by fire, just as the structures in the Royal Quarter were. Although only partially uncovered, it still held by far the richest objects found in the buildings in this period. A large number of weapons, imported ceramics, bone-inlaid furniture, sealed bullae, and the only ivory furniture inlays found in any of the buildings, attest to the importance of this building, probably as a royal palace.<sup>38</sup>

The only other area where fairly substantial structural elements dating to the Iron Age were discovered was in Squares I9-I0 (see Fig. 2), above what the excavators describe as a Late

33 It is beyond the purview of this paper to go into details about these important studies of the arrangements within the city centers of Syro-Hittite towns. For more information, see Gilibert 2011, 2012, 2013; Mazzoni 1997a, 1997b, 2006; Pucci 2006, 2008. Matthiae noted, at least, that the citadel at Hama shared the arrangement at contemporary Zincirli and Tell Tayinat of government functions distributed among smaller buildings around an open space rather than concentrated in a single large building, and accepted that such a deployment may have been inspired by the Imperial Hittite citadel, Büyükkale, 2008: 209.

34 See Gilibert 2012, 2013. Apart from everything else, it seems unlikely that one would enter the town in the central and northern parts of the mound by passing through the “Royal Quarter”, even though there may have been another means of access on to the mound.

35 Gilibert 2011: 99.

36 Fugmann 1958: 245.

37 For the dating of Buildings IV and V relative to the other buildings, see Fugmann 1958: 172, 189-190, 233, 244-245, 258.

38 See Fugmann 1958: 245-258; Gilibert 2012: 111-112, note 30; 2013: 44, note 40. Of course, the absence of ivory objects in the other large buildings may simply attest to the thoroughness of Assyrian looting. A group of the ivories found in storerooms at Fort Shalmaneser in Nimrud has often been associated with Hama, see Hermann 1986: 53; 1989.

Bronze Age palace.<sup>39</sup> Here the fragmentary walls were found of a building that had suffered in an intense fire, similar to the other large structures excavated from this period. This included the strange “beading” of basalt architectural elements.<sup>40</sup> Fragments of basalt sculptural elements discovered here (lion and sphinx(?) gate figures, a statue of a woman, etc.) in disturbed Hellenistic contexts may belong to this structure, or others in this sector.<sup>41</sup>

This reevaluation of the arrangement on the citadel leads to the suggestion that the size (10-12 hectares) and the shape of the Iron Age mound would have been very similar to what they are now. While the Medieval source states that the mound was cut, it does not specify where or how much. As noted earlier, because it is thought that the Iron Age mound must have been rounder in shape than it is now, the central area of the east side of the mound and the west and southwest, especially, are suggested as targets for demolition.<sup>42</sup>

Although the depression that separates the southern end of the mound from the ridge at al-Bashura is usually described as natural,<sup>43</sup> it is also often suggested that there may have been some excavating here in the Roman and Medieval Periods as well,<sup>44</sup> and I would like to propose that here is where most of the drastic post-Iron Age cutting took place (see Fig. 8). Elements of the limestone bedrock reaching an elevation of 285 meters, found in Squares Q19-20 (see Fig. 2) at the southeastern tip of the mound, seem to indicate that originally the bedrock underpinning the mound may have formed an extension of the north-south running stone ridge that traverses the flood plain.<sup>45</sup> Immediately south of the mound is the ridge known as al-Bashura, separated by a gap from a ridge further to the south called ed-Dabbagha. Both ridges reach an elevation of 295 meters. Gertrude Bell, who visited the site at the beginning of the twentieth century, was of the opinion that “the isolation of the mound is not natural, but has been effected by cutting through the headland that juts out into the valley, and so separates a part of it from the remaining ridge. If this be so, it must have been a great work of antiquity, for the cutting is both wide and deep”.<sup>46</sup> Fugmann and Pentz, at least, accept that she may have been on the right track in the sense that a natural declivity would have been artificially broadened and deepened in the past.<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps the rest of the mound was only cut by shaving the edges for the 12<sup>th</sup> century limestone glacis that covered the slopes.<sup>48</sup> Buildings II and V, along the southwestern slope of the mound, were damaged by a glacis,<sup>49</sup> and this section of the mound also seems to have suffered more from erosion than other parts, which may explain why no evidence for the

39 Fugmann 1958: 117-122, 260-264.

40 Riis and Buhl 1990: 23; Sørensen and Noe-Nygaard 1958: 279-280.

41 Nine fragments of (gate?) lion sculptures, one of the wing of a bull(?), a fragmentary female figure, and an eye inlay for a statue were found in disturbed contexts in squares I10-11, H10-11, and G11. See Riis and Buhl 1990: 48, 54.

42 Fugmann 1958: 4; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

43 Fugmann 1958: 7; Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

44 Fugmann 1958: 7; Ploug 1985: 7; Pentz 1997: 27, 29.

45 Fugmann 1958: 5-7.

46 Bell 1919: 223.

47 Fugmann 1958: 7; Pentz 1997: 29.

48 For the Ayyubid glacis, see Pentz 1997: 27, 29.

49 Fugmann 1958: 4. Fugmann thought, though, that the glacis was pre-Islamic, perhaps Byzantine.



Byzantine defensive works – so clearly visible on the eastern edge of the mound – was found here.<sup>50</sup> Another argument for the current shape of the mound reflecting the form of the Iron Age citadel may be that Buildings II and III, and to a certain extent V, follow the angle of the perimeter of the mound. It should be expected that significant buildings such as these would have stood at the edge of the citadel, benefiting from views of the surrounding countryside and from prevailing breezes.

### **The Lower Town**

If I am correct and a palatial complex covered the entire mound, then there should have been a lower town to accommodate the population at Hama. Despite not finding any evidence for the habitations of a lower town in the sondages dug to the southwest and west of the mound, Fugmann thought there must have been one there in the Iron Age, based on the pottery from this period found in sondages not associated with Iron Age cremation graves.<sup>51</sup> Riis places the town on the mound behind the Royal Quarter, seemingly rejecting any notion of a lower town to the west and southwest.<sup>52</sup> If a lower town cannot be located in this area, then perhaps it should be looked for elsewhere.

The town of Hama in the 1930s was divided into two parts. The largest and oldest section, al-Madina, was located on the west bank of the Orontes (Fig. 3). The town had only recently begun to expand on to the plateau to the south and west.<sup>53</sup> East of the river was located a smaller neighborhood called al-Hadir, meaning “camp” or “where the bedouins settled”.<sup>54</sup> The earliest date of permanent settlement in al-Hadir remains unclear, although it seems to have been much later than that in the central part of the town across the river.<sup>55</sup> In addition, the ridge south of the mound, al-Bashura, meaning “outer defensive work” or “barbican”, was fortified, probably in the Ayyubid Period.<sup>56</sup>

If a lower town cannot be located in al-Madina in the Iron Age, then perhaps it should be looked for across the river, in al-Hadir, although the present bed of the Orontes may present a hindrance to such a theory. A glance at the topographic map in Fig. 8 will illustrate how the more than 600 meter-long ridge - beginning at the mound, continuing along al-Bashura and ed-Dabbagh, and ending approximately 150 meters from the edge of the plateau that delimits the southern extent of the flood plain<sup>57</sup> - has formed a substantial barrier to the progress of the river. Yet the river has broken through in the past and formed the broad flood plain west of this barrier that has long been covered by settlement at Hama.<sup>58</sup> Although the

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50 Pentz 1997: 31.

51 Fugmann 1958: 264-265.

52 Riis and Buhl 1990: 9.

53 Riis 1948: 1.

54 Pentz 1997: 96.

55 Pentz 1997: 96.

56 Pentz 1997: 30.

57 See Riis 1948: 1.

58 Professor Jesper Bartholdy of the Department of Geography and Geology at the University of Copenhagen very kindly looked at the topographic map and discussed with me the implications for the course of the river over time. Without being able to say anything definitive, of course, he was able to agree that my suggestions for the course of the river in the Iron Age were at least possible.

river must have flowed west of the mound over a very long period, I would like to suggest two specific alternatives for the bed of the river during the Iron Age.

The river has clearly flowed through that southernmost gap in the ridge and west of the mound in the past (see Fig. 8). For this to be possible in the Bronze and Iron Ages it would have had to avoid the burials from these periods located here.<sup>59</sup> Figs. 3 and 9 show the location of the Bronze and Iron Age burials. All of the burials were found on slopes at elevations from ca.277 to ca.269 meters, in the cemetery closest to the mound, and around 300 meters farther to the southwest.<sup>60</sup> On the western edge of the group of Iron Age graves closest to the mound (see Fig. 9), sondages uncovered no evidence for Iron or Bronze Age burials, and water-borne soil was found below an elevation of ca.270 in one (3), excavations were stopped at ca.268 without reaching bedrock in another (9), and bedrock was reached in a third (10) at an elevation of 266.85.<sup>61</sup> Bedrock was also reached at an elevation of 265 meters in Sondage 1, to the northwest.<sup>62</sup> Fig. 10 illustrates a hypothetical course of the river that evades the burials and follows the lowest elevations. Perhaps the Iron Age graves would have been placed on the slopes flanking the course of the river at that time.

A more intriguing possibility is illustrated in Fig. 11. In this scenario, the river would have broken through the ridge at the gap between al-Bashura and ed-Dabbagh, where the river now makes a 90° turn. It then would have turned north, flowing along the western edge of the ridge until it hit the southwestern corner of the mound, creating the angle of the mound at its southwestern edge, before flowing off to the northwest into the current river valley. Perhaps the ditch just to the south of the mound (now covered by the modern city) represents a relic of this ancient riverbed (see Figs. 3, 6, 8, and 12).<sup>63</sup> Then, at some time between ca.700 BCE and ca.200 CE, the river would have changed course to its current position.<sup>64</sup>

There seems to have been no visible architectural evidence for Islamic Period settlement in al-Hadir before the 13<sup>th</sup> century, although Pentz suggests that there may have been settlement here as early as the late Classical Period.<sup>65</sup> There apparently is no topographical evidence for mounding, which might indicate an Iron Age town wall, for instance (Fig. 8).<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless,

59 The search for graves was not systematic. There are large areas that were not investigated that may contain graves from these periods, which would make my suggestion of the westernmost course of the river in these periods untenable.

60 Riis 1948; Riis and Buhl 2007.

61 Riis 1948: 16-19.

62 Riis 1948: 14-15. Just upstream, at the eastern edge of the modern city, investigations in the river plain located the Middle Pleistocene valley at between 270 and 280 meter's elevation and the Late Pleistocene-Holocene at ca.265 meters, van Liere and Hooijer 1961-62: Fig. 2.

63 Alternatively, the declivity that still existed here in the 30s perhaps represented an extension of the Ayyubid moat system to protect the fortified bastion on al-Bashura. These moats extending along the western side of al-Bashura and the mound would have been excavated out of the old river bed that I propose flowed here in the Iron Age.

64 The extent of any settlement on the mound between the end of the 8th century and the Hellenistic settlement, beginning probably in the 3rd century BCE, remains uncertain. The excavators found material that they dated to an intervening period (E/D) of possibly ephemeral Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian occupation. See Lund 2003 for an overview of the evidence.

65 Pentz 1997: 96.

66 The lower town at Tell Afis (see the conclusion below for this town) was not fortified in Iron Age II,

I suggest that the extent of my hypothetical lower town would have looked something like that illustrated in Fig. 13. I have arbitrarily taken the semicircular outline of this neighborhood in the 1930s – perhaps indicating an earlier configuration – as the shape of an Iron Age lower town (see Figs. 3, 14, and 15). This feature is still visible on Google Earth images of the modern city. The Iron Age town would then have covered about 30 to 50 hectares, making it equivalent to other important contemporary Syro-Hittite centers (Carchemish-ca.100 ha, Tell Halaf-ca.55 ha, Zincirli-ca.36 ha).<sup>67</sup> The location of Building I – apparently the main entrance on to the citadel – on the southeastern corner of the mound, along with Fugmann’s suggestion that this gate was reached along a path from the east, may link this gate with a lower town in this direction.

## Conclusion

My starting point for this paper has been my conviction that the 10-12-hectare Iron Age mound was filled with palatial and other official buildings, leaving no room for the residential neighborhoods of an adjoining town. I have followed the studies of Gilibert, Mazzoni, and Pucci in ascribing to Hama a layout for this palatial complex common for other Syro-Hittite centers, in which a more accessible ceremonial area leads through gates decorated with sculpture to a more restricted palatial sector. Building II dominates the open space in what should more properly be called the “Ceremonial Quarter” (rather than “Royal Quarter”, the term used by the excavators). In fact, this open ceremonial space (3600 m<sup>2</sup>) is comparable with similar spaces elsewhere; at Carchemish, for instance, the ceremonial open space in the Lower Palace area measures 2600 m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>68</sup> The massive stone basin, the stone elements inscribed in Luwian Hieroglyphics, the “thrones”, and other fragmentary stone objects, found out of context in the plaza, would have played roles in public ceremonies and rituals in this open space.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, the palatial complex covering the citadel at Hama exhibited the same “vast open space, ritual installations, monumental stairways, and different levels of accessibility” as at other prominent Syro-Hittite towns.<sup>70</sup>

Fugmann argued that the inferior quality of the repairs and additions made to the buildings at Hama in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, after a new dynasty came to power in the land of Hamath, indicated that the center for this new dynasty (now called the kings of Lu’ash and Hamath) had moved to Hatarikka/Hazrek (Tell Afis), the capital of Lu’ash, some 90 kilometers north of Hama.<sup>71</sup>

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contemporary with Period E at Hama, see Affanni and Di Michele 2010: 46. The archaeologists apparently did not investigate on this side of the river at Hama; at least, I cannot find any mention of this in the publications. A fragment of a terra sigillata plate was picked up in a garden on the right bank of the river, just north of the mound, Riis 1948: 26.

67 Although without providing any evidence for his assertion (study of aerial photographs?), van Liere states that the Bronze-Iron Age site of Hama covers 50 hectares, contending that “The citadel of Hama is only a part of the former Tell”. Van Liere 1963: 116, note 1.

68 Gilibert 2012: 112.

69 See Fugmann 1958: 191-205; Gilibert 2012: 118, 121; Riis and Buhl 1990: 32, 60-62. Large basins like that at Hama have been found outside the temple at Ain Dara and at a megaroid building at Tell Tayinat, Gilibert 2011: 52, note 110.

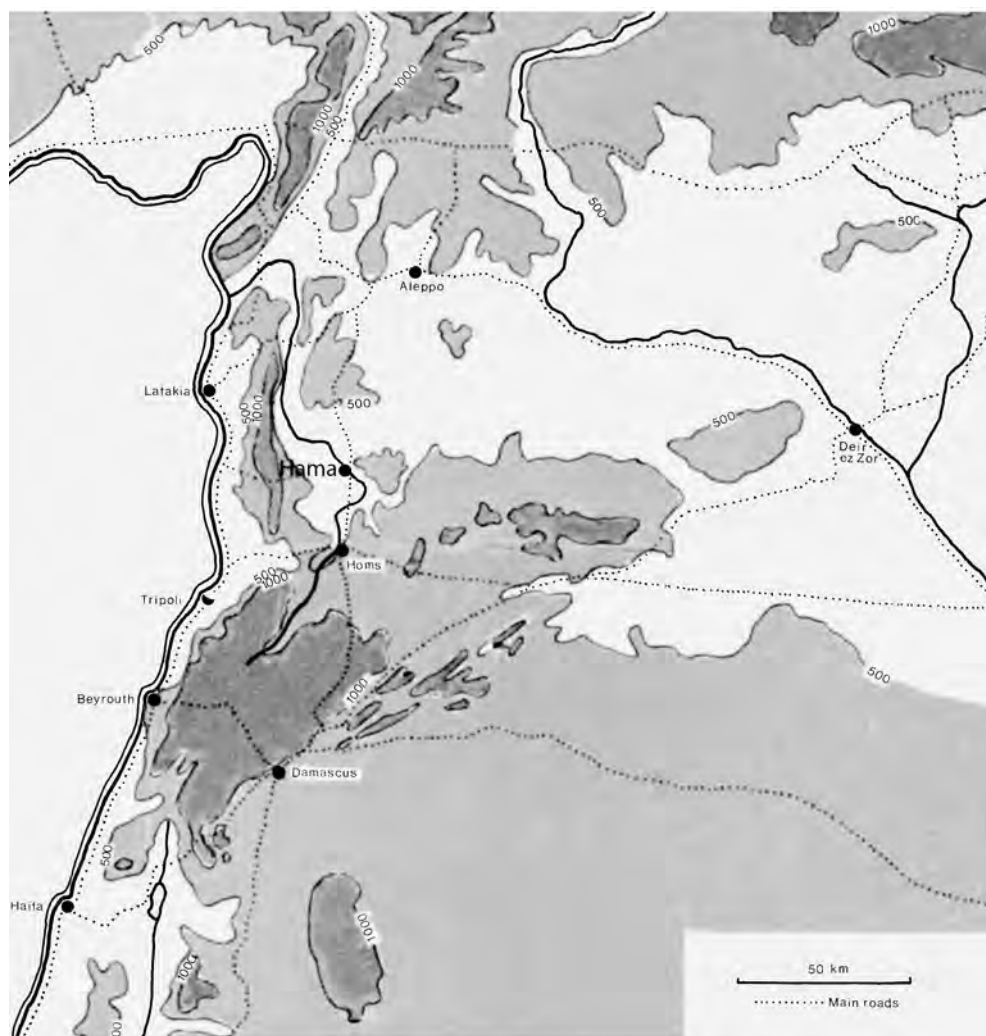
70 Gilibert 2011:104, note 172.

71 For the shoddy 8th century work, see Fugmann 1958: 172, 189-190, 233, 268. For the move to Tell Afis, the change in dynasties, and the role of Hamath, see Fugmann 1958: 268; also, Bryce 2012: 133-

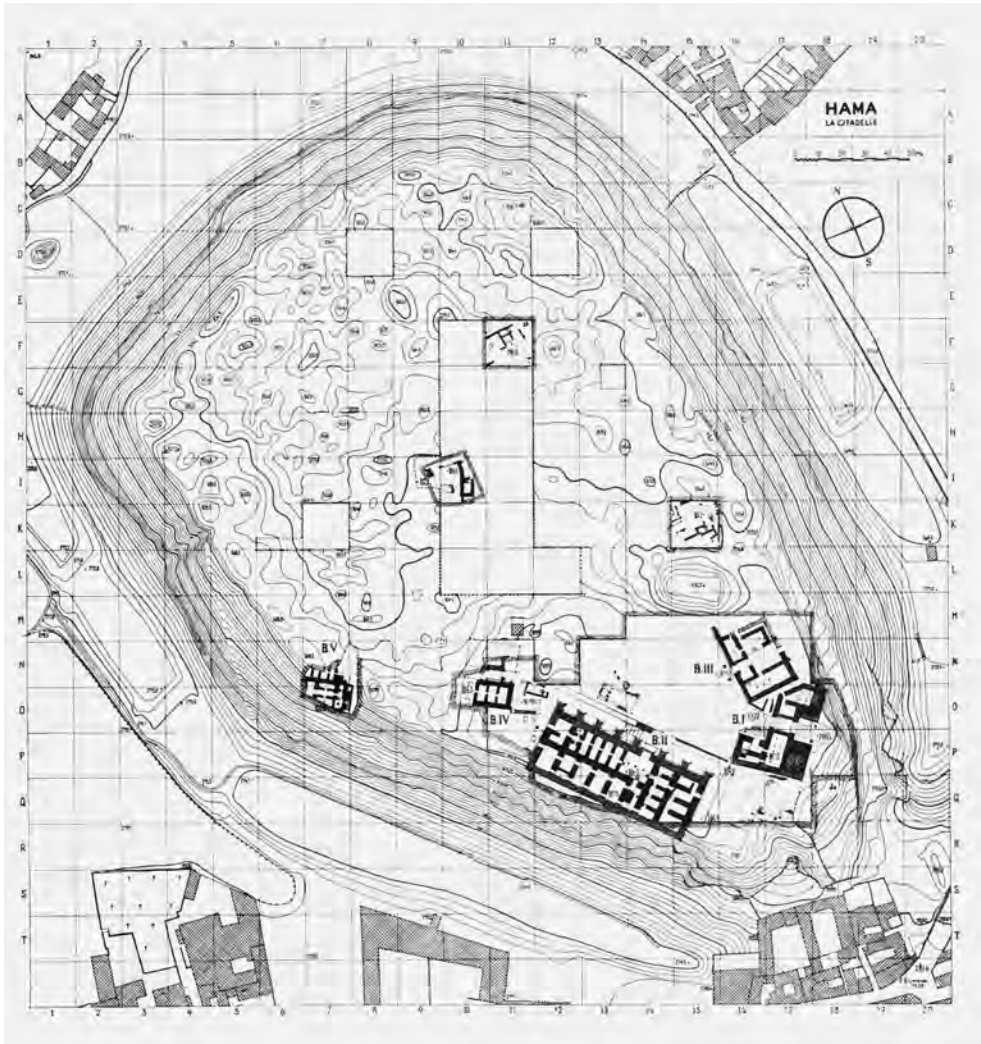
Nonetheless, if my reconstruction of the arrangement on the mound can be accepted as feasible, then there has to have been a lower town somewhere adjacent to the mound. The location of this lower town may depend on the placement of the bed of the Orontes in the Iron Age. This, of course, cannot be ascertained without geomorphological investigations, but it is a fact that the river at some time, probably for a very long time, flowed to the west of the mound. The most reasonable solution is for the river to still have been flowing west of the mound in the Iron Age, with the lower town to the east. Major ceremonial, ritual, and palatial residential structures on the western side of the mound – Buildings II, V, and others unexcavated – would have overlooked the river and the gardens fed by its waters.

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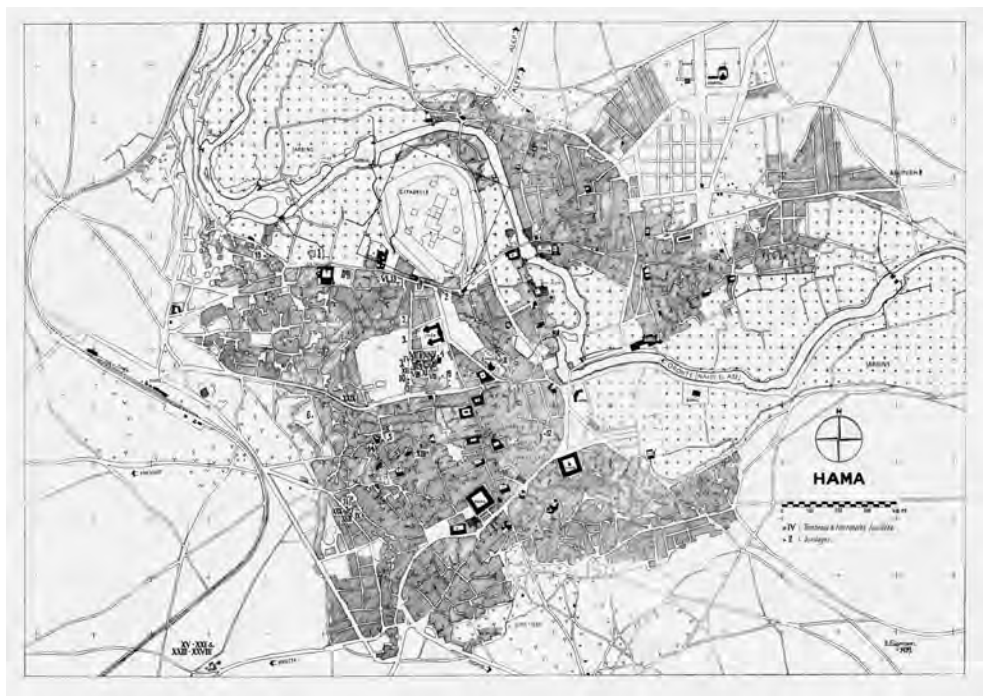
135, 264; Hawkins 1975: 67-70; 2000: 402 413-414; Payne 2012: 8-9, 59-60.



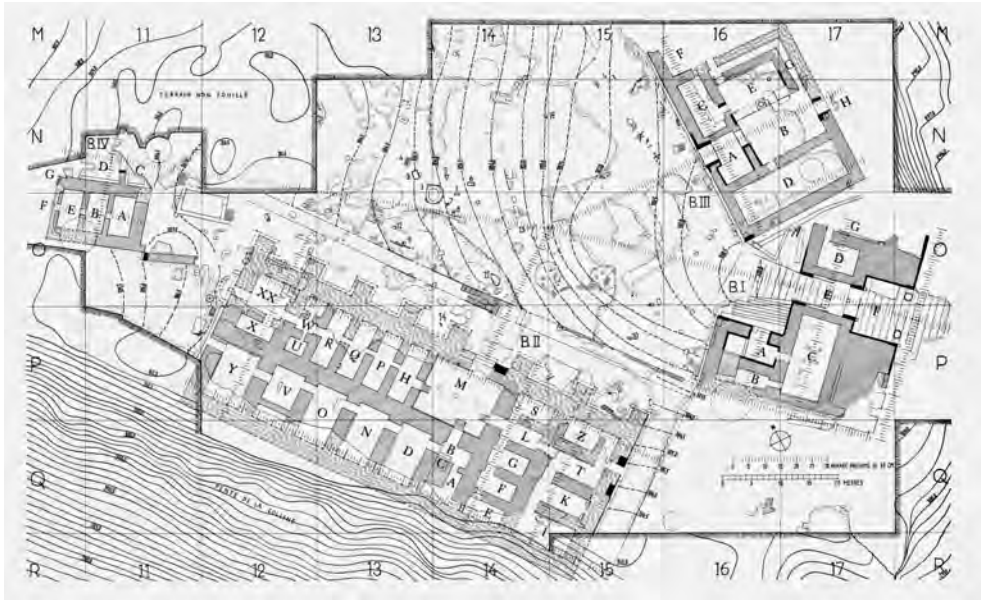
**Fig. 1:** Location of Hama (after Thuesen 1988: fig. 4).



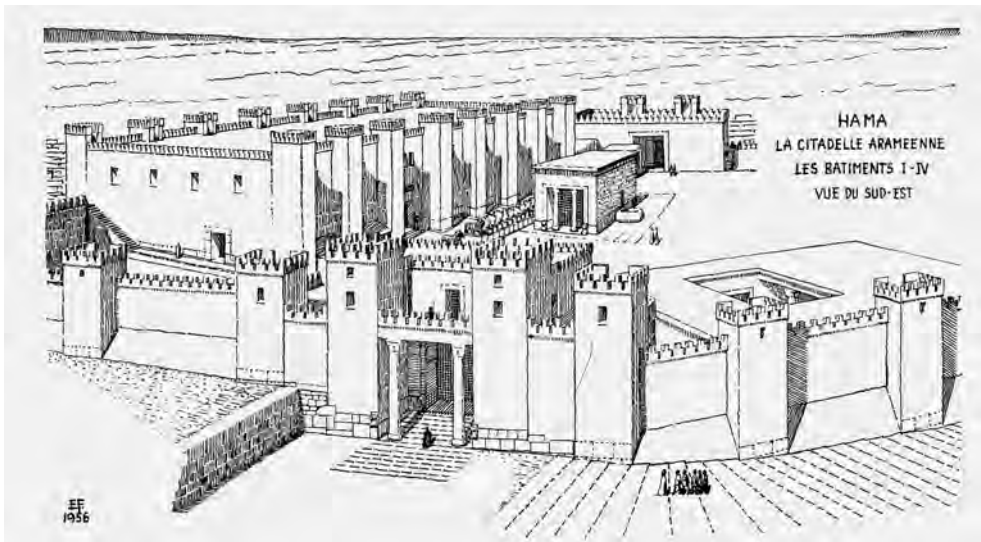
**Fig. 2:** Plan of the Iron Age buildings on the mound (Fugmann 1958: fig. 185).



**Fig. 3:** Extent of the town of Hama in the 1930s and the location of the Bronze and Iron Age burials (Riis 1948: fig. 1).

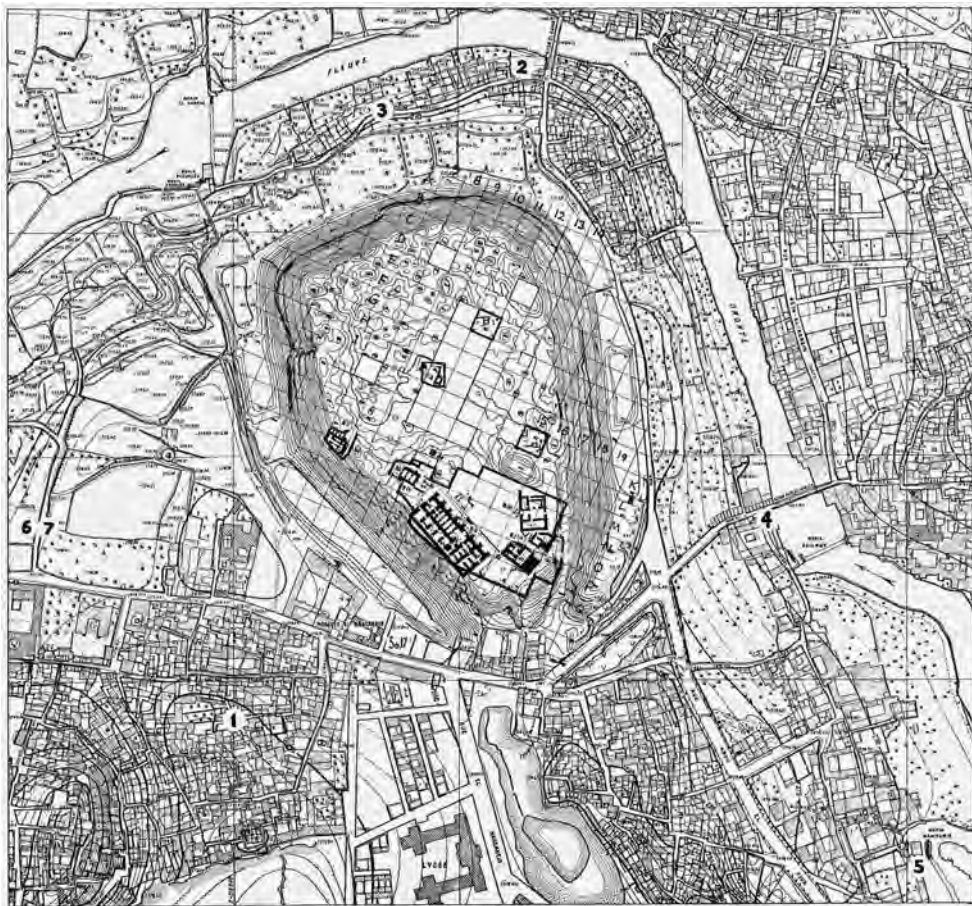


**Fig. 4:** Excavated buildings in the Royal Quarter (Riis and Buhl 1990: fig. 10B).

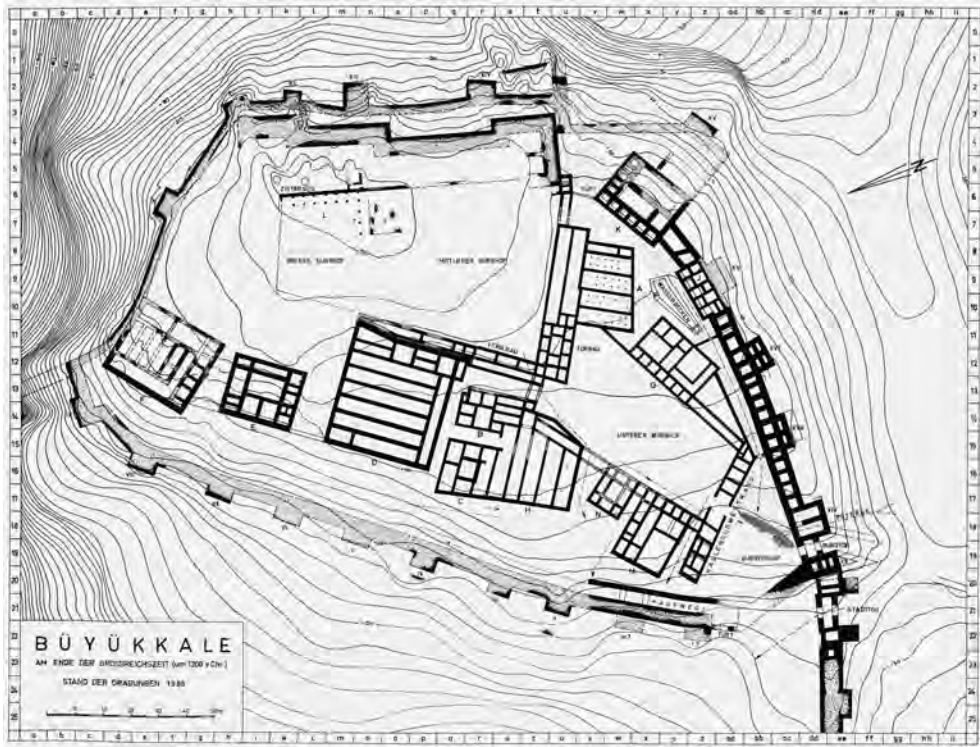


**Fig. 5:** Reconstruction of the buildings in the Royal Quarter, drawn by Ejnar Fugmann (Riis 1959: fig. 13).

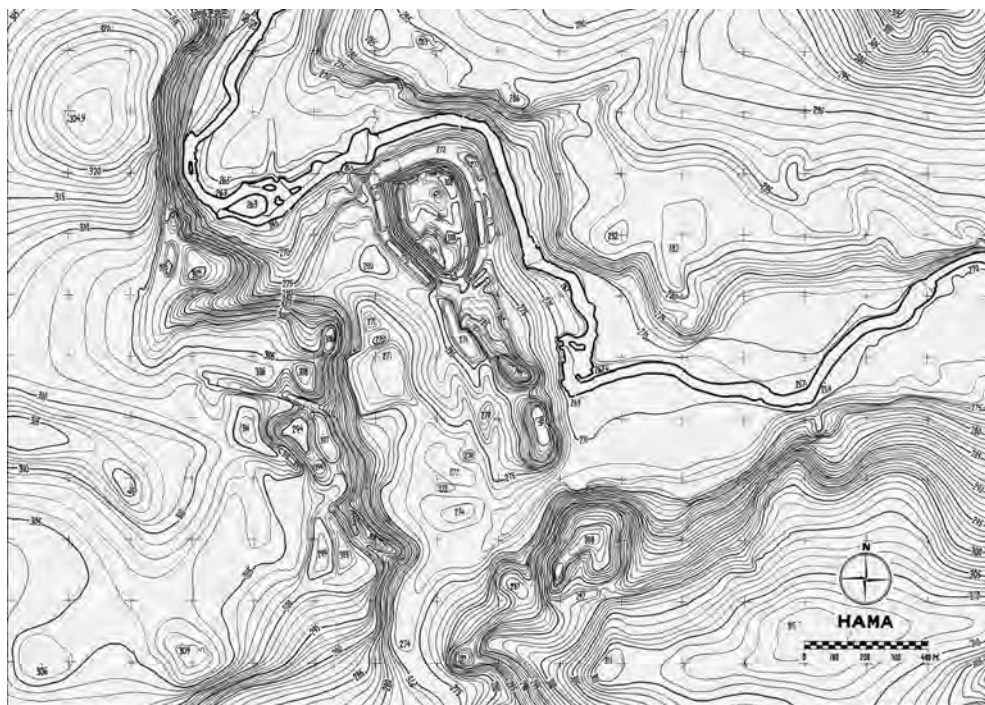




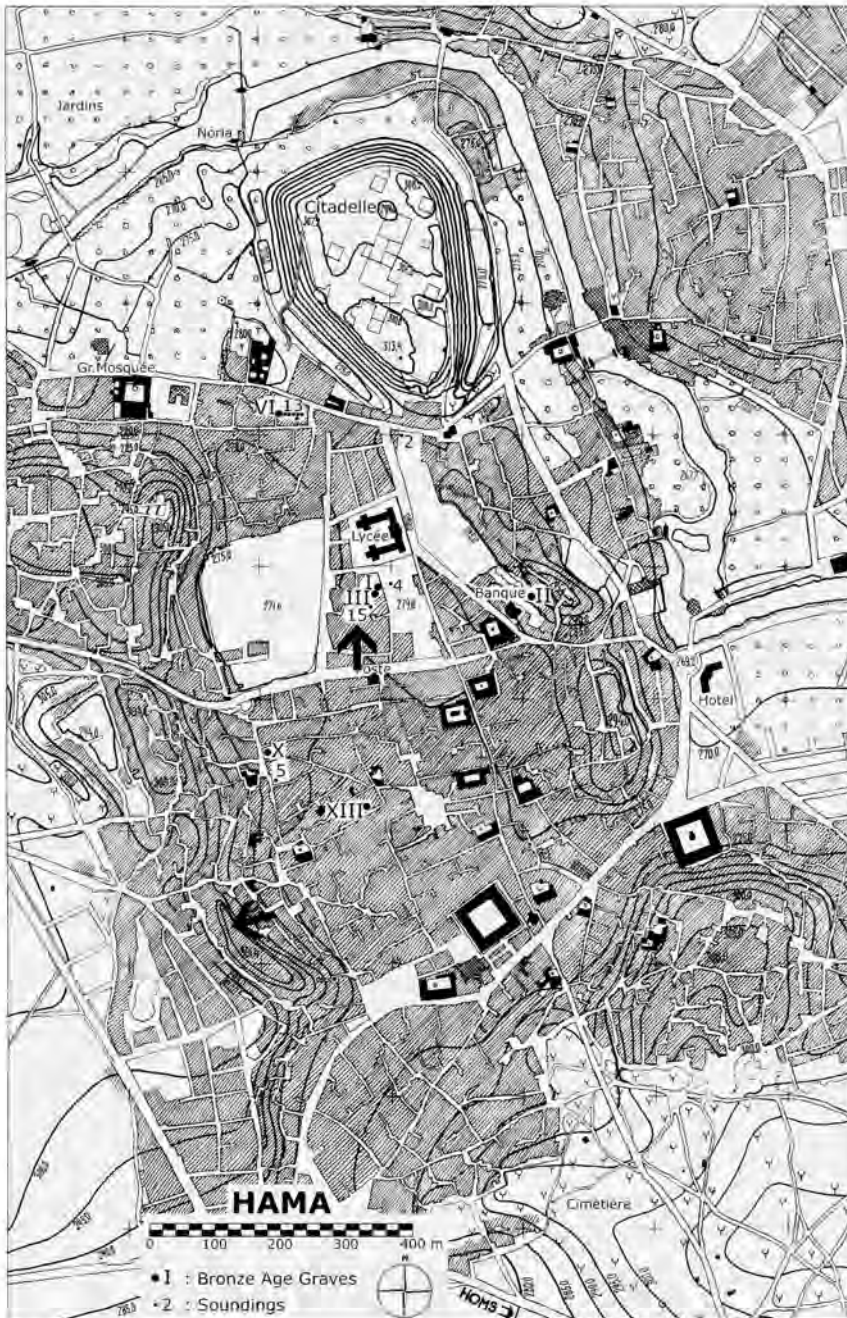
**Fig. 6:** Locations of the “Hama Stones” (Riis and Buhl 1990: fig. 3).



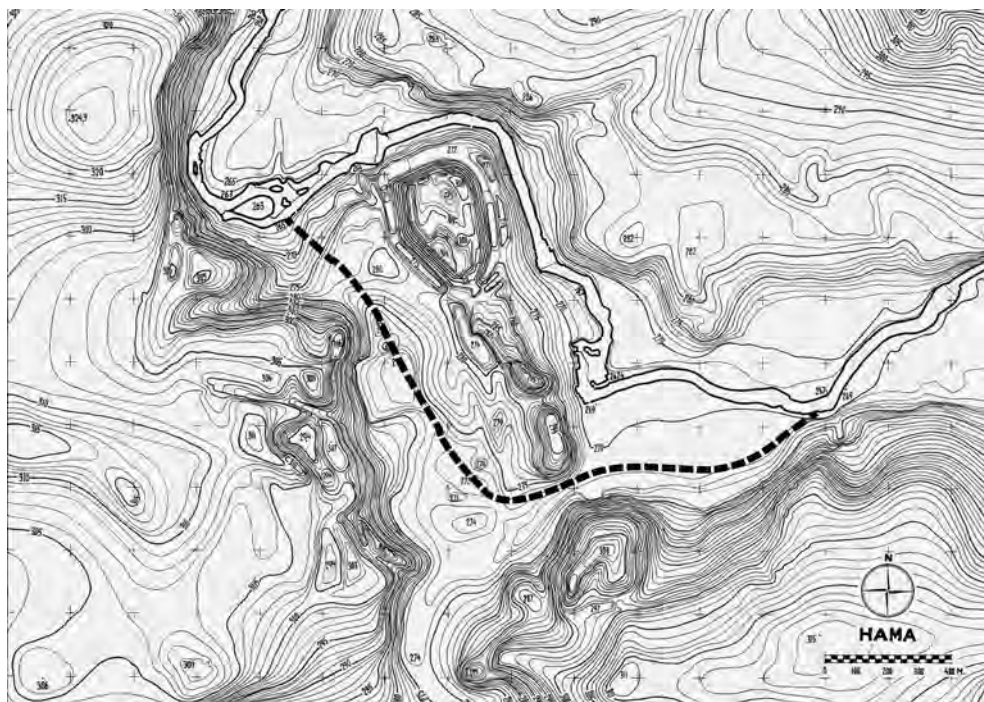
**Fig. 7:** The plan of the citadel at Hattusha (Neve 1982: Beilage 36).



**Fig. 8:** Topographic map of Hama. Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark.



**Fig. 9:** Location of the Bronze Age graves. The two arrows indicate the placement of the Iron Age cremation cemeteries (after Riis and Buhl 2007: fig. 17).



**Fig. 10:** A possible location in the western part of the flood plain for the riverbed during the Iron Age.



**Fig. 11:** An alternative course of the river breaking through the al-Bashura/ed-Dabbagh gap and flowing north along the southwestern base of the mound.





**Fig. 12:** Looking south over the mound at the town and river. The arrow points to the ditch/possible relict riverbed. Photo taken in 1936. Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark.



**Fig. 13:** Hypothetical course of the Orontes west of the mound and location of the lower town to the east.





**Fig. 14:** Bird's-eye view from the 1930s. The semi-circular outline of the al-Hadir neighborhood east of the mound can be clearly seen. Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark.



**Fig. 15:** Looking east across the mound towards the al-Hadir neighborhood and beyond. Taken in 1936. Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark.

# Tokens – silent archive of the agreed

Bonnie Nilhamn

## Introduction

When the memory fails written inventory lists, contracts and receipts remind us about the agreed, our possessions, claims, and debts. In a time when illiteracy must have been widespread other mnemonic devices were employed as *aides memoire*.<sup>1</sup>

Tokens, small handy items made of clay or stone maintained an important mnemonic function within the bookkeeping practices of the earliest societies. They were used not only as a physical counterpart of transactions, but also stood for a social and psychological legal concept that made economics possible. Physical objects like tokens, clay tags, figurines, and *kudurrus* not only carried practical information of an agreement, but also acted as a legal symbol.<sup>2</sup> This paper discusses Near Eastern tokens from the Middle Assyrian period (i.e. Late Bronze Age ca. 16th to 10th centuries BCE) from another perspective aside from being a mere counter device for accounting and economics.

## Tokens

The earliest plain tokens (i.e. without any significant marks) are attested from 8000 BCE and were common throughout the Near East from Anatolia to Iran. They were mainly abstract geometric shapes such as cones, spheres, tetrahedrons, discs, and cylinders. About 4400 BCE more complex tokens (i.e. with marks or more elaborate shapes) emerged.<sup>3</sup> Tokens were now part of the economic development and have predominantly been found at larger urban sites, for instance Uruk in Iraq, Susa in Iran and Habuba Kabira in Syria. From about 3250 BCE tokens were occasionally found in or in connection with spherical envelopes (*bullae*).<sup>4</sup> Even though tokens seem to have been mostly used in Neolithic times, their presence in the Late Bronze Age is also established by finds from Yorghana Tepe in Iraq,<sup>5</sup> Ziyaret Tepe in Turkey<sup>6</sup> and Tell Sabi Abyad in Syria (see below).

The size of the tokens is usually about 15–30 mm, (with incidental variations from 5 mm up to 50 mm). These crude lumps of clay are therefore easy to miss, often dismissed as nothing worth much or in more favourable situations seen as unfinished beads. Fortunately, the last

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1 Connerton 1989.

2 Gelb et al. 1991; Hauser 2007; Nilhamn 2010.

3 Schmandt-Besserat 1992; 1996.

4 Amiet 1966, 1972; Schmandt-Besserat 1992, 1996.

5 Abusch 1981.

6 Matney et al. 2003.

30 years have brought many of these tiny items to light. The scholarly focus has concentrated on their roles in accounting practices and as the origin of writing.<sup>7</sup> In particular the role of tokens as initiators for the development of writing has been debated.<sup>8</sup>

Pierre Amiet was one of the first who emphasized the relationship of tokens with bookkeeping. He based his interpretation on the earlier findings of A. L. Oppenheim who in his article ‘On an Operational Device in Mesopotamian Bureaucracy’<sup>9</sup>, proposed that there was a correlation between a text on an "egg-shaped" tablet found in Nuzi mentioning forty-nine sheep and its content, forty-nine pebbles (unfortunately these pebbles were later lost). Another tablet found together with this egg-shaped envelope (bullā) is the receipt stating an identical number of sheep that the sheep owner Puhishenni, son of Mus-apu, had entrusted in the care of the shepherd Ziqarru.<sup>10</sup>

Oppenheim saw a connection between the use of the Akkadian word *abnātu* “stones”, in other Nuzi texts and the use of pebbles as calculi (counting stones).<sup>11</sup> Notably, *abnātu* in the sense of a term for counting is not attested in texts outside of Nuzi.<sup>12</sup> However we do have earlier textual evidence, found in the Sumero-Akkadian lexicon of occupations, sometimes known under the name “The Old Babylonian Lu-series”. The clay calculi are here listed as the bookkeeping device *imna*, “clay stone”.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately the Sumerian *imna* and its Akkadian equivalent *abnu* also had the meaning “stone weight”.<sup>14</sup> Weights were also frequently used within accounting. In the Late Uruk period, i.e. in the latter part of the 4th millennium BCE, the tokens were well established in their role as calculi as part of the administration.<sup>15</sup>

Amiet compared the results of Oppenheim with his own research of seals and globular clay objects from Susa. Even though there are more than 2000 years between the fourth millennium Susa and the second millennium Nuzian hollow envelopes there were striking resemblances.<sup>16</sup> Maurice Lambert had made a similar discovery by identifying impressed signs on envelopes as token impressions.<sup>17</sup> Over the last decades extensive research has developed and sometimes revised the interpretations. Among many researchers on this topic, two stand out: Schmandt-Besserat who has been concentrating on the relationship with the earliest writing and Mattessich who has taken a more economic stand by focusing on accounting.<sup>18</sup>

7 Lieberman 1980; Mattessich 1987, 1989, 1994, 1998, 2000; Schmandt-Besserat 1992, 1996; Englund 1996; Costello 2002; Ezzamel and Hoskins 2002; Woods 2010.

8 Jasim and Oates 1986; Vallat 1986; Bottero 1992; Nissen et al. 1993; Zimansky 1993; Glassner 2000; Costello 2011.

9 Oppenheim 1959; (SMN 1854 = HSS 16:499).

10 Amiet 1966: 20-22; (SMN 2096).

11 Lieberman 1980: 340.

12 CAD A/1 *abnu* A5.

13 Lieberman 1980: 346.

14 CAD A/1 *abnu* A4.

15 Jasim and Oates 1986.

16 Amiet 1966, 1972.

17 Lambert 1966: 30.

18 Schmandt-Besserat 1992, 1996; Mattessich 1987, 1989, 1994, 1998, 2000.

## Mnemonic devices to organize complexity

A society that relies exclusively on human memory depends upon social arrangements and mnemonic skills to maintain social-cultural memory by using visual imagination, formal ritual and verbal formulaic recitation and witnesses, as a means of retaining complex memories. The emergence of external mnemonic tools made it possible for transfer of memory from one to another even when separated from each other geographically and in time. The earliest known example is the South African Blombos Ochre tally that dates back to 75,000 BCE.<sup>19</sup> The introduction of tallies and tokens as mnemonic devices made the act of record keeping easier but also developed the cognitive abilities and stimulated abstract thinking, counting, and the development of numerals.<sup>20</sup> As Schmandt-Besserat puts it: “Tokens and clay tablets functioned as an extension of the human brain to collect, manipulate, store, and retrieve data”.<sup>21</sup> By introducing external memory devices, such as tokens, pictorial items, clay tags, *kudurrus*, and written documents new cognitive skill-clusters were possible. The use of these devices can be seen as a form of symbolic literacy. The creation of external memory is a prerequisite for literacy. It emphasizes the visual as well as semantic processing. As society and its economy grew more complex so did the need for standardization and (legal) administration. First nature and society had to be controlled and organized by introducing numeracy and quantitative measurements and secondly this gave birth to methods for keeping track of economic data and time. It was no coincidence that the first written documents in the fourth Millennium were receipts and inventories of goods as part of the bookkeeping process.<sup>22</sup> The emergence of the physical receipt reflects the change towards an increasingly complex economy and bureaucracy. Without commonly accepted rules no economic activities could be performed. Administration had to be organized to avoid conflicts. All parties involved (illiterate or not) had to recognize and acknowledge the legal value, and the authority behind it. In a certain way the need for the keeping track and managing of the information initiated an administrative hierarchy, i.e. bureaucracy.<sup>23</sup> With the increasing administration followed a need for secure storage of the archives. Often these administrative texts were stored in official buildings and kept by an official at that institution.<sup>24</sup>

Many of the round clay ball envelopes – *bullae* – found are still intact (unopened). Englund has estimated that as many as 80 of the 130 Late Uruk (34th to 32nd centuries BCE) *bullae* found were found intact.<sup>25</sup>

Amiet was one of the first to examine intact *bullae* by using radiographic scanning techniques. He noted that the contents of tokens within the second millennium (BCE) *bullae* found in Susa and the surface notations do not necessarily correlate with each other. Amiet

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19 D’Errico et al. 2001.

20 Donald 1991, 1993, 2001; Costello 2002; Mouck 2004.

21 Schmandt-Besserat 1992: 197.

22 Englund 2004.

23 Hudson 2004: 9–11; Schmandt-Besserat 1992: 170.

24 Pedersén 1997.

25 Englund 1998: 49.

therefore concluded that the use of bullae was part of a verbal procedure.<sup>26</sup> These unopened bullae acted partly as verification but also as a legal reminder of the transaction in the same way sealed envelopes work. Morrison and Owen propose that this parallel system may have served different purposes, with the tablet as the legal document and the bulla as the counting record.<sup>27</sup>

A recent research project initiated in 2011 by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago on intact envelopes from Chogha Mish, Iran (Late Uruk period) will hopefully provide us with more valuable information in the near future on this topic, even though these bullae are of much earlier origin. By using CT technology the research team generates 3-D digital models which make it possible to digitally “remove” the tokens from the envelope. The aim is not just to examine the number and types of tokens but also to achieve more knowledge about the relationship between envelopes, tokens, and the administrative contexts.<sup>28</sup>

From a legal aspect there are mainly two reasons why an envelope or bullae was opened; firstly because of the determination of an agreement and secondly there was a need for verification in a legal dispute. As many bullae were never opened we must conclude that some contracts were never ended, obligations never fulfilled, or there was never the need of extra “evidence”.<sup>29</sup>

The oral performance was the main activity when making an agreement; still, during historical times a physical object (i.e. the token and/or the tablet) itself had initially no economical or legal value of its own but was a mnemonic device. Mesopotamian laws initially did not recognize the creation of the physical document as the essence of a transaction but only as verification that the transaction had taken place in a legally valid manner. The tablet was a copy of spoken words put down on clay. The tablet turned the words into physical tactile evidence that could be seen and felt. The tablet itself proved that it was a closed agreement with a legal aspect not to be contested. Breaking the written tablet was a strong visual symbol of annulment and termination of the obligation.<sup>30</sup>

The role of the witnesses (including the gods acting as witnesses) was a natural part of legal procedures.<sup>31</sup> Their presence was sometimes proofed by putting their personal seal on the document or envelope. For a long time a witness was seen as the principal verification even though the document existed. It seems that in some cases a document was only used if the defendant lacked witnesses. Through time the legal status of the tablet itself increased. In the earliest laws (the codices of Ur-Nammu 2100 BCE and Lipit Ishtar 1930 BCE), the need for a physical tablet as required evidence is not so pronounced while in the latter periods this is seen as a necessity. The Middle Assyrian Laws (dated around 1076 BCE) show a preference

26 Jasim and Oates 1986.

27 Morrison and Owen 1993: 74, n. 40.

28 Woods 2012: 3-8

29 Lieberman 1980: 352.

30 Edzard 1957; Malul 1987, 1988; Nilhamn 2010; Codex Hammurabi § 37.

31 Mercer 1913: 92; Liebsny 1941.

for the presence of a written document, even though the testimony of the witnesses continued to be the main form of evidence.<sup>32</sup>

If the authenticity of the document was questioned the seals were examined. Putting the seals of the witnesses on the document was a further step towards external evidentiary memory but also as a personal commitment. In a similar way we may interpret the finger- or nail marks that are commonly imprinted in tokens as meaning the same.<sup>33</sup>

One theory is that these finger- or nailmarks are for denoting numerals of objects transferred. However the randomness may suggest that the nail marks are intentionally put there by the persons involved when making the agreement as a physical proof, c.f. personal signature. This practice is also found on tablets where nail marks and an imprint of the hem of a garment instead of a seal denotes presence.<sup>34</sup> The physical marking of the token may be an official act not only in the presence of the concerned parties and witnesses but also in the eyes of the gods, c.f. swearing an oath with the hand on a holy book.

Even though the connection with administration in many cases seems evident we cannot state that all similar clay objects had one and the same definite function, as these pebbles may have been calculi, weights, game pieces, or tokens in the sense of “in-stead-of” or “verifications”. Therefore the context they are found in is of the uttermost importance to understanding them.<sup>35</sup>

## **Tell Sabi Abyad**

The site of Tell Sabi Abyad is located close to the village of Hammam et-Turkman, less than 30 km south of the Syro-Turkish border (Fig. 1)<sup>36</sup>. The site consists of four small (1–5 ha) mounds, which are visible in an otherwise flat plain on the eastern side of the river Balikh. The mounds are lined out in a north-south orientation with Tell Sabi Abyad I forming the most southern mound. Three of these, I, II, and III have been extensively excavated by Prof. P. Akkermans and the National Museum of Antiquity in Leiden. The results show that these four mounds were not simultaneously occupied but rather it seems they evolved one after the other beginning in the late eighth millennium until the early sixth millennium when the site was abandoned. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century BCE the main mound (I) was once again resettled by Assyrians who built a fortified farmstead (*dunnu*) around 1230 BCE close to the western frontier of their kingdom to serve as a military outpost for the western frontier of Assyria. That it was also an important administrative centre for the region as it was situated on the main route from Carchemish in the west to the Assyrian capital of Aššur in the east, is attested in the rich archive found at the *dunnu*. The *dunnu* belonged to the family of the grand vizier and viceroy of Hanigalbat. The daily activity was governed by the chief-steward, the *abarakku* Mannu-ki-Adad, later Buriya and then Tammitte. The texts found at the site provide us with important information about the activities of the *dunnu* and the region in the

<sup>32</sup> Roth 2000; Nilhamn 2010, table 2.

<sup>33</sup> Nilhamn 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Postgate 1994: 285 and 328, n. 524.

<sup>35</sup> Nilhamn 2002; Costello 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Photos and drawings by courtesy of Tell Sabi Abyad project.

13<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. The oldest text is dated to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1233–1197 BCE) and the youngest to the reign of *Aššur-rēša-iši* (1132–1115 BCE). The best-documented period in the administration of Tell Sabi Abyad, was when Ili-padā is Grand Vizier, King of Hanigalbat, and owner of the *dunnu* settlement at the site (1195–1185 BCE).<sup>37</sup>

More than 2000 tokens have been discovered at the site. Most tokens originate from Neolithic contexts, but 221 (of which 21 are disputable and may be lower weight-pieces) are found in the Middle Assyrian layers in several of the rooms of the 60 by 60 meter (0.36 ha) large Assyrian *dunnu*.<sup>38</sup>

The most common token shapes are the sphere and the semi-sphere. However disc, cone, tetrahedron, cylinder, and biconical shapes occur too (Figs. 4 and 5). Very often the sun dried clay has a very fine texture with nail marks which also provide us with the information that these tokens were probably made when needed. To the diversity in size when it comes to the size and marks, we may assume that the book-keeper did not keep a storage of unused ready-made tokens. Therefore the tokens found with tablets were probably in active use or perhaps one would rather say in semi-archival use.

37 of the 221 tokens were made of stone, including a wide range of both sedimentary and volcanic rocks. Eight of the stones are of limestone. Another group of eight stone tokens found together were of iron hydroxide concretion. Thirty stone tokens had an (irregular) (semi-) spherical to oval shape. One was triangular, and six were cylindrical. Two stones were pierced.

One important find is a deposit of 25 well preserved tablets<sup>39</sup> which were found in a pit dug into a wall south of the central court from a higher level (Fig. 2). According to the contents of the texts studied and translated by Dr. F. Wiggermann<sup>40</sup> they were produced in the period of 1225–1195 BCE that is during the time of Ili-pada's predecessor Šulmanu-muṣabši. Mannu-ki-Adad, who was the chief-steward, the *abarakku*, at this time, is the main character in these texts. Fortunately among the information we have, we also have some year names, *limmu*'s Ninuaju and Kaštiliašu, which takes us to the second half of the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I (reign ca. 1243–1207 BCE). An interesting point is that these tablets originate from the old phase (1225–1195 BCE) but have been kept until the end of the young phase (1180–1125 BCE) before they were carefully buried together with a text dated to the reign of *Aššur-rēša-iši* (1132–1115 BCE). This text also marks the end of this period 1125 BCE and therefore helps us to date the deposit. We cannot speak of an intentional archive as the texts themselves are of a wide range of different kinds of documents from letters to staff-lists, but the texts show some internal relationship. For instance there are two texts with longer lists of workers, dated to the same year, month and, probably, day. The texts were found with a piece of bronze and a fragment of a clay animal figurine (the hoof of a bovine) as well as tokens. The tokens can be separated into two smaller elaborate disc-tokens and three additional semi-spherical “lumps” of clay. A small cluster of five to six conical stone tokens was also found

37 Akkermans 2006; Wiggermann 2010.

38 Akkermans 2006.

39 SAB Collection T96-6–30.

40 Wiggermann 2000.



in the same deposit.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately the stone tokens were never administrated. Even though the texts do not provide information on the reasons for the presence of tokens, one can question whether their presence is connected to the texts.

This conscious treatment of tokens is also reflected in the main archive of the Middle phase. This archive was found in the office of Ilī-padā's chief steward Tammitte next to the main court (i.e. the northwest building of the *dunnu* near the main entrance leading to the central court) (Fig. 3). In the corridor a larger collection of tablets was found on the floor level. The neighbouring rooms contained 137 tablets, as well as 36 tokens. Of these tokens 50% had a tetrahedral or conical shape. Nine stone tokens were found of which seven were of the same stone type (iron hydroxide concretion). Initially this latter stone-assembly was seen as lower weights; however their weights do not correspond. Four of them were cylindrical which may suggest that they were raw material for cylinder seals. An additional flattened stone of the same kind of rock was more oval but was also pierced. The spread of the finds in the rooms suggests that the texts were kept in a wooden box together with the tokens, with the tokens perhaps being placed in a leather or textile pouch. This reconstruction is supported by the find of an intact box-seal in the same area. Wooden boxes were probably commonly used, as several sealings found in the same area showed imprints of wood.<sup>42</sup> The fact that an archive of texts (and tokens) was kept in the close vicinity of an office and on the same floor suggests that it was in active to semi-static (i.e. for future reference) use at the time of the destruction of the building.<sup>43</sup>

Unfortunately none of the Middle Assyrian texts found at Tell Sabi Abyad mentions tokens or the use of devices that would be similar to them. This leaves us with an open door as to what these tokens actually were. What is clear, is that the tokens had a function that we can link to the seals, tablets, and weights. One earlier theory is that the tokens functioned as lower weights or counting-stones, i.e. *calculi*.<sup>44</sup> However no standardization of weight between the items has been noted. We have found too few tokens of the same standardized size and shape to state that they were used as counting stones in the sense of an abacus as abaci normally denote numbers and not items counted.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, if they were only counting stones why this careful treatment as archived goods?

There is a connection between the contexts where tablets, seals, sealings or weights have been found and the correlation with the find spots of tokens. 30% of all Middle Assyrian tokens found in the *dunnu* at Tell Sabi Abyad were found together with tablets. At other Bronze Age sites similar patterns of tokens have been found in connection with tablets.

At Ziyaret Tepe, Turkey, tokens were mainly found in two distinct areas. The kind of tokens found at the two areas also differed from each other in shapes and quantity.<sup>46</sup> One of these

41 Akkermans, personal communication 2014.

42 Akkermans 2006: 206.

43 Pedersén 1997: 241.

44 Based on the similar use of calculi in Nuzi, see Liberman 1980: 340.

45 Lieberman 1980.

46 Matney et al. 2011: 86-88.

assemblies of tokens, tablets and weights led the researchers to the important conclusion that they had located the office of a tax collector.<sup>47</sup>

We cannot dismiss the theory that the tokens had a function as a bookkeeping device but perhaps with their own legal status as a juridical agreement between two parties. In a time where not everybody could read, the possibility of using tokens could have insured both parties of the legal ties when setting up a contract. Tokens as complementary solutions may have served as a less abstract method than the tablets. Could it be that suspicious non-Assyrians outside the *dunnu* needed a physical juridical testimony when settling an agreement that they could visibly understand? This theory is not implausible as we do have a similar case: the inscribed bulla with tokens found in Nuzi (see above)! The bulla<sup>48</sup> has been correlated with another cuneiform text<sup>49</sup> regarding the contract between the shepherd Ziqarru and the sheep owner Puhišenni, son of Mus-apu. This early evidence of “double entry-bookkeeping” shows how the amount of animals mentioned in the tablet corresponds with the number of tokens found.<sup>50</sup>

The tokens found in Tell Sabi Abyad could have functioned in a similar way when making agreements between groups with different levels of literacy or native languages. We know from texts found in Tell Sabi Abyad that the *dunnu* had a mixed population of both un-free *šiluhlu* workers and freeborn *alāpu*. Besides Assyrian names, Kassite and Hurrian names occur too.<sup>51</sup> For instance the envelope found in the deposit reads, “This is possession of the Subaraeans from Šadikanni”.<sup>52</sup> The *dunnu* had both its own shepherds and herds as well as contact with the nomadic population in the area. Several texts found mention shepherds in charge of the animals of the *dunnu*. Among the tablets found in and around the archive we have a list of ten shepherds (*nāqīdu*) in charge of the *rab ešarte* (ten-man). This list is followed by a warning that if these shepherds do not come back at the moment indicated by Tammitte they will receive 100 blows with a rod.<sup>53</sup> Another text<sup>54</sup> mentions one of these shepherds more explicitly as he gets 138 assorted ovids (sheep/goats) from Tammitte.<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusion - First legal awareness, then functional economy

Tokens were made from common materials like clay, non-precious stones and most probably also of wood<sup>56</sup> and had little, if any, intrinsic value. They did not function as money, but were connected to specific commodities. The use of pebbles for counting was a worldwide phenomenon and the Latin word *calculi* actually means small stones (“pebbles”). Small standardized items used as a physical verification is also universal practice, which is still widely used in different guises; for example if we buy cigarettes, a ticket to the underground,

47 Matney et al. 2003.

48 SMN 1854= HSS 16:499.

49 SMN 2096.

50 Oppenheim 1959; Abusch 1981.

51 SAB Collection T96-21.

52 SAB Collection T96-23.

53 SAB Collection T98-43.

54 SAB Collection T98-34.

55 Wiggermann 2000.

56 Jasim and Oates 1986: 350.

or try our luck in the casino. These small objects are a stand-in for an idea of something else. They are more easy to transfer and store than the commodity or service that they represent. They form receipts of past transactions or act as a claim for a future transaction.

The contextual information from the Middle Assyrian *dunnu* of Tell Sabi Abyad indicates that the tokens were sometimes treated and archived with care, together with seals and written legal documents. The use of written sources did not overthrow common conventions and unwritten laws overnight. Even though a society becomes more complex, certain aspects of the past will live on. Especially oral traditions will become of more importance for the individual than at a public level.<sup>57</sup> The token represents an archaic alternative to the written receipt, and has its roots in the prehistoric period. In a society where not everyone could read, or spoke the same language, tokens as a physical mnemonic device for the agreed still played a supportive role.

The token was important for the development of legal and administrative practices as it gave authenticity to acts as a physical receipt or voucher as a mnemonic tool, but also as a symbolic carrier of legal consensus in order to uphold stability and the rightful ownership claim. As such it had an important role within the process of administration, both for the individual persons involved and on a higher level for the whole society. Tokens enabled abstract legal thinking, otherwise no party would accept the status of neither the tokens nor the later economic and legal texts.

Economy, trade, and transactions can only function if the parties involved believe that they are acting in a manner that suits their purposes and ethics. It requires a legal system that insures the parties that they have proper rights and/or obligations. The existence of such a legal framework is not in doubt during the time of the Middle Assyrian kingdom, as we have a large corpus of legal texts. For the prehistoric periods however the situation is more difficult. Therefore the status of the later Middle Assyrian tokens becomes more important as comparative material. Evidences from this period indicates that tokens, or other forms of physical “receipts”, functioned side by side with written documentation in certain cases, even though this was not the normal way of handling acts. The tokens may have been a juridical “left-over” from earlier periods, used especially when dealing with a party that did not acknowledge the cuneiform contract as a legitimate form of agreement or was not able to read it. Still that person felt that he needed a legal proof of the commitment or contract that he was going to enter. Perhaps he felt more comfortable with the old-fashioned ways. As such the tokens needed to be archived and kept safe during the whole contract term. Once the transaction was fulfilled the evidence or the receipt was no longer necessary nor valid and the object was discarded or smashed<sup>58</sup>: “(When) his accounts are settled, he may break his tablet. Month Sippu, day 12, eponym Šulmanu-aha-iddina”.<sup>59</sup>

This gives us an indication of a rural system developing into a more complex urban one. In a similar matter the law develops from unwritten common law to written statute law. In the

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57 Goody and Watt 1963: 342.

58 Hauser 2007; Nilhamn 2010.

59 Wiggermann 2000:174; SAB Collection T98-33.

earliest laws, the presence of the physical tablet is less distinct as evidence, while in the latter period this is seen as a necessity.

The study of tokens shows us that knowledge of juridical activity can be obtained by studying objects. If we acknowledge the tokens from a juridical point of view we gain new insights of the development of the earliest legal systems. The foundation for economy is jurisdiction by a commonly accepted and acknowledged system that has the power over how claims and debts for services and commodities are settled between people. Developments in the urban and social structure necessitated for new and better means for book keeping and legal auditing. The increasing complexity of contracts, transaction, loans, and interest made earlier methods, such as tokens and tallies neither efficient nor reliable. As the amount of special cases and exceptions rose the complex societies were urged into a socio-economic administrative hierarchy and to adopt law codices to be able to manage the behaviour of the people and their economic and social transactions.

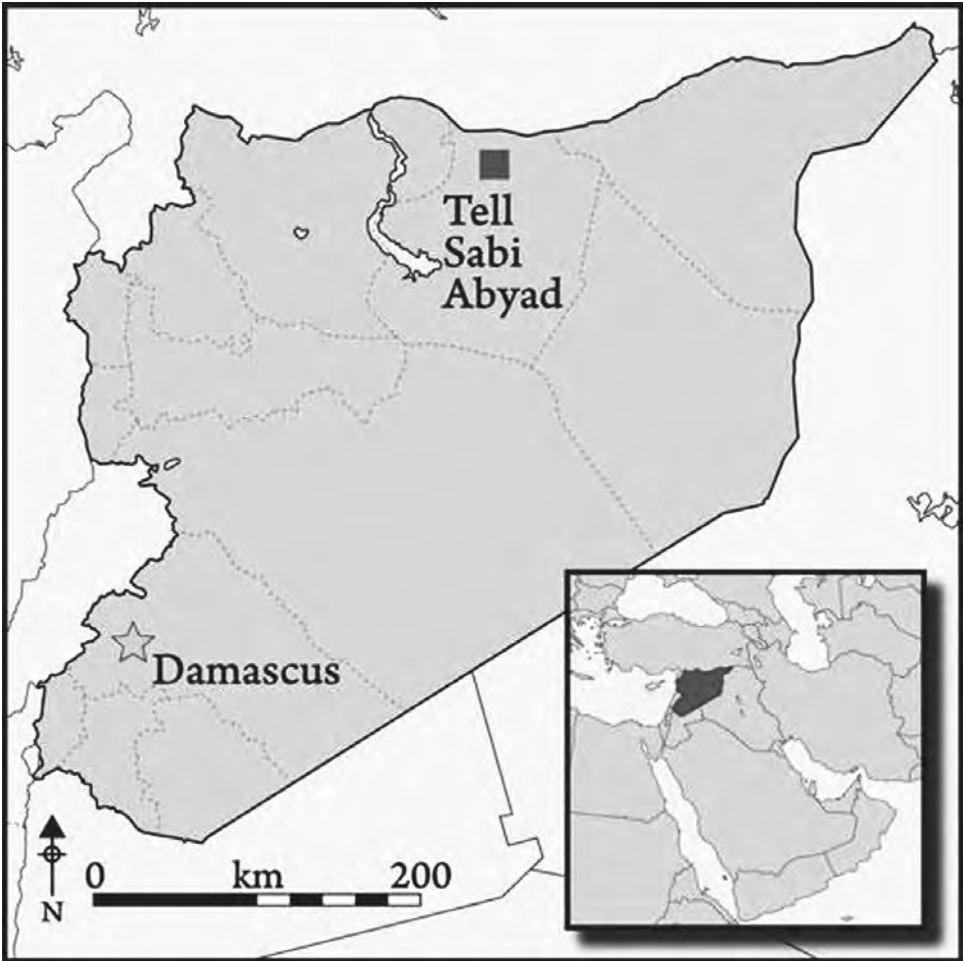
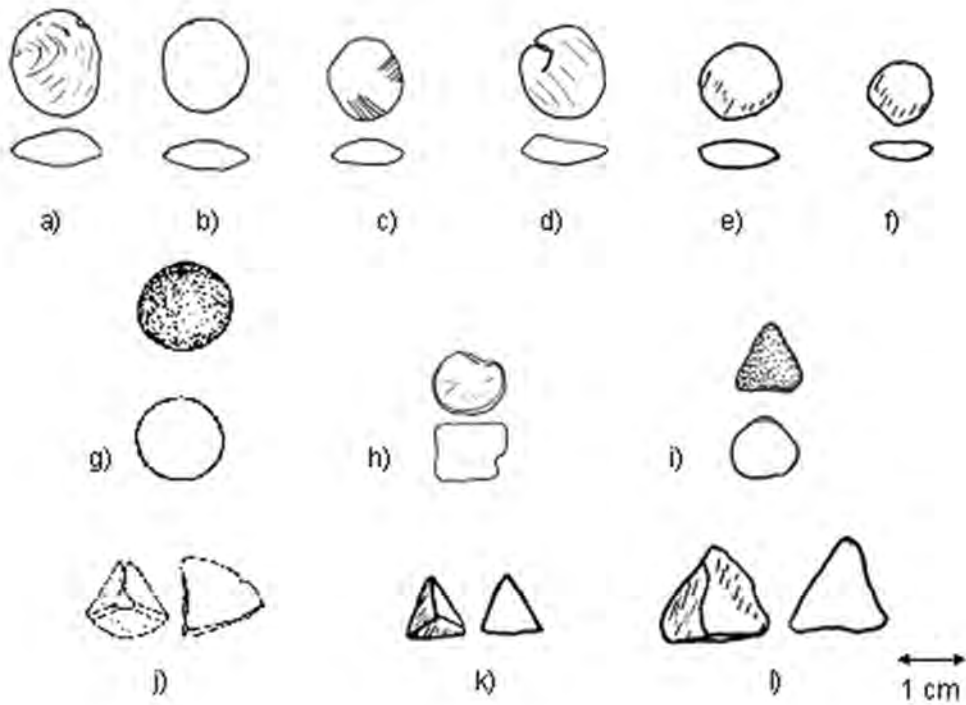


Fig.1

**Fig. 2**



**Fig. 3**

**Fig. 4**





**Fig. 5**

# East and West. Contacts across the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age

Gullög C. Nordquist

In the Bronze Age the Eastern Mediterranean was an international sphere with intricate interactions between different cultures, ethnic groups, and people speaking different languages, and it was a period of fast diachronical changes. Elite contacts and diplomatic exchange played an important role, as seen from the preserved archives, such as the one from El Amarna,<sup>1</sup> but also that on more mundane level interaction between people was important. Material goods and services were carried within and between the regions by traders, itinerant crafts persons, slaves and travellers. It is clearly observed in the material objects, which are often found in other cultural contexts than where they were produced. Ivory, Mesopotamian seals, fancy stone vases and ostrich eggs appear in Aegean contexts, for example in the Mycenaean graves, while Aegean pottery is found in Levantine and Egyptian areas and is depicted in Egyptian graves. Raw materials was part of the international trade, as were organic material, such as spices and textiles recorded on the Linear B tablets and in other archives.<sup>2</sup>

Human contacts also imply exchange and sharing of ideas, stories, songs and experiences, witness e.g. all ideas and innovations that became shared between the cultures in the region: writing and archives, iconographical motifs and mythological scenes, technical development such as the two-wheeled chariot drawn by horse power, not to mention ideas and ideologies. In fact, the Aegean palace cultures, as we see them, are unthinkable without these contacts.

But given this international world, there would also have been a need to define one's own group, culture and society and demarcate one's own identity against others, by stressing differences instead of similarities. This is something that we find in all human societies and groups in both past and modern times, as is all too evident in the daily news. Identity was marked out in clothing and material culture, as well as in religion and script whether Egyptian, Babylonian, Hittite or any other. So for example in Egyptian art the non-Egyptian Semitic, Nubian and other groups of people, including those from the Aegean are distinguished as the others, those that are different in hairstyles and clothes. On a smaller scale, in the Linear B records from the Mycenaean Pylos, groups of women are listed as *Aswiai*, "from Asia". They may be enslaved, but it has also been suggested that trained craftsmen were used as a commodity for exchange in the Eastern Mediterranean trading

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1 Cline 1994, 1995. Cf. the Ulu Burun ship wreck (Bass 1987, 1997, Nordquist 2007, and <https://nauticalarch.org/projects/uluburun-late-bronze-age-shipwreck-excavation>).

2 For overviews of non-Greek artifacts found in the Aegean region, see e.g. Lambrou-Philipsson 1990, and Cline 1994. Cf. Cline 1995 for the Minoans and Mycenaean abroad. See also Gale 1991, Cline 2005, and Bell 2005. Tartaron (2008: 129–129) gives an overview of recent research in Aegean trade systems.

systems.<sup>3</sup> On the well-known fresco from Pylos the opponents are different, more barbarian looking than the well-equipped Pylians (if indeed that is what they are).

Similarly, in the later Greek stories and myths objects and people are defined as non-Greek: the civilized Greeks fight non-humans, such as the centaurs, the non-male, such as the amazons and the non-Greeks, such as the Trojans. The non-Greek thus get a place within the Greek culture, since they are needed to define the Greek.<sup>4</sup>

Another type of border emerged in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the early researchers of Aegean cultures perceived and identified these as European and thus different to those further to the East.<sup>5</sup> No one denied the Eastern influences on the Minoan culture, but as a predecessor to the Mycenaean (and thus to Homer), in its turn a predecessor to the Classical Greek culture, the Minoans were “our” ancestors and therefore Europeans. Eastern influences on the Aegean cultures<sup>6</sup> could instead be seen to legitimate the Western political and archaeological presence in the Eastern Mediterranean region and that many archaeological finds were taken to Western museums in an appropriation of one’s own cultural heritage.

Did then a border between East and West exist in antiquity? By the time of Herodotus it seems so, since he in his Book 2 is eager to explain the strange habits and customs of the Eastern civilizations, and to point out the differences in cult behaviour to the Greek way. Egyptians have according to him customs and laws that are contrary for the most part to those of the rest of mankind (Hdt 2.35.2) and they “shun using Greek customs, and (generally speaking) the customs of all other peoples as well” (Hdt 2.91.1). By the Classical period the Athenian ideology reflected itself as a democratic, small scale and brave polis society against the despotic, rich, over large and powerful neighbours, especially after Marathon in 490 BC. These stereotypes, so well expressed in Greek literature, influenced the way later scholars regarded the easterner; these views were accepted as a truth.

Of course such ideas were challenged. Here must be mentioned Bernal’s *Black Athena* from 1991,<sup>7</sup> where he presented his theories about the Afro-Asiatic roots of Classical Greek civilization. Inspired by the lively, not to say heated, discussions that followed, scholars such as Sarah Morris<sup>8</sup> and others stress the oriental influences that are evident in Greek culture. They rightly point out that many predecessors to aspects of the Aegean cultures, in artefacts, as well as phenomena such as writing, motifs and iconography, symbols, administrative systems, social organization, myths and cults may be found in the Near Eastern and Egyptian civilizations. It is in relation to these eastern Mediterranean civilizations and the complex web of networks that existed between them that we must see the Aegean, that is, the prehistory of a nation that is an important part of what is now Europe.<sup>9</sup> To return to the

3 Michailidou & Voutsas 2005: 17–27. See also Bloedow 1997 for itinerant craftpersons.

4 Boardman 2002.

5 Fitton 2001. For example Hall (1928: 5): “The Minoan civilization was in part the ancestor of Greek culture, which is our own today: it is the firstfruits of the Greek genius that are here revealed to us: These Minoans were our own culture-ancestors”.

6 Hall (1928: 3-5): “It is the Eastern rather than the Western connexion of early Greek culture that will absorb our attention so far as foreign relations are concerned.”

7 Bernal 1991-2006, 2001. For discussion of the work, see e.g. Lefkowitz & MacLean Rogers 1996.

8 Morris 1992.

9 Preziosi & Hitchcock 1999. See also discussions in Davies & Schoefield 1995, and Cline & Harris-Cline 1998.

Greeks and the transition to the Iron Age in Greece, it is to quote Morris “*nor ... more Greek than ... oriental*”<sup>10</sup>. Our Eurocentric view is clearly too simplistic.

But with exchange of ideas or objects and the adoption of a certain phenomenon into a new context in a new society, the meaning of an object or idea is altered. “Similarity” as a basic concept basic in archaeology is far too often misused, but what is similarity? How is it expressed and what does it mean? Even if we can identify an “origin”, this does not explain how the object was viewed and interpreted at the place and time when it entered into the archaeological record. A single object may have passed through several hands and been viewed by many pairs of eyes before that. Also dissimilarity must be taken into account. A case in point are the wall paintings in Egyptian Avaris, in many respects Minoan in style, but also with many differences from wall paintings on Crete.<sup>11</sup>

It becomes problematic when modern attitudes are allowed to reflect the stereotypic ideas of the eastern neighbours in the Classical authors. The eastern civilizations are rich, learned and powerful but also despotic and conservative with an enslaved population, while Western societies are democratic, just and innovative. Then once again political aspects in modern times seek legitimization in past and the research of the past may become a weapon to diminish the importance of the modern opponents.

A complication is that our past is limited by the present in the shape of national antiquarian authorities, laws and ideologies, and political agendas influence what research is financed. A paneuropean view is encouraged within the EU, seen as “*a shared cultural area bringing people together while preserving their national and regional diversity*”,<sup>12</sup> is influential since it fund research, conservation and education. An example is when scholars from Northern Europe seek to connect to the Greek Bronze Age net-work, while fewer are interested in relations with, for example, less civilised the Italic or Iberian Bronze Age. This new diffusionism is based on interesting theoretical models, but often is the need to problematize contexts, dating, interpretation or reconstructions disregarded. It is also a risk to neglect cultural expressions that are NOT defined as European, but instead connected with traditions and cultures from outside the EU.

As Khatchadourian formulates it discussing paradigms in South Caucasian archaeology, Western classical archaeology (like archaic geography) at times labors under the model of cores and peripheries created by the *periodos* of Greece and Rome, the Russian tradition instead recognizes the entire known world of ancient sources as equally legitimate spaces for classical investigations and is not guided by the notion that they are studying a periphery of the classical world but rather another part of it, where non-Greek and non-Roman communities flourished.<sup>13</sup> Ancient Caucasus was in many ways more integrated in “antiquity” than northern Europe.

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10 Morris 1992: 124.

11 For discussion on the “Minoan” type frescos at Avaris, see Bietak 1992, Bietak, Marinatos & Palyvou 2007, and (M.C.) Shaw 1995, 1996, 2012.

12 See [http://www.coe.int/Cultural\\_cooperation/Heritage/A\\_common\\_heritage\\_/Campaign/](http://www.coe.int/Cultural_cooperation/Heritage/A_common_heritage_/Campaign/), Council of Europe (accessed 2004-01-07).

13 Khatchadourian 2008: 274.

Instead culture meetings need to be problematized, and in recent years several theoretical perspectives have been used in order to explore the complex systems in the Eastern Mediterranean. Agent perspective is one such. In this region people from various cultures moved and acted as individuals, groups, nations and “cultures”; it was an arena for war and expansions, for peaceful trading as well as adventure and piracy.<sup>14</sup> Behind the spread of ideas, theoretical terms as acculturation, influences, ethnicity and identity are people, the groups and individuals who acted, belonged to people and societies with different identities, and carried ideas, experiences and knowledge. They had reasons for their actions, based in their own traditions and modernities.<sup>15</sup>

Seen from another aspect, net-work theory aim to study the complex network of contacts in the Eastern Mediterranean and abroad during the Bronze Age and other periods, contacts that in their turn linked into other networks and thus into worlds far from the Mediterranean.<sup>16</sup> New finds and publication of old excavations in trading centres such as the Cretan harbour city of Kommos, suggested to have functioned as an emporium under control from the palace at Phaistos,<sup>17</sup> and the Bronze Age commercial centre at Kolonna on Aegina has given new material evidence for contacts. As foci for exchange and trade they attracted sailors, ship builders and traders, but also those crafts persons who could repair and equip the ships.<sup>18</sup>

Another such centre, namely Cyprus, has also been discussed in this context and especially the role of Enkomi. A Cypriot transit trade of mainland pottery, among other goods, has been suggested and large quantities of Mycenaean pottery in private households suggest that it was common among the inhabitants in Enkomi, in contrast to Ugarit, even if the palace there has been compared with the Mycenaean.<sup>19</sup> That close to 60 percent of all Cypro-Minoan texts have been found at Enkomi also point out the site as important. Sherratt and Sherratt even suggest that there was a long-term Cypriote strategy to dominate the trade, leading to a growing manipulation of trade goods and an entrepreneurial trade.<sup>20</sup> Traders and producers also seem to have had access to a flexible and usable weight system, which in its turn would encourage the further development of trading networks.<sup>21</sup>

But an object may be differently valued by different people, as becomes even more evident when it is moved to another context. An object with little economic value, may be valued as a souvenir or heirloom, or become an antique in a museum. The object is the same, but its economic, social and ideological value changes.<sup>22</sup> A number of seals were imported to Thebes in Boeotia, but their economic, social and religious values was disregarded in the bead maker’s workshop in the Mycenaean palatial settlement, where they became raw material for new beads.<sup>23</sup>

14 For an overview and discussion of the Cretan evidence, see e.g. Hamilakis 2002. See also Cline 1995.

15 As in e.g. Weiberg 2007.

16 Malkin 2011, Tartaron 2013, Bloedow 1997: 446-447.

17 Shaw & Shaw 1990-2005, Preziosi & Hitchcock 1999: 173, fig 111.

18 See further e.g. Laffineur & Greco 2005, Bass 1997: 168-170.

19 Soles 2005, Stampolidis & Karageorghis 2003.

20 Sherratt & Sherratt 2001: 15-38.

21 Albert & Parise 2005: 381-391. See also Crewe 2012.

22 Cline 2005: 45-51, Laffineur 2005: 53-58. See also discussion by Tartaron (2008: 108-110).

23 Younger 1989: 54, Porada 1981-82.

Together with the goods along the roads and shipping routes would also humans moved: traders and diplomats but also emigrants, asylum seekers, slaves or prisoners of war, people captured by robbers and pirates. Also their skills, ideas, knowledge and experiences reached new areas and they met new social and cultural contexts.<sup>24</sup>

It is important for all who study the past to accept it in its complexity, to refrain as far as possible from attaching the past to modern borders or modern pre-conceived concepts. To cite Hamilakis<sup>25</sup>

*“There is thus an urgent need to de-familiarise ourselves with the Minoan past ... to accept, accommodate and understand its otherness”.*

This is true not only of the Minoans, but of also of the other cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean and the people who shaped them.

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24 For a discussion of Minoan and Mycenaean craftpersons and craftsmanship, see e.g. Laffineur & Betancourt 1997 with further references.

25 Hamilakis 2002: 19.

# Urdalika, Ardericca and Dāliki

Daniel T. Potts

## Urdalika and Ardericca

The study of Assurbanipal's first campaign against Ummanaldasi (El. Huban-haltaš III<sup>1</sup>) — his fourth against the Elamites — commenced in 1870 when George Smith began publishing Assurbanipal's annals.<sup>2</sup> Of interest here is the list of twenty-nine settlements said to have been destroyed by Assurbanipal's army in the course of their Elamite adventure. For convenience we may use Borger's translation:

‘Auf meiner Rückkehr in Wohlergehen wendete ich, mit voller Hand, mein Joch nach Assyrien. (Die Städte) Gatudu, nochmals Gatudu, Daeba, Nadi', Dūr-Amnani, nochmals Dūr-Amnani, Ḥamānu, Taraqu, Ḥajūsi, Bīt-kunukki-bīssu, Bīt-Arrabi, Bīt-Imbī, Madaktu, Susa, Bubē, Kapar-Mardukšarrani, Urdalika, Algariga, Tūbu, Til-Tūbu, Dunšarri, Dūr-Undāsi, nochmals Dūr-Undāsi, Bubilu, Samunu, Bīt-Bunaku, Qabrina, nochmals Qabrina, Ḥara' – selbige Städte eroberte, verwüstete und zerstörte ich, verbrannte sie mit Gira (d.h. Feuer). Ihre Götter, ihre Einwohner, ihre Rinder, ihr Kleinvieh, ihren Besitz, ihr Eigentum, Karren, Pferde, Maultiere, Wehrgehänge, Kriegsgerät führte ich nach Assyrien fort.’<sup>3</sup>

Modern scholarship has tended to take a cautious approach to this list of toponyms. Based on the fact that the return of the army is mentioned in the first sentence of this passage, Gerardi suggested that the places mentioned were ‘plundered on the army's return’, while noting that our ‘inability to locate these cities prevents a determination of whether or not the army was moving from north to south or in some other direction’.<sup>4</sup> It seems illogical, however, to couple the reference to the Assyrian army's return journey with the list of destroyed towns. If all of these places were not destroyed until the army's return march, what had they been doing on the rest of their campaign? Moreover, it is surely contradictory to suggest that an army *en route* from Elam to Assyria would be marching from north to south. The normal route would be precisely the opposite, via Dēru (mod. Tell ‘Aqar, near Badra).<sup>5</sup> If we put to one side the notion that all of these places were attacked only in the course of the Assyrian army's exit, does the order in which they are presented offer anything like a campaign itinerary? In Gerardi's opinion, ‘Of the twenty-nine cities listed at the end of the account in Elam 4...eleven can be located regionally: five in or near Rashi and six in the region of the Kharkh [sic, Karkheh] river. These eleven are not grouped within the list regionally however...Cities

1 Waters (2000: 69–70) dated the campaign to 647 or 648 B.C. Cf. Tavernier 2004.

2 III R or Rawlinson & Smith 1870. Cf. Smith 1871: 213.

3 Borger 1996: 238–239.

4 Gerardi 1987: 190–191.

5 Zadok 1985: 118.

associated with Rashi: Hamanu (no. 7 in the list), Bit Arrabi (no. 11), Imbi (no. 12), Bube (no. 15), Bunak (no. 26). Cities associated with the Kharkh river region: Madaktu (no. 13), Susa (no. 14), Tubu (no. 19), Til-Tuba (no. 20), Din-Sharri (no. 21) and Bubilu (no. 24).<sup>6</sup> If these groupings are valid, then the names were clearly not listed in any kind of linear order even vaguely resembling the order in which they were attacked. Without going into such detail, Waters was, however, of the view that, while ‘the precise location of many of these cities is uncertain...those that are identifiable indicate that the conquered territories were along the Babylonian–Elamite border or in Khuzistan. There is no direct indication that Assyrians penetrated into the highlands of Elam during this campaign’.<sup>7</sup>

One name in this list — Urdalika — has attracted particular attention, not because anything is otherwise known about it<sup>8</sup> but because of an identification with a toponym attested in both Herodotus’ *Histories* (VI. 119) and Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (1.23, 24, 35). For Friedrich Delitzsch, writing in 1881, Urdalika’s location was still ‘unbestimmbar’.<sup>9</sup> Inexplicably, Jacques de Morgan considered Urdalika a town in Lower Elam located downstream from Susa.<sup>10</sup> Unexpectedly, however, we find Urdalika identified with ‘das Arderikka Herodots’ in the anonymous entry on Susiana in the thirteenth edition of F.A. Brockhaus’ *Conversations-Lexikon*, published in 1886.<sup>11</sup> This unattributed identification anticipated by several years an identical suggestion made by Jules Oppert who was apparently ignorant of the Brockhaus entry. Oppert’s inspiration was the discovery of the Rassam Prism in the North Palace of Kūyūnjik in 1878 and he is universally, if incorrectly, credited with being the originator of this idea.<sup>12</sup>

The relevant passage in Herodotus (6.119) concerning Ardericca has been discussed by generations of ancient historians. Herodotus says,

‘As soon as they landed in Asia, Datis and Artaphrenes brought the Eretrian captives to Susa. Before they had been enslaved Darius nursed a fierce anger against the Eretrians on the grounds that they were the first to take hostile action against him, but when he saw them brought before him and in his power he took no punitive action against them but settled them in land of his own, in a place called Arderikka in the territory of Kissia. The place is 210 stades distant from Susa and 40 stades distance from the well which produces three different products; asphalt, salt and oil. These are extracted in the following manner: liquid is drawn

6 Gerardi 1987: 227, n. 146.

7 Waters 2000: 72.

8 The reference to Urdalika in the Annals is unique. Andreas Fuchs suggested that Urdalika may have been referred to in a Neo-Assyrian letter (CT 43: 532) but Simo Parpola has restored the broken name in question as Malak/ka. See Fuchs & Parpola 2001: 76.

9 Delitzsch 1881: 328.

10 de Morgan 1896: 233, ‘Ville du Bas-Èlam située en aval de Suse’.

11 Anonymous 1886: 382.

12 Jensen 1890: 199, n. \*, ‘Siehe zu dieser Identification Oppert in der Zeitschrift für Assyriologie III, 422’. Weissbach (1896: 614), wrote, ‘Oppert... glaubt den Name in den keilinschriftlich bezeugten *Urdalika*...wiederzuerkennen’. Likewise Herzfeld (1968: 12), said, ‘J. Oppert recognized the identity of Arderikka and Urdalika, mentioned by Assurbānīpal in 640 B.C. among 29 towns of the Elamite Empire – not Elam itself – destroyed during that campaign’. Both Sachau (1897: 60) and Bezold (1899: 2208) accepted the identity of Urdalika and Ardericca but neither attributed the idea to a particular source.



from the well by swing beam to which is attached half of a wine skin instead of a bucket. Using this as a dip, they draw off the liquid and then pour it into a receptacle from which it flows into another receptacle and there the three substances separate. The asphalt and the salt harden immediately but the oil [lacuna] ... the Persians called oil rhadinake and the oil is dark and has a strong smell. It was in this place Darius settled the Eretrians and they have held this territory up until my time and have preserved their ancient language.'

Scholars have noted the similarities between this account and Strabo's reference to 'Eretrians, who were carried off by the Persians' and settled further north, in Gordyene (*Geog.* 16.1.25).<sup>13</sup> It has also been suggested that Quintus Curtius' reference to 'Gortyae, gentis quidem Euboicae' (*Hist. Alex.* 4.12.11), amongst Darius III's forces at Gaugamela, is a reference to the descendants of the same Eretrian deportees. According to Philostratus' apparently fictional account of a visit to the Eretrians by Apollonius, they had been brought to Kissia 'from Euboea by Darius five hundred years ago...and said to have been treated at their capture like the fishes that we saw in the dream; for they were netted in, so they say, and captured one and all' (*Vita Apollonii* 1.23).<sup>14</sup> The *Palatine Anthology* contains this: 'Plato; on the Eretrians who lie at Ecbatana: To lie here amidst the plains of Ecbatana we once left the sounding waves of the Aegean. Fare thee well renowned Eretria once our country, fare thee well Euboea's neighbor Athens, fare thee well dear Sea'. Diogenes Laertius (*Lives of the Philosophers [Plato]*), wrote, 'It is also said that the lines on the Eretrians who were swept into captivity are his: We are Eretrians of Euboea, but we lie near Susa, alas, how far from home!'<sup>15</sup> Finally, according to Justin (*Epitome* 11.14.11-12), after capturing Persepolis, 'Alexander encountered some 800 Greeks, who had been mutilated and kept in captivity. They asked him to avenge them — as he had avenged Greece — for the barbarous treatment they had received from the enemy. Given the opportunity of returning home, they chose rather to accept a land-grant, for they feared that instead of bringing joy to their relatives they might cause revulsion by their appearance'. Some scholars have seen in this a link with the account of the Eretrians re-settled at Ardericca.<sup>16</sup> There may even be some conflation and confusion in Diodorus (17.110.4-5) who wrote of Boeotians in Sittacene who were 'moved in the time of Xerxes' campaign, but still have not forgotten their ancestral customs. They are bilingual and speak like the natives in the one language, while in the other they preserve most of the Greek vocabulary, and they maintain some Greek practices'.<sup>17</sup>

13 Cooley 1844: 237, 'Strabo says, that the Eretrians were transported to Gordyene; but he is mistaken'.

14 See the extensive discussion in Grosso 1958 and Penella 1974. Surprisingly, Walker (2004: 272), seems to take Philostratus at his word when he writes, 'A memory of the captured Eretrians, who were exiled to a locality near Babylon called Kissia, is recorded in the late writer Philostratos. He describes their grave markers, significantly, for such a remote inland place, decorated with reliefs of ships commemorating their naval traditions. Plato's epitaphs also emphasise the sea-faring origins of these lonely exiles, far from the "deep-sounding" Aegean. Descendants of the exiles were later involved on the Persian side in the Battle of Gaugamela: "After these marched the Gortyae, really an Euboian race who formerly followed the Medes but were now degenerate and ignorant of their native customs. Strabo likewise notes the presence of Eretrians in Gordyene, the province of Mesopotamia. There can be no doubt that they were descendants of Eretrians exiled by Dareios after the fall of the city'. Cf. Atkinson 1980: 408.

15 <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text>.

16 Yardley & Heckel 1997: 54.

17 Briant 1996: 739-740; Yardley & Heckel 1997: 174; Biffi 2002: 168.

Some scholars believe that Herodotus himself visited Ardericca.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, because Herodotus used the term *stathmos* (station) to describe Ardericca, scholars have for centuries assumed that it was ‘one of the resting-places’ on the Achaemenid Royal Road from Sardis to Susa<sup>19</sup>, but there is otherwise nothing either explicit or implicit in Herodotus’ text that supports such an assumption.<sup>20</sup> Most scholars have chosen to focus on the association of Ardericca with Susa and an ‘asphalt’ or bitumen source in their attempts to suggest a location. Undoubtedly the most influential suggestion made in this regard was that of H.C. Rawlinson who, in 1839, wrote:

‘I left Dizfūl with a small party, and without baggage, for Khorram-ābad....I marched the first day 8 farsakhs, to the plain of Kīr A’b (the bitumen water). The road...descended among some very steep ravines to the little plain of Kīr A’b, which lay at the extreme roots of the great range between the stream of Balād-rūd and the mountains. I was not a little surprised to detect among these steep ravines the evident traces of a broad paved road, leading into the secluded plain of Kīr A’b, which appeared to come from the direction of Sūs. I also found a heap of mounds in the plain, the remains of an ancient town; and united these indications with the bitumen pits, which abound in the neighbourhood, and from which the place has obtained its name, I could not but fancy that I beheld the site of the Eretrian colony of Ardericca. It is true that the distance in a right line from Susa is too much to accord with the 210 stadia of Herodotus...but, in all other respects, it will agree sufficiently well both with his account and with that of Damis [i.e. in Apollonius’ account]. The liquid bitumen is collected at the present day in the same way as is related by Herodotus: the ground is impregnated with this noxious matter, and the waters are most unwholesome.’<sup>21</sup>

Unsurprisingly, support for Rawlinson’s location at Kir Ab came early on from his brother, the Camden Professor of Ancient History at Oxford (1861–1889), George Rawlinson.<sup>22</sup> Nor is it surprising, given Rawlinson’s standing, that many other scholars adopted the same position.<sup>23</sup> Ghirshman’s alternative, attributed to unnamed ‘prospecteurs géologues’ of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, that Ardericca (Urdalika) was identical to Ain Serail, ‘dans les environs de Suse’<sup>24</sup>, has been largely ignored. There is, however, another possibility that suggests itself.

## Dāliki

The toponyms Urdalika and Ardericca have never been seriously examined in light of either contemporary or modern toponymy. Based on its association with several identifiable Elamite settlements in Assurbanipal’s annals, Urdalika could well be the Assyrian rendering

18 See e.g. Matzat 1872: 448.

19 Grote 1853: 362. Cf. Larcher 1786: 36; Chaumont 1984: 68.

20 Schmitt (1987: 385) suggests that, in this context, *stathmos* might simply refer to a farmstead.

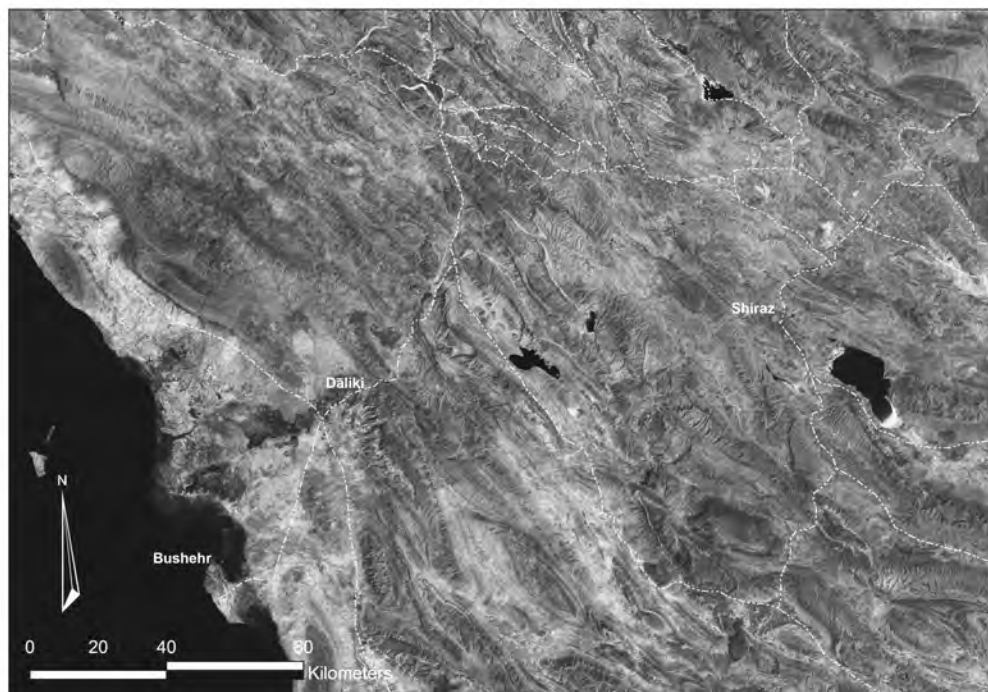
21 Rawlinson 1839: 93–94.

22 Rawlinson 1862: 409, n. 2.

23 For example, Peckham 1885: 3; Weissbach 1896: 614; Amerie 1925: 248; Waring 1965: 189–190. For Kir Ab’s position on one of the main routes between Dezful and Khorramabad, see Schwarz 1929: 924.

24 Ghirshman 1950: 218.

of an Elamite toponym ending in *-lika*, like Hamantallika (*Šha-man-tal-li-ka<sub>4</sub>*). A number of modern toponyms in southwestern Iran, of which Susa (mod. Sūs/Šūs; Sum. Šušina, Akk./El. Šušim/Šušān) is perhaps the best known, clearly represent survivals of much older forms.<sup>25</sup> Another is Mehrān, near the Iran-Iraq border, the *Me/ihrānu* of Esarhaddon's inscriptions.<sup>26</sup> A name which, in my opinion, may well represent an Elamite survival in slightly altered form is *Dāliki*, a town located on the road from Bushehr, on the Persian Gulf coast, to Kazerun and, eventually, Shiraz.



**Fig. 1:** Map showing the location of Dāliki (map courtesy Dr. C.A. Petrie, Cambridge University).

To my knowledge the similarity of *Dāliki* and *Urdalika* has never been noted before. What makes the suggestion doubly attractive, moreover, is the fact that Dāliki is situated close to a celebrated bitumen seep and thus satisfies one of the major requirements of an identification with Ardericca. It is true that its location does not conform to the distance from Susa stipulated by Herodotus. On the other hand, neither does the location of Kir Ab, as Rawlinson himself readily admitted. Rawlinson's authority may have given the impression that bitumen seeps are rare in southwestern Iran, making Kir Ab's candidacy for the site of ancient Urdalika/Ardericca even more compelling. In fact, this is not the case, as analyses of bitumen

25 Here I am thinking of names attested in cuneiform sources, not names derived from Middle Persian forerunners of Sasanian date.

26 Zadok 1981-82: 136; Leichty 2011: 344, s.v. Mihrānu.

and bituminous artifacts from sites in southwestern Iran have shown.<sup>27</sup> It seems clear, however, that the bitumen sources exploited in antiquity were not limited to those that have been sampled in recent programs of scientific analysis. Moreover, it is interesting that those sources identified in 1874 by J.L. Schlimmer as the most important in Iran<sup>28</sup> are not the same as those identified by modern analyses as having been used in the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Because of its position between Bushehr and Shiraz, Dāliki has been visited by countless Europeans and is mentioned in an enormous number of travel accounts. Although it was noted in the course of several botanical investigations<sup>29</sup>, it is best known for the nearby bitumen seep that was investigated, unsuccessfully, for oil by Messrs. Hotz and the Persian Mining Rights Corporation following the granting of an initial concession for exploration in 1884. The selection of excerpted sources appended below, extending from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, leaves no doubt that Dāliki's bitumen seep is a well-documented natural feature, one that is attested much more often in the literature than that of Kir Ab. This fact, and the name Dāliki itself, suggest that it is a serious candidate for the site of ancient Urdalika/Ardericca.

### **Selection of sources on Dāliki in chronological order**

**Francklin 1788:** 17–18 — ‘encamped near the village of Dowlakie....At Dowlakie...we were almost scorched to death with heat’.

**Scott Waring 1807:** 17–18 — ‘Our Munzil-Gah [halting place] was at Dalikee...abounding in gardens of date trees, which afford a slight shelter from the scorching rays of the sun. To the southward of the town are several springs of warm water, and to the north-east a small stream...This stream issues from a cleft at the bottom of a hill, and affords excellent water to the inhabitants, a luxury not very common in this part of Persia; near it is a stone building, apparently of European architecture; and upon my noticing this, I was informed that many years ago it was inhabited by an European stationed here for the purpose of forwarding packets from Sheeraz to Reeshire. Dalikee is a respectable village, protected by a fort tenable against horse....In the evening I rode to some pits called Nufti Seeah, and found them to contain black naphtha. There were a number of pits; and the ground all about so tenacious, as to make it no easy matter for my horse to extricate himself from it. It is used by the Persians...for lamps...and occasionally is given to their camels’.

**Morier 1816:** 87 — ‘The site of Daulakee is marked by a break in the mountains...at the foot of which ran a stream of mineral water, of a most sulphureous smell. Further on we crossed other streams of the same quality; the heat of one of which, as it gushed from under

27 Connan & Deschesne 1996; Connan 1999; Gregg et al. 2007; Connan et al. 2008; Connan & Van de Velde 2010.

28 Schlimmer 1874: 62–63, s.v. ASPHALTUM.

29 Edmondson & Lack 2006: 580; Gauba 1949–50: 14. The French royal botanist André Michaux was also in this area in 1783/4. As Ainsworth (1846: 481) noted when he was near Dasht-e Arjan, ‘I observed a superb species of *Michauxia*, differing totally from the only known species, and which is the more curious as Andrew Michaux himself travelled this road’. For Michaux’s travels in southern Iran see Hamy 1911: 30. At the foot of the mountains near Bushehr Michaux noted, ‘Il sort en plusieurs endroits du bitume du pied des montagnes qui regardent le midy’, an oblique reference to Dāliki.

the rocks, was almost scalding. We brought home specimens of the incrustation which the spray of the bubbles left on the surrounding rocks. The bed of the stream was mostly of the colour of sulphur, although there were patches here and there of a copper hue. Still a little further one, on the left of the road, are two springs of naphtha [sic]. The oil swims on the surface of the water, and the peasantry take it off with the branch of a date-tree, and collect it into small holes around the spring ready for their immediate use. They daub the camels all over with it in the spring, which preserves their coats, and prevents a disease in the skin, which is common to them. The huts in the village of Daulakee, as we rode through it, appeared mostly to be covered on the tops with the entwined leaves of their date-trees, while the better houses are built of mud and terraced. The mosque was the most creditable building that met our eye in the whole place; its interior seemed neatly arranged in arches, and preserved clean with a white stucco. There was a little bath at the extremity of the town. The customary fort (for such are found in most of these villages) was situated in the middle of the huts’.

**Johnson 1818:** 30–32 — ‘We arrived at Daulekee soon after seven, and put up in an excellent caravansera....About 2 1/2 miles from Daulekee is perceived a very strong smell of the black naphtha, petroleum, or perhaps asphaltum; and at two miles the road is traversed by a greenish coloured stream of lukewarm water, having a salt and rather acid taste....In one spot, the water, on its descent along the face of the hill, has left a white powder, which on tasting I found to be sharp and acid. It is used for acidulating water to drink, which with the admixture of any sweetening ingredient is denominated *sherbet*. This term, applied generally to every beverage consisting of water, holding in solution a sweet and an acid, is more appropriate than that of lemonade in its extended acceptance....I collected some of the salt deposited on the margins of the first mentioned streams, and some portions of the black naphtha from the pits, which I shall deposit with the Geological Society of London...There is a very considerable plantation of date-trees, extending from S.W. to N.W. at the distance of about a mile and a half from Daulekee. The trees grow to a very superior size, and the dates which they produce are so prepared as to be softer and more luscious than any others that I ever tasted. This is the only place at which they are so prepared and preserved, and they are hence carried for sale all over Persia, where they are held in high estimation....The black naphtha, already mentioned is applied to a variety of useful purposes. It is found efficacious as a remedy for the scabies or mange in camels, being rubbed upon the parts affected when shorn of the hair. Cloths dipped in it are formed into flambeaux for weddings and other festivities. The tepid streams in the district where it is found, are reported to be highly salubrious, and strangers travelling this way rae recommended to bathe in them’.

**Martyn 1819:** 372–373 — ‘The next morning we arrived at the foot of the mountains, at a place where we seemed to have discovered one of nature’s ulcers. A strong suffocating smell of naphtha announced something more than ordinarily foul in the neighbourhood. We saw a river: what flowed in it, it seemed difficult to say, whether it were water or green oil; it scarcely moved, and the stones which it laved it left of a greyish colour, as if its foul touch had given them the leprosy. Our place of encampment this day was a grove of date trees, where the atmosphere, at sunrise was ten times hotter than the ambient air’.

**Alexander 1827:** 102–103 — ‘The road to Dalkee is exceedingly stony, and at eight miles from it is a capital sporting tract, with a date jungle and swamp on the left. Our olfactory nerves were assailed by an insufferable sulphurous effluvia. Shortly after we crossed several naphtha and sulphur streams, which issued from the hills round the bases of which the road winds. At the fountain-head the water is lukewarm. The streams leave on their margin a whitish grey earth, which is of an acid and saltish taste: it is termed *gil-i-toorsh*, or sour clay [*gel-e torsh*].<sup>30</sup> The taste is probably occasioned by a mixture of alum and sal-ammoniac: it is used in acidulating sherbet. I brought away a small quantity of this substance for my esteemed preceptor, Professor Jameson.<sup>31</sup> The petroleum is collected in shallow pits, and is used medicinally, being applied to the sores of camels and other quadrupeds. The timber of which the roofs of the houses are constructed is dipped in it, to prevent the attacks of insects, &c....Dalkee is an inconsiderable place. Near it are some interesting remains of a fire-temple and fort. We were here regaled by delicious melons and *moss* [*māst*, yoghurt or curdled milk] (acidulated milk); the bread which we lived upon was wheaten, rolled out into large cakes as thin as wafers. The thermometer this day...was 100°’.

**Serristori 1834:** 383 — ‘Daliki...Village de 1,000 maisons, ou 5,000 habitants. Il est considérable et défendu par un fort. On y voit plusieurs jardins plantés de palmiers, et des sources d’eaux chaudes. Une petite rivière le traverse’.

**Ainsworth 1846:** 475–476: ‘We had passed Barazgun, the residence of Ali Khan, who is considered to be one of the most powerful chieftains in the Dashtistan, and were approaching Dalaki, not far from the foot of the hills.... Dalaki is celebrated for its bitumen fountains, this useful substance oozing out upon the surface of the water in several distinct springs or wells at the foot of the hills, where it is carefully collected by the proprietors’.

**Goldsmid 1874:** 183–184: “‘Immediately on leaving Bushahr,” to quote Stewart’s<sup>32</sup> own words, in describing this section of his route, “a circuit is made to the S.E. to avoid the arm of the sea lying between the Bushahr promontory and the mainland. Here there is an extensive tract of salt marsh which continues about fifteen miles to the desolate village of Chāhgodak. From this point to Dāliki, nearly sixty miles from Bushahr, the road passes over a tolerably fertile and undulating plain, dotted with several large plantations of date-trees, and with flourishing villages here and there. Near Dāliki, as the mountains are approached, the ground becomes broken by strong water-courses and ravines. The village, which lies at the foot of the bare western face of the first chain of hills, is an inconsiderable place, and remarkable only for the sulphurous streams and the springs of naphtha in its neighbourhood. It is very probable that the abundant produce of these springs might be turned to most valuable account, here and elsewhere, in preparing timber and protecting it both from natural decay and the ravages of insects. Naphtha is nowhere else so plentiful as here, but it is found in many parts

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30 Turner 1828.

31 Robert Jameson, Regius Professor of Natural History, Lecturer on Mineralogy and Keeper of the Museum at the University of Edinburgh.

32 Colonel Patrick Stewart, of the Bengal Engineers, Director-General of the Indo-European Telegraph. See Low 1877: 412. ‘For ascertaining the feasibility of erecting land lines through Mesopotamia and Persia, to meet the Mekran Telegraph at Gwadur, or Churbar’, he was ‘sent from India on a special mission to Persia’ in 1862. See Bright & Bright 1898: 516.

of the route about to be described, and is everywhere collected and used by the Persians, solely as an external remedy for sores or wounds on cattle and horses. From its position we were not surprised to hear that Dāliki in the summer is almost unbearable”’.

**Mason 1878:** 144 — ‘On Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1859, I started from Bushire...Daliki is an inconsiderable place lying at the foot of the first chain of hills, and only remarkable for the sulphurous streams and springs of naphtha in the neighbourhood. It is said by the natives to be the hottest place in the world. ...The dates here are large and fine, and are considered the best in Persia, and are watered from the naphtha springs. All caravans for Shiraz start from Daliki....European travellers who stop at Daliki are always visited by those who are really sick, or believe themselves so...the hukkeem, or village medical man...often mixes bowls of physic holding a quart or more for those who are *in extremis*, and whose sole remedy for a broken limb often lies in the application of “moomiyai,” a kind of petroleum, of which there are whole pits at Daliki, strong smelling, and pouring their vile refuse into the fine date groves which form the most pleasing feature of the place’.

**Ballantine 1879:** 74, 76–78 — ‘The glimmerings of dawn were barely traceable on the highest peaks of the mountains when the barking of dogs in the distance announced our approach to Dalaki, — a pitiable collection of hovels, — a place we were strongly advised to avoid, on account of its proverbial heat and insalubrity...Late in the afternoon, I mounted my horse...wishing to examine the petroleum springs. I found, on both sides of the road, broad-mouthed depressions in the ground, — regular pitfalls, — containing a thick, blackened mass of offensive bitumen, from two to four feet below surface level, several feet in depth, with apparently no outlet, and presenting a very peculiar appearance. There were a number of springs of water, that carried on their surface a continuous film of oil, which is borne along a few hundred ayrs to the Dalak River, — a large stream that empties into the Persian Gulf, — not many miles distant. The oil thus contributed to the waters of the river and gulf amounts to several thousand gallons of petroleum every day. This is the opinion of the civil surgeon at Bushire, as expressed in his printed report, published by the British Government<sup>33</sup>....On inquiring of the people in the village what they did with the naphth, they replied, “Nothing, save to apply it as an ointment for sores and bruises.” Indeed, its healing properties have justly great celebrity, as it is carried far and wide, and used with great efficacy on man and beast.’

**Anderson 1880:** 46–47 — ‘Leaving Borasjoon for Daliki, the road grows more interesting. On approaching the latter place date plantations tend to Orientalize the scene. Naphtha springs abound around Daliki, but the revenue derived from this source is not great, amounting to about £700 sterling annually.<sup>34</sup> The heat at Daliki is greater than in any other part of Persia. The night we rested there, our thermometer showed at sunset in the shade 116° Fahrenheit [46.66° C.]’.

<sup>33</sup> This was wildly overestimated.

<sup>34</sup> In 1889 the asphalt yield was 80–100 l. per day. See Blumer 1922: 344.

**Anonymous 1885:** 1147<sup>35</sup> — ‘The Dutch firm of Hotz and Son has obtained concession to work the petroleum or naphtha springs of Daliki, and borings have been made. The quality and quantity of oil obtainable is not yet known’.

**Curzon 1892:** 225 — ‘Around the village of Daliki, which is small and wholly undistinguished, grow a number of plants, known as ghark... Soon after leaving the village, the road crosses a stream whose waters run an emerald green from the sulphur with which they are impregnated; while on the stagnant pools floats a bituminous scum. Sulphuretted fumes also fill the air and invade the nostrils. The Rev. H. Martyn described the place in 1810 (see above) as ‘one of Nature’s ulcers;’ but the acerbity of the metaphor may be attributed to the fact that when the excellent missionary employed it his thermometer was standing at 126°. A little below in the plain is a bitumen pit, from which the natives have long been in the habit of collecting that substance, principally as a prescription for the sore backs of camels, and for the smearing of boat and roof timbers. It was for the working of the petroleum springs suspected to exist here that a concession was procured from the Persian Government, in 1884, by Messrs. Hotz, of Bushire. Their boring was unsuccessful; but the experiment has since been renewed by the Persian Mining Rights Corporation, whose engineers have sunk a bore to a depth of over eight hundred feet, so far without much result, but who are not likely to leave the region until its oleiferous capacities, be they great or small, have been thoroughly tested. Several other streams also flow here from the mountains; and the largest of them meanders down to the plains, and is there lost in a feverish-looking swamp. Beyond, a noble belt of date-palms supplies relief to the eye, and a living to the villagers of Daliki’.

**Birks 1895:** 50 — ‘Round Daliki there is a splendid palm-forest, which would be grand if it were not so low. The naphtha-springs are most unfragrant and abundant, but turned to no account’.

**Miles 1886:** 29 — ‘The attempt to work the naphtha springs at Daliki mentioned in the last report has been abandoned’.

**Redwood 1896:** 165 — ‘Some experimental boring has been carried out by the Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation at Daliki, on the Persian Gulf, 35 miles from Bushire. In this locality, petroleum, in various states of constency, is found, both on the surface and at different depths. In a well sunk to a depth of 124 feet, the principal strata pierced were alternations of sandstones and “rock,” with blue clay, and black semi-solid bitumen was encountered, together with small quantities of liquid petroleum... Two samples of the oil from Daliki, which is collected from the warm springs and sold by the natives, were examined by the author’.

**Neuburger and Noalhat 1901:** 151 — ‘The shores of the Persian Gulf run along the southern extremities of the Persian oil field. Daliki is the most important of the stations of this portion of the oil field. There is an establishment here which has commenced work in a rational manner. Daliki petroleum is heavy and bituminous’.

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35 On Hotz see also Witkam 1998 with a photograph of the oil well at Daliki.



**Struthers 1901:** 497 — ‘At Daliki, about 50 miles from Bushire, the natives collect nearly 20 gal. of oil per diem in a shallow reservoir constructed near a hot sulphur spring at the foot of a limestone hill. The oil is of a yellow color and clear, with an agreeable aromatic odor. The sp. gr. is 0.81 and it burns with a clear smokeless flame in lamps’.

**Sykes 1902:** 315 — ‘To Daliki the track was level but very stony....Just before reaching this stage, we crossed a stream smelling strongly of sulphur and running emerald green. Unsuccessful borings for petroleum have been made on this spot, but so far the only product consists of bitumen, which is used for dressing camels’ backs and for horses’ hoofs. Daliki lies in a charming date-grove, and is on the banks of the Shápúr river, an important body of water, but undrinkable at this point....Daliki is one of those choice spots...which, lying at the foot of ranges, can get no air, and are in consequence very much worse than stations in the open.’

**Lorimer 1908:** 362 — ‘A village in the Dashtistān district of the Persian Coast, and a stage on the Būshehr-Shirāz route; it is situated at an elevation of 400 feet about 13 miles north-north-east of Burāzjān, being adjoined by hills on the north-east and surrounded on the other sides by date-plantations. The heat in summer is excessive. Dālīki consists of about 35 houses of bilingual Arabs, who are Shi’ahs and are said to be the descendants of immigrants from Bahrain; they cultivate dates, wheat and barley and own about 40 mules and 40 donkeys. A short distance to the south of the village is a green sulphurous stream. A bitumen pit exists in the plain about 4 miles from Dālīki and 1 mile from Qarāwal Khāneh, and a deep boring has been made for petroleum by European concessionaires, but without success.’

**Pilgrim 1908:** 62 — ‘At Dālīki alluvial hills are absent and the main range, composed of rocks of the Fars series, rises sheer from the plain. The total thickness of rocks belonging to the Fars series seen here is about 15,000 feet. The basal gypsum beds, which are readily distinguished at a distance by their brilliant red colours or by the white appearance of the gypsum, are as a rule the only beds in which the bending over of the strata to the south-east is shown; the south-easterly dipping portion of the overlying beds has invariably been denuded, and the scarped face is left with the low gypsiferous hills hanging on at the base. Arising out of them at Dālīki is a hot spring at a temperature of 70° C. laden with sulphuretted hydrogen and depositing small amounts of sulphur and bitumen’.

# The Nergal Gate and the South-West Palace at Nineveh: appearances and disappearances in the late Ottoman Period

Julian Edgeworth Reade

## Introduction

One thing I was told about Olof, shortly before I met him for the first time in Copenhagen in 1981, was that he knew everything there was to know in the discipline of Assyriology; I am unsure if he yet did, but the trajectory was fixed. I was also told that the discipline had recently been abolished by Royal Decree and that Olof was therefore destined to be the Last Swedish Assyriologist. In the event, displaying good nature, sensitivity and fine scholarship, he has contributed not only to the survival of Assyriological studies in Sweden but also to the resurrection of the ancient Assyrian capital city of Ashur, as excavated by Walter Andrae and his colleagues.

The histories of Nineveh, Nimrud and Khorsabad in the late Ottoman period present problems that are different in nature but at least comparable in scale. There are uncertainties over what happened not only during but also in the intervals between the official excavations, and over the ways in which structures and objects found in these cities have appeared and disappeared, have hidden in museum storerooms, and have even reappeared after being destroyed. The present paper is an exercise in clarifying the process and aftermath of some of the excavations at Nineveh. It is consequently also a presentation of competing modern attitudes to ancient buildings and artefacts. I hope Olof may find something he does not already know.

The principal actors at Nineveh during the last century or so of Ottoman rule were subjects of the British or Ottoman empires. This paper is mainly based on documentation from one side only — some of the many accounts written by British excavators, travellers and government staff. Sources remaining unutilised include the reports and correspondence of British and other western diplomats in Ottoman Mesopotamia, the archives of organisations like the Anglican Church, the Church Missionary Society and the long-established Dominican community in Mosul, additional travel books and articles, and unpublished records preserved by families and libraries throughout the British dominions, Europe and the United States. Western sources should be compared with others, if they exist, written in Turkish (perhaps archived in Istanbul), Arabic, Syriac and so on, by Ottoman government officials and by members of the diverse communities then resident in and around Mosul.

## The Nergal Gate

The Nergal Gate is or was situated in the northern wall of Nineveh, and was built around 700 BC (Fig. 1). It appears to have been the only gate in the main city wall protected by colossal

sculptures; many details of the carving were left incomplete. Perhaps the sculptures were an afterthought: Sennacherib might have added them long after the gate was built, intending to add them to other gates too, and the project might have been interrupted by his death or another reason. The gate was burned, presumably in 612 when the city was sacked. Its archaeological history is peculiar.

In 1820 Claudius J. Rich was told that “some years ago, an immense bas-relief, representing men and animals, covering a grey stone of the height of two men, was dug up from a spot a little above the surface of the ground. All the town of Mousul went out to see it, and in a few days it was cut up or broken to pieces.”<sup>1</sup> In 1846 the spot was shown to Henry Layard by an aged stone-cutter who had been employed to break the sculpture, and Layard duly excavated an entrance “formed by two winged figures, which had been purposely destroyed. The legs and the lower part of the tunic were alone preserved. The proportions were gigantic, and the relief higher than that of any sculpture hitherto discovered in Assyria.”<sup>2</sup> The area was reexcavated for the Iraq authorities by Menhal Jabbar in the 1990s (as Menhal mentioned to me and as Muzahim Hussein has kindly confirmed), and part of a winged figure facing left, photographed in 2001 by John Russell who has kindly contributed Fig. 2, is surely one of the two seen by Layard in 1846.

According to Layard the stones had been used to repair a bridge.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps so, but Rich says this not of the Nergal Gate sculptures but of stones removed from a tomb on Kuyunjik, the much larger principal mound of Nineveh.<sup>4</sup> Modern builders, like the Assyrians before them, prefer to use the local limestone (calcium carbonate) in positions exposed to water. There are limestone blocks by the thousand in the ruins of Nineveh—one could write a dissertation on the origins, ethics and economics of Sennacherib’s public works—and they have been a most valuable resource: Felix Jones mentions the extraction of blocks from the Shamash Gate area in 1852,<sup>5</sup> for instance, while George Smith records that the basement of the North Palace on Kuyunjik was used as a quarry for the main Mosul bridge.<sup>6</sup> People could have taken plenty of limestone from the Nergal Gate too, but all the actual sculptures recorded in this gate, like most other Assyrian sculptures and carved wall-panels, are made of alabaster or gypsum (calcium sulphate). This material is soft and easily carved but unsatisfactory for structures like bridges, as water soon dissolves it (hence concerns over the safety of the modern Eski Mosul dam, whose foundations rest partly on gypsum strata). An alternative use for alabaster is that it can be burned to provide excellent gypsum plaster or plaster of Paris. Europeans, as sometimes quoted below, tend to refer to the burning of alabaster sculptures to provide “lime”.

Layard resumed work at the Nergal Gate in 1849. As the mound rose “nearly fifty feet [c. 15 m] above the plain” and must once have been a massive tower, 30 m high by his estimate, he tunnelled into it from the south-east, through two rooms that were full of fallen bricks and

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1 Rich 1836: II, 39.

2 Layard 1849a: I, 143–144.

3 Layard 1853a: 122.

4 Rich 1836: II, 126.

5 Jones 1855: 358.

6 Smith 1875: 96.

burnt beams, and inside he found a pair of human-headed winged bulls facing north, with attendant genies (Fig. 3), which he then exposed to view by digging a deep shaft from above. The entrance between the bulls “was paved with large slabs of limestone, still bearing the marks of chariot wheels.”<sup>7</sup> Layard noted that the carving of the sculptures had been left unfinished, and warns that the details of the bull’s wings were mistakenly restored in a published engraving.<sup>8</sup> He suggested that the sculptures reported to Rich had included a similar pair of human-headed bulls facing south, with attendant winged figures, on the southern side of the same building; the presence of winged bulls would explain Rich’s reference to “animals”. The Arab companions of Jones described Layard’s pair as water-buffalo.<sup>9</sup>

Layard’s plan of the gate, Fig. 4a, implies that he ascertained the presence of two symmetrical rooms, but he had no incentive to tunnel all round the walls of both of them. More probably he determined the shape of both rooms on the western side, where he gives the dimensions, and assumed that the east was similar. At Khorsabad, built for Sennacherib’s father, a citadel-gate had two comparable broad rooms, but both had doorways at one end, one of which led to a stair-well or ramp room,<sup>10</sup> presumably for access to the battlements, and some such arrangement is likely here too.

The plan labels one of Rich’s genies, apparently the fragment shown in Fig. 2, as an “eagle-headed figure”. This is odd as Layard does not claim to have found the head, but eagle-headed winged genies have a greater allure than human-headed ones. This was especially so in the nineteenth century, when they were sometimes thought to represent Nisroch, a Biblical god. Mallowan at Nimrud also once described a winged genie as eagle-headed before he found its human head. A related mistake, again made occasionally by Layard and attested in references to the Nergal Gate itself (see below), is to describe winged bulls as winged lions: cats are catchier than cattle. The errors assume an ancient Orient even more exotic than it really was. Another oddity on Layard’s plan is that he describes the area inside the walls of Nineveh as the “Inclosure of Kouyunjik”; other writers sometimes use the name of Kuyunjik in this way, which can be confusing.

Layard normally seems to have reburied sculptures for their protection if he had excavated them in open trenches, though the earth was liable to settle and be washed away even without human interference. He cannot have attempted this at the Nergal Gate. According to Jones, who was there in March 1852, “the elevated circular mound ... on its eastern side has been opened by Layard, and the interior exposes a magnificent sight to those entering suddenly from without, for colossal bulls of an excellent form, with human heads crowned with the peculiar tiara of Koiyunjik, stand in grim and stately majesty in the depth of the caverns of the wall.”<sup>11</sup> Some years later John Ussher remarked that the mound still contained “two eagle-headed figures and two winged bulls”,<sup>12</sup> clearly Layard’s not Rich’s. George Smith, who first

7 Layard 1853a: 120–123.

8 Layard 1853b: pl. 3.

9 Jones 1855: 357.

10 Loud & Altman 1938: pl. 78.

11 Jones 1855: 323, 356–357.

12 Ussher 1865: 394.

visited in March or April 1873, called Layard's group "colossal winged bulls and mythological figures". He lamented that later in 1873 or 1874 "the natives broke down one side of the northern gate in the wall of Nineveh, and the governor took no notice, although I called his attention to it. The ruin of this gateway is a great misfortune, as it was one of the most curious sights at Nineveh."<sup>13</sup> I have not located any subsequent nineteenth-century mention of the attendant genies, but the bulls continued to impress.

Tristram Ellis, who was at Nineveh in March–April 1880, visited a "mound covering the ruins of a fine entrance-gate. Here two magnificent winged lions were discovered by Layard. He carefully covered them up again to keep them from the destructive effects of the atmosphere. The Turks, fired with a desire to be civilized, and seeing that the European nations took off to their capitals similar large carvings, determined to do the same by Constantinople. The two lions were therefore uncovered and their removal essayed. The alabaster was unfortunately too weak to bear rough handling, and in the attempt to move them one was broken to pieces and the other so seriously cracked that the enterprise was abandoned. It still stands in the open excavation, gradually succumbing to the atmosphere. The earth washed down by the rains is gradually burying it from the feet upwards, and every winter it may be seen standing in a pool of water."<sup>14</sup> This well-intentioned attempt at removal, if true, sounds like the 1873–74 operation described by Smith. Ellis stayed with the Russells at the British Vice-Consulate in Mosul, and presumably had the story from them or from a Maslawi such as Nimrod Rassam.<sup>15</sup>

Oswald Parry, who was to visit Nineveh in 1892, wrote that "a late Wali of Baghdad, taking some interest in matters archaeological, tried to induce the government to do something for the treasures of ancient Assyria; but after contracting considerable expense on his part, and meeting no encouragement from the government, he relinquished the idea, and left the ruins to the protection of the Arab, who readily sells Sennacherib's head for a small bakhshish, as he plies round his solitary beat".<sup>16</sup> Although this passage immediately follows a description of Sennacherib's South-West Palace on Kuyunjik, without explicit mention of the Nergal Gate, Parry had probably heard the same anecdote as Ellis, with the added detail that a governor of Baghdad was involved. At that time Mosul came under Baghdad, and this is the kind of enterprise which the great Midhat Pasha might have initiated, but he left in 1872. His successor Redif Pasha, however, vigorously supported the claims of the Imperial Museum to its share of the objects found by Smith,<sup>17</sup> so he could well have been responsible for trying to move the bulls.

During 1878–82 there were extensive British Museum excavations in the South-West Palace on Kuyunjik. In 1882 at least two winged bulls of the same general kind as those at the Nergal Gate were left visible there, and thereafter it can be tricky to distinguish between references to the two sets. Thus William Hayes Ward visited Nineveh and other sites during 14–18

13 Smith 1875: 88, 151.

14 Ellis 1881: I, 107–108.

15 The English usually refer to this man as Nimroud, but Nimrod is how he signs himself in a letter—written disconcertingly in French—to Budge at the British Museum, 5 January 1905.

16 Parry 1895: 251.

17 Smith 1875: 136–137.

December 1884: “we also noticed two colossal but unfinished bulls of Sennacherib.”<sup>18</sup> Ward has been describing Kuyunjik, and his two bulls were not necessarily together in one place, but the reference to their unfinished state would have suggested that they were the pair at the Nergal Gate, were it not that by 1884 only one of these remained complete, and maybe some Kuyunjik bulls were also left unfinished. In contrast, when Wallis Budge says that “there was only one bull left in situ when I was last at Kuyunjik (1891), and it was in a perfect state”,<sup>19</sup> it is certain from the context that he is intending to refer not to a Kuyunjik bull but to a Nergal Gate one; yet it is inadvisable to believe Budge without independent corroboration.<sup>20</sup>

Parry also writes: “There was no official objection made when a miller decapitated a year ago [i.e. in 1891] the fine human-headed bull that guards the northern gate of Kuyunjik or Nineveh to mend his mill; but there is a fine outcry when the foreigner comes to take away these buried images to set them up in that house of idols in which the natives believe that the Londoner worships.” Parry also refers to a bull as “guarding the northern gate of the palace of Sennacherib”; again, “one winged bull still guards the northern gate of the enclosure, carved from a piece of marble twelve feet square, and until lately in good condition; but now its head has gone to mend a neighbouring mill.”<sup>21</sup> Despite the mentions of Kuyunjik and Sennacherib’s palace, these bulls may all be the same one in the Nergal Gate.

In the autumn of 1901, as reported in January 1902 by Leonard King,<sup>22</sup> “of the two colossal bulls which flanked one entrance of the great gate in the Northern wall, only part of one now remains; the other has been broken up by the natives to burn for lime.” The former was presumably the one that had lost its head. Campbell Thompson, who was in Mosul for several months up to February 1905, returning in or before 1927, saw or thought he had seen slightly more. He states that Layard found at the Nergal Gate “the remains of two winged figures” which “actually remained in situ until 1905, but, thanks to the destructive hand of the inevitable lime-burner, now exist no longer.”<sup>23</sup>

According to William Wigram, the decapitated bull “was subsequently sold for the sum of three shillings and six pence by the Vali of Mosul (not worthy old Tahir Pasha but his predecessor), and burnt into lime by its purchaser.”<sup>24</sup> Tahir was Pasha during 1910–1912, Fazil in 1909, and Mustafa Bey during 1905–1908.<sup>25</sup> Because there was extensive destruction in the South-West Palace, apparently before 15 March 1906, Wigram may have been thinking not of Fazil but of Mustafa. This enterprising Pasha, as discussed below, sold *all* the visible remains of Nineveh for 36 shillings (=36/- = £1.16s.0d, or decimal £1.80p). It looks suspiciously as if this sum of 36 shillings may, through garbled transmission, have underlain Wigram’s figure of three shillings and sixpence as the price of the Nergal Gate bull, because

18 Ward 1886: 14–15.

19 Budge 1920: II, 23.

20 Reade 2011: 454–457.

21 Parry 1895: 228, 243, 250.

22 D’Andrea 1981: 83.

23 Campbell Thompson & Hutchinson 1929: 33. See also Fig. 4b (Assur Photograph 2088, by courtesy of Eva Strommenger).

24 Wigram 1914: 84.

25 Source: Wikipedia.

in conversational English (before the 1971 introduction of decimal currency) three shillings and sixpence would normally have been expressed as “three and six” and written as 3/6.

So that was the end of Layard’s sculptures, except that when Menhal Jabbar reexcavated this part of the gate in the 1990s, they were still present. Layard had described some specific details of carving on his bulls as unfinished, and I cannot check these convincingly on the available photographs, but there seems no doubt that Menhal’s bulls are the same as Layard’s. They are in much the same state as when last reported: the bull on the eastern door-jamb has lost his head, and the one on the west is in fragments; they are now restored under a canopy. Photographs taken by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Fakhri (Figs 5–6)<sup>26</sup> make the situation entirely clear. So the bulls had not been burnt for plaster, and must merely have been reburied by collapsing debris. They are in the exact position already proposed for them,<sup>27</sup> on the southern side of a small internal yard designed to trap attackers who have penetrated inside the gate complex. I proposed this position for the bulls on the assumption that the plan of the Nergal Gate was similar to that of the contemporary Shamash Gate on the eastern side of the city which Tariq Madhloom excavated in the 1960s.<sup>28</sup> Although we do not have adequate dimensions for the Nergal Gate itself, I was still surprised in writing this paper how easy it was to use the Shamash Gate as a template for the reconstruction suggested in Fig. 7. The plans of the two gates may have been virtually identical.

That leaves us with another pair of bulls, also unfinished, which emerged after heavy rain in April 1941, facing north in the northern external entrance of the Nergal Gate in the outer wall. They were described by Finch.<sup>29</sup> In a photograph courteously provided by the family of William Beckerley (Fig. 8), taken before the bulls had been completely cleared, a line of brickwork suggests that there had been an arched gateway between them. While the western of these two new bulls was perfectly preserved, the eastern one had lost its upper half: in Finch’s words it “has been hacked away, and doubtless burnt, along a line starting upon the animal’s rump and running downwards to the lower part of the breast, just above the forelegs.” Finches surmises that it had been exposed by erosion exactly as the western one was to be exposed in 1941, and we may deduce that it was really this eastern bull that was decapitated by the miller in 1891, not Layard’s bull as supposed in contemporary European accounts. The top could have been taken to the mill at Armushiyah below Kuyunjik, in which case its remains may still be there.

The new bulls were restored in 1956 with a fine tower by Mahmud ‘Ainachi (Fig. 9).<sup>30</sup> Both Finch and Mahmud, not having the example of the Shamash Gate as a guide, supposed the new bulls to be the same as those exposed by Layard in 1849, which caused understandable difficulties. As a consequence Mahmud’s gate-tower, adapted from older proposed restorations of gate-towers at Khorsabad and Babylon, is in the wrong place, erected above the outer rather than the inner wall of Nineveh. It has acquired its own status, however, as a pioneering attempt to present an ancient Assyrian building as a monument still worth

26 And more at [www.almosul.com](http://www.almosul.com).

27 Reade 2000: 402, written before I knew of their reappearance.

28 References: Scott & MacGinnis 1990: 64.

29 Finch 1948.

30 ‘Ainachi 1956: 125–127, fig. 1, pls 1–3.

admiring, and it is or at least used to be an enjoyable place for a picnic (Fig. 10). South of it lies the northern half of the ancient city, saved in the 1960s as a public open space by the courage and determination of Tariq Madhloom.<sup>31</sup>

### **The South-West Palace, c. 1843–1902**

This building, situated on its own high terrace on the great mound of Kuyunjik, with mudbrick walls that were decorated with colossal bulls and innumerable carved wall-panels, had been in the seventh century BC a veritable wonder of the world. It was sacked and burned in 612, and buried beneath later structures, but 2500 years later its ruins still contained much of high antiquarian interest. The French Consuls in Mosul probably dug exploratory tunnels during 1843–47 through the area where the palace was buried, but it was first recognised in 1847 by Layard, who created a ground-plan of most of the state apartments (Fig. 11).

Layard's technique for excavating Assyrian palaces was to identify the surface of the main mudbrick platform near the edge of a mound and then dig trenches at that level until he encountered panelled walls which he could then follow. When the overburden became too high, the trenches became tunnels along the walls, leaving the centres of rooms unexcavated, with additional light and air provided by occasional vertical shafts cut down from the surface. Layard gives further details,<sup>32</sup> and several sketches show the appearance of his tunnels.<sup>33</sup> Hormuzd Rassam explains that at that stage they were primarily searching for wall-panels and that with limited time and money "we could therefore only dig about five or six feet [1.5–1.6 m] in front of the sculpture-faced walls, so as to allow space for the workmen to pass each other without hindrance."<sup>34</sup> Walpole is also illuminating: "Descending a few rudely cut steps, a narrow passage leads to one of the regular excavations; there were long galleries, some ten or more—perhaps fifteen feet high, and four or five broad, with the earth cut in an arch overhead, so as to render it less likely to fall in. Every fifteen or twenty feet a hole was cut in the top, open to the surface; up this, as the excavations had proceeded, the earth from below had been passed, and it now served to shed an ample light. On one side in rows sat the flat slabs, while on the pathway were traces that it had been so used before; and above the slab the first cut of the brick showed the sun-burnt brick.... As the world knows, these bas-reliefs are beautifully cut, and the inscriptions fresh as on the day they were executed. They had all been washed so as to permit of their being copied."<sup>35</sup>

Jones, who was there on 19 March 1852, described some of the panels in Court VI and Room XXXVI (the Lachish room), and speculated that Room XXXII was dedicated to Victory. This explains the presence of a "Temple of Victory" in his schematic plan of the building (Fig. 12). The "House of Records" is intended as Rooms XL–XLI, where many cuneiform tablets were found, and the Hall of Bulls may be Court VI. Jones' florid descriptions of nature on the wall-panels include a reference to a bird's nest, presumably the one in Room XLVIII (Fig. 13), and to "aquatic birds" which are perhaps otherwise unrecorded. The "Chamber of

31 For further accounts of work at the Nergal Gate, see Salih 2017 and Al-Juboori 2017.

32 Layard 1853a: 69.

33 Barnett et al. 1998: I, pls 558–559.

34 Rassam 1897: 222.

35 Walpole 1851: II, 14–15.



Elephants” on his plan owes its name to “the much-disfigured remains of two somewhat diminutive elephants ... not far removed from [Room XXXII]. From their high position in the mound, we suspect them to have originally occupied a loftier post in the edifices of Koiyunjik, and their disfiguration seems also to imply their exposure for a great length of time. We think them creations of an age subsequent to that of [Room XXXII], from the above surmises coupled with the appearance of an inferiority both in design and execution, when compared with the majestic forms of [Neo-Assyrian winged bulls].”<sup>36</sup> Perhaps it was an elephant column-capital like those at Nabatean Petra; such things might have been appropriate at Hellenistic Nineveh, since the Seleucid kings were proud of their war-elephants.

British excavations on Kuyunjik continued through 1847–55.<sup>37</sup> Layard was there during parts of 1847 and 1849–51; otherwise the work was controlled by various people, including Layard’s trusted foreman Thoma Shishman who was left in charge when the official director was absent. It was important to maintain continuity of occupation, in case someone else (such as a French Consul) appropriated the mound, but no one excavated and published his results as efficiently as Layard.<sup>38</sup> The prime aim of the excavations was to recover history and art in the form of cuneiform inscriptions and carved wall-panels (or drawings of wall-panels). If standards of excavation and recording were generally poor, if washing removed traces of paint, if the extraction of panels and interesting inscriptions destroyed their original contexts, these were regrettable but unavoidable side-effects. Any bits and pieces that individuals collected for themselves had an improved chance of survival. According to Jones, “we shall soon have to deplore the wreck of the sculptures already exposed, for calcined as they are, from the effects of fire, they must moulder and fall from the positions they occupy; nor will they bear removal from the walls.”<sup>39</sup> Jones’ paper was read to the Royal Asiatic Society on 2 July 1853, and he was probably unaware that Hormuzd Rassam had just succeeded in dismantling and packing the wall-panels in the Lachish room.<sup>40</sup> We do not seem to have a description of Rassam’s procedure, but he may have cleared all the soil above the room before arranging for his artist, Charles Hodder, to make key-drawings of the panels while still in position so that they could be reconstructed correctly in London.

Material from the palace was deliberately damaged in 1851, probably through ignorance rather than malice, after it had left the site. As the British Vice-Consul in Mosul, Christian Rassam, reported to Layard in a letter of 21 July 1851 (BL), “on the 14th Inst. I sent down by raft to Baghdad 14 cases containing Sculptures from Kionjuk together with the vase presented to you by the Patriarch. Just below Kalah Shirqat the Bedween attacked it like so many bees, and immediately made the musketeers the raftmen & two passengers prisoners, after which they forced open the cases, & finding that they were deceived in their contents thereof commenced breaking the Slabs to pieces & hurling them into the river, this done they soon demolished the raft & appropriated the timber to their own use, & the bases they burnt.” According to Gadd the Arabs had been “anxious only to secure the wood and iron and

<sup>36</sup> Jones 1855: 360–363.

<sup>37</sup> Barnett et al. 1998: 4–7.

<sup>38</sup> Layard 1849a, 1849b, 1853a, 1853b.

<sup>39</sup> Jones 1855: 363.

<sup>40</sup> Gadd 1936: 174.

materials of the raft”,<sup>41</sup> but Christian’s letter implies that the robbers were expecting valuable goods rather than old stones. It was his job to have predicted the problem and sent suitable gifts in advance.

I have not located a list of the panels lost in this attack, but Layard knew<sup>42</sup> that among them was the scene of a king and soldiers beginning to cross a river;<sup>43</sup> the remains of these three panels could well have been cracked or broken before they were packed, thereby occupying more than three of the 14 cases. A glance through the illustrations in *Monuments of Nineveh* II<sup>44</sup> reveals several obvious candidates for panels that one might have expected to be removed but whose present location is unknown, but they naturally cannot have included any that Jones was to see in 1852. Those from Room XXII, which are now recognised as exceptional because they may represent Nineveh itself, “had sustained too much injury to be restored or removed”,<sup>45</sup> this is a room which may reward reexcavation.

Maybe there were a few pieces from the South-West Palace on another convoy, mainly carrying material excavated by the French in Assyria and Babylonia, that was attacked and largely sunk near Qurnah in May 1855. The convoy certainly carried wall-panels from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Kuyunjik, which had been excavated in 1853–54, and others from the North-West Palace at Nimrud. There are uncertainties over the fate of many panels from these two buildings, and over the entire contents of the French convoy, too complicated for discussion here.<sup>46</sup>

Ussher provides a vivid description of the condition of Kuyunjik a few years later. “The tunnels and galleries pierced by Mr Layard through the bowels of the enormous mound are still perfect as when he ceased his excavations in 1852, the hardness of the sun-baked bricks through which they were cut preventing the sides from falling in. They cross and recross each other, diving at one time deep into the recesses of the mass, at another ascending, when least expected, to the surface. A number of slabs, the inscriptions and bas-reliefs on which were not of sufficient interest to induce their removal, still line many of the passages in their original position, traces of fire being distinctly observable on most. One corner of the great mound, some 2500 yards in circumference, was perforated like a honeycomb with the numerous shafts that had been driven through it... A number of the townspeople were idling and loitering about on the flat summit, and a crowd of small boys, who had been playing at hide and seek through the passages of the buried palace of Sennacherib, volunteered eagerly to be our guides through the gloomy galleries.”<sup>47</sup> Myers, who was there in 1872, noticed “plaster still clinging” to the heavy mudbrick walls, but stated that no stone masonry was visible because Layard had removed all of it.<sup>48</sup> Most of Ussher’s description probably does describe the palace of Sennacherib. In 1901, however, King reported that there had been

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41 Gadd 1936: 72.

42 Layard 1853a: 441.

43 South-West Palace, Court XIX, Panels 20–22. Barnett et al. 1998: II, figs 190–192.

44 Layard 1853b.

45 Layard 1853a: 233, Reade 1998a.

46 But see now Reade 2018.

47 Ussher 1865: 393–394.

48 Myers 1874: 115.

plenty of tunnels in the North Palace too;<sup>49</sup> they were probably on its periphery as the walls of its state apartments were mostly close to the surface and must have been explored mainly by trenches.

In 1872, the year of Christian Rassam's death, George Smith recognised an account resembling the story of the Biblical Deluge on a tablet fragment from Kuyunjik in the British Museum. Smith was sent to find further fragments, and had two seasons of work at Kuyunjik in 1873–74, but presents himself in his 1875 book as a brilliant scholar unfit for fieldwork.<sup>50</sup> He missed the respect due to him as an Englishman, was repeatedly harrassed on miscellaneous grounds, and even failed to establish cordial relations with the Rassam family in Mosul. He was welcomed by Layard's Thoma Shishman, however, and investigated both the North and the South-West Palaces. After a frustrating start, he identified the approximate location of Rooms XL–XLI in the South-West Palace which had produced the largest number of tablets,<sup>51</sup> and excavated around them an oval space roughly 700 feet (213 m.) round.<sup>52</sup> He does not describe the oval precisely, but it touched the centre of Court XIX and passed over Court XLIX. We also have a plan, a very dirty tracing from Layard, which Smith must have used in the field: the letter G is marked in Rooms XXIX, XXXIV and XXXVIII–XXXIX and Court XLIX, which surround Rooms XL–XLI, perhaps indicating where his excavations reached the floor. I have annotated this plan, Fig. 14, with a proposed shape for Smith's oval. "When I commenced the excavations in January [1874] I had only forty men, but I increased them every day until they numbered nearly 600, and when they were at work the mound presented an interesting appearance of bustle and activity. I was reluctant to engage so many men, as I could not exercise an efficient control over so large a number, but the short time I had for work compelled me to use every effort to realize as much as possible before the close of the firman [excavation permit]." The work involved the removal of what must have been important post-Assyrian structures, unrecorded, but Smith found a growing number of tablets near the Assyrian floor. His plan also marks a "hut", perhaps one built by Layard that remained in use into the 1890s.

Smith died in 1876, and Hormuzd Rassam was employed to continue his work with the same objective during 1878–82. Because the Trustees were now especially anxious to procure cuneiform texts, "I aimed not only to clear out all the chambers of the debris, but actually to break down every wall that seemed likely to contain relics of the past".<sup>53</sup> This technique, involving systematic demolition, had been suggested by previous discoveries of hidden foundation documents, most famously those found by Henry Rawlinson in the corners of the ziggurat at Borsippa. Rassam accordingly found, during December 1878 to January 1880, four foundation cylinders inside the walls of Rooms VII–IX of the South-West Palace.<sup>54</sup> Sennacherib himself had had an eye on his future reputation, but whether he would have approved is debatable: the wall-panels that had to be removed to search inside the walls will already have been badly damaged, and were not necessarily unique, but the information on

49 D'Andrea 1981: 82–83.

50 Smith 1875.

51 Layard 1853a: 344–346.

52 Smith 1875: 145–149.

53 Rassam 1897: 222.

54 Reade 1986a.

the cylinders was itself repetitive. Rassam cleared a large wide trench across the centre of the palace, excavated it to floor-level, and then continued, backfilling as work proceeded, in such a way that the excavation was compared to a deep railway cutting moving sideways. Supervision of the work was mostly entrusted to Nimrod Rassam, who was Hormuzd's nephew and Christian's son, or rather in effect frequently to a site foreman. The total area cleared by Smith, Rassam and later by Budge is indicated in a plan made by King in 1904, Fig. 15.

Ellis gives an account of what was visible in March–April 1880, during the excavations. “I took the opportunity of visiting the mount of Koyunjik ... where excavations were being carried on by the British Museum, in search of tablets to explain or complete those we have already obtained. There was not much to be seen of the ancient monuments, for the best had been carried away and are in the British Museum, and the remainder are very much broken and destroyed. In one place, where a tolerably large excavation had been made, there were the remains of two winged bulls, one so far broken that only just the base remained, and all around there were chambers of the old palace. The general effect was very disappointing, as the rooms were small and very narrow (perhaps for the convenience of roofing over), and with the exception of the bulls there was a complete want of boldness in the ornamentation. There were signs everywhere of the palace having been destroyed by fire, and the whole of the upper part of the alabaster carved slabs have been much calcined and destroyed.” Ellis was a professional artist, hence his disapproval of the style of the carvings; he seems to have mistaken excavated tunnels for ancient rooms. He took up quarters in a small stone hut with three rooms, originally built for Layard. “It was now used for storing any small carvings or antiquities that were too large to be easily moved and too small to be safe to leave on the ground.”<sup>55</sup>

After Hormuzd Rassam's excavation permit expired on 26 July 1882, the British Museum still hoped to renew work in the future, and paid Nimrod to watch over the site. Since the land was private property, it is unclear what authority he can have possessed, though he must have reached an agreement with the land-owners; Parry records that in 1892 an Arab was being paid to stay on Kuyunjik.<sup>56</sup> Ward visited Nineveh and other sites during 14–18 December 1884. “At Kuyunjik are still to be seen exposed the lower portions of a few of the engraved slabs that lined the walls of the palaces.”<sup>57</sup> Ward also mentions two bulls but, as noted above, it is uncertain whether he is referring to those in the Nergal Gate. There were indeed two bulls exposed at Kuyunjik, however, because soon afterwards, on 11 July 1885, the Trustees of the British Museum (as recorded in their Minutes) found themselves discussing a letter of 22 June, from the Foreign Office, which stated that the British Vice-Consul at Mosul had reported that “a very fine winged human-headed bull” had been destroyed at Kuyunjik and another mutilated; “representations are to be made to the Sublime Porte on the subject.” Another letter of 25 June 1885 from “Mr Rassam”, evidently Hormuzd who by then resided in England, advised that “the Trustees have no right to interfere as the antiquities mentioned were not on their land, and only the local authorities are empowered to take cognisance of damage done to antiquities.”

<sup>55</sup> Ellis 1881: I, 103–104.

<sup>56</sup> Parry 1895: 250.

<sup>57</sup> Ward 1886: 14–15.

After this the British Museum applied successfully to renew work at Kuyunjik. Wallis Budge arrived on 16 January 1889. He found many tablet fragments in the earth dumped from previous excavations,<sup>58</sup> and made a “good attempt to clear out all the unexcavated parts of the palace of Sennacherib. I set a large number of men to dig out the ground by and near the two bulls which were partly uncovered and to remove all the earth which had been piled upon them”.<sup>59</sup> These are perhaps still the 1885 bulls, despite one of them having been “destroyed”. Budge continues: “When we began to find tablets, the most absurd rumours were set afloat by the Ulema at Nebi Yunus. One morning I found a party of men ready to smash one of the bulls because one of the Ulema had dreamed that the belly of the bull was full of gold.” According to Budge, a similar dream about the same time led to the destruction of a bull exposed at Khorsabad.<sup>60</sup> Yet Budge enjoyed negotiating with Ottoman officials and other Orientals, he had adequate supplies of money, and he usually arranged matters to everyone’s satisfaction.

Budge delegated Nimrod Rassam to oversee most of the work, which ended in 1891. In 1892 Parry was shown round Kuyunjik by Nimrod, and records more than many visitors before him. “A slab carved with soldiers and a sepulchral scene; another with the familiar subject of men fighting among reeds, with backgrounds of pigs and fishes, and cranes flying over diminutive palm trees; these are all that are to be seen above ground, but point to more treasure below. I was perfectly ignorant of the archaeology of the place, and had, therefore, no desire to take notes. This secured, perhaps, a present of a small sculptured fragment from the broken-down shanty that serves for a museum, but which contains little beyond broken glass and pottery, where many a lizard and scorpion finds shelter from the heat. The old Arab who guards the place was not a little pleased to have a visitor, and readily broke down the wall, in order to let me in, climbing on to the roof, and clearing away the stones from inside to make an opening.”<sup>61</sup> This was presumably Layard’s hut, where Ellis had taken up quarters in 1880, now doubling as a gift shop. I do not recognise the interesting panels described by Parry.

King visited Nineveh in 1901 and gives a general description.<sup>62</sup> “An examination of the site makes it certain that portions of the palaces were covered again with earth by the early excavators themselves. In some cases this was doubtless done for safety, or to preserve in place the stone or brickwork which had not been removed. It is probable, however, that in most cases their action was dictated by convenience. As the excavations proceeded the earth was not removed to the edge of the mound, but was carried only a few feet and thrown on those portions of the building from which the sculptures had already been removed. A second cause of change is to be sought in the action of the weather; the loose earth on the sides of the trenches and shafts has fallen in, and the entrances to most of the tunnels have been completely blocked by the earth which has been carried down by the rain. The third cause of the obliteration of the excavations is the fact that the surface of the mound is under

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58 Budge 1920: II, 67–68.

59 Budge 1889.

60 Budge 1920: II, 76.

61 Parry 1895: 248–251.

62 D’Andrea 1981: 81–83.

cultivation; in the centre of Sennacherib's palace even small flat patches and islands of earth which have been left standing have been carefully ploughed" (Fig. 16). In Sennacherib's palace, "the lines of many of the walls from which the sculptures have been taken are clearly defined, and in one or two places portions of sculptured slabs are still visible in situ." At least one bull was still visible in the palace. It had "suffered" but perhaps as much from weathering as from vandalism. King photographed the bull but its location is not obvious; John Russell concluded that it was Bull 2 in door a of Court VI.<sup>63</sup> King collected 35 tablet fragments from the site guard, and it was decided that the museum should make another attempt to complete the excavation of Kuyunjik.

### **The South-West Palace, 1903–05**

New excavations were conducted in the South-West Palace by L.W. King and R. Campbell Thompson in 1903–05, during and after which there was another poorly understood phase of destruction. The following account attempts to clarify the context, but further information is needed to resolve all the questions.

A basic sequence of events is that King reopened excavations at Kuyunjik on 2 March 1903. Formal reports cover the periods 2 March–12 May 1903 and 12 May 1903–21 June 1904.<sup>64</sup> The excavation was interrupted during the height of summer, 19 July–8 September 1903, while King visited Van. Thompson arrived on 1 March 1904, and was left in charge while King visited Khane/Bavian during 29 March–10 April. Work at Kuyunjik was again interrupted during 16 April–19 June 1904; from 18 April King and Thompson were both absent, off to copy inscriptions at Bisitun in Persia. Work at Kuyunjik recommenced on their return on 19 June. King left for England on 21 June. Thompson continued work till 23 July, and then left for six weeks' holiday in Armenia, though returning early to Mosul. He resumed work on 5 September 1904, and continued till the expiry of the excavation permit on 11 February 1905. His formal report is dated 27 March 1905.<sup>65</sup>

Budge, then Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, had written to King on 24 November 1903: "I hope you are keeping full notes of your work, for please God you shall write the final account of excavations in Assyria".<sup>66</sup> King did not do so; only some of the 1904–05 results are described by Campbell Thompson and Hutchinson.<sup>67</sup> Nearly all the original records, so far as they are known to survive, are currently kept in the Department of the Middle East at the British Museum. I once intended to publish all the museum's excavations at Nineveh myself, but was distracted by a 1986 invitation from Maurizio Tosi to visit Oman and consider excavating there. Prof. Clyde Curry Smith, however, of the University of Wisconsin, transcribed a high proportion of the letters sent by King and Thompson to London, together with more formal reports, and generously made them available for incorporation into M.A. dissertations by Mary Magnan D'Andrea and Thomas

<sup>63</sup> The 1902-5-10 collection. Russell 1998: 45–46.

<sup>64</sup> D'Andrea 1981: 97–103, 109–114.

<sup>65</sup> Klein 1992: 44–51.

<sup>66</sup> British Museum letterbook.

<sup>67</sup> Campbell Thompson & Hutchinson 1929: 57–71.

G. Klein.<sup>68</sup> Copies of the dissertations are rare and apparently not yet on-line, but are extremely convenient if accessible, although some documents are incomplete.

An objective of the 1903–05 excavations was as usual to find as many more cuneiform tablets and fragments as possible, and so bring to a close the museum's long-standing commitment to the site of Kuyunjik. King was instructed to investigate both the South-West and the North Palaces, and to check the remainder of the mound for major structural remains, an operation which he and subsequently Thompson performed by means of a series of trenches, shafts and tunnels. These are mostly indicated on their plan of the mound, Fig. 17, except that the ground-plans of the South-West and North Palaces have been added from earlier sources, so that in these areas the progress and exact location of their own work is unclear.

In the South-West Palace, up to 12 May 1903, King had cleared and sifted the earth from a corner of Court VI; parts of Rooms XVII, XVI and XLV, Room V, part of Court XIX, parts of Rooms XXVI, XXIV and XXVII (trial trenches), the end of Room XLIX, and parts of Rooms LIV, LIII and LI.<sup>69</sup> His important sketch-plan, Fig. 15, shows how, coming from the south, he had just begun to expose the south-western wall of Room I. On the west side of the palace he was "continuing beyond the wall which Layard supposed to be the exterior wall of the palace," and found a colossal bull in a great doorway on the west. "In most of the rooms cleared the sculptured slabs which lined the walls are only preserved for a foot or two above the pavement and in many places they have entirely disappeared." In his letters and reports he seldom mentions the subject-matter of the carved wall-panels, not even those which were in good condition.

Indeed King is so taciturn about the wall-panels, which constituted one of the most extraordinary and novel features of the South-West Palace, that it is a mystery what on earth he thought of them. Sometimes he suffered the debilitating effects of both malaria and dysentery, but this cannot explain his attitude. Perhaps he shared Ellis' view of their quality. Perhaps, like some other specialist scholars, he had little interest in material "outside his field" of philology, though he did observe enough to tell a visitor (see below) about some panels he had reburied. A consequence of his reticence is that it is often difficult to ascertain where he has been digging and what he has found.

King, however, was concerned over conservation. By 23 April 1903 he was already refilling some of the rooms. "In places where the men are cutting in from the outer edge of the mound, the carriers have very little distance to go to throw the debris down the slope. In the case of those working outwards from inside I am following your plan of getting rid of the debris and at the same time of protecting the broken walls and pavements by covering the rooms again with earth as we finish clearing them. I have had a lesson in the necessity of doing this, for in spite of the guards we leave at the diggings at night, there have been two attempts to smash up sculptures though luckily no great damage was done".<sup>70</sup> On 20 April 1903 Budge had already replied approvingly to an earlier letter: "You will lose all the sculptures you uncover if you do not cover them up again, for the natives think that particular stone makes the best

68 D'Andrea 1981, Klein 1992.

69 D'Andrea 1981: 98–99.

70 D'Andrea 1981: 151.

plaster when burnt.” Even trenches that did not contain vulnerable wall-panels may often have been refilled for convenience and safety.

Among the sculptured rooms excavated by King, Room V was exceptional, “for here the walls are standing and several of the slabs are complete, although their sculptured surface has been cracked all over by fire ...”.<sup>71</sup> So the room was still much as it was when originally recorded by Layard in 1847, and indeed as it still was when excavated for a third time by Tariq Madhloom in 1965.<sup>72</sup> King considered dismantling some of the Room V panels for transfer to Constantinople, but after discussion with a local stonemason he decided against the experiment, and instead recommended that these panels too should be covered again with earth. On 12 June 1903, “the surface of several of them has begun to flake away from the heat of the sun, and in order to prevent further damage I have begun to cover with earth those which from their position are more exposed to the sun”.<sup>73</sup>

André Jouannin visited King on 27 October 1903. He also alludes to vandalism. He records that “il y a aussi, paraît-il, de grands bas-reliefs, dont l’un, très beau, représente le roi Sennachérib lui-même, monté sur un char abrité d’une large ombrelle, traîné par des chevaux richement harnachés. Il est entouré des hauts officiers du royaume et suivi d’une longue suite de rois éraniens enchaînés; mais, lors de la mise au jour, un grand nombre de Mossouliotes sont venus visiter les travaux, et ces gens barbares, poussés par un fanatisme odieux, ont brisé une partie de ces précieuses sculptures à coups de pierres, sous les yeux mêmes de M. King, qui, manquant de moyens pour protéger ses découvertes contre le vandalisme de la population, et aussi contre les injures du temps, s’est vu obligé de les enfuir de nouveau après estampage.”<sup>74</sup> This description of a king with a parasol and attendants followed by chained Iranian kings could be an ill-informed reference to scenes still then partly preserved in Room V, on panels 32–34 and 13–15.<sup>75</sup> The panel with the king, indeed, when reexcavated in the 1960s, looked very much as if it had been battered with large stones since being drawn by Layard in 1847. I have not located an account of this assault in King’s own reports, nor any reference to him making squeezes (estampages) in the palace. Presumably he wished to assure Jouannin that everything had been properly recorded, whether it had been or not.

In May 1903 King’s excavations had already reached Room I, and he did find four tablets or tablet fragments there in the last week of June.<sup>76</sup> One might have expected work in this room to have been completed during May–July 1903. Undated King photographs of bulls and wall-panels, some in fair condition, show that the northern end of Room I was excavated, and probably all of the small adjoining Room III (Figs 18–19); the photographs have again been correlated with the actual ground-plan by Russell.<sup>77</sup> Two panels showed scenes of ships in water, apparently the Mediterranean, previously recorded by Layard;<sup>78</sup> they are among the

71 D’Andrea 1981: 99.

72 Russell 1998: pls 105–193, Lippolis 2007: tav. 1–33.

73 D’Andrea 1981: 166.

74 Jouannin 1904.

75 Russell 1998: pls 157–164 and 128–133.

76 D’Andrea 1981: 174.

77 Russell 1998: 20–26, 45.

78 Russell 1998: pls 54–57.



most striking of Sennacherib's wall-panels, apparently unmentioned by King. A date for the photographs might reveal when these wall-panels were exposed. One print includes two westerners<sup>79</sup> — a woman who may well be the missionary Miss Martin, and a man with a handlebar moustache, who has been identified for no evident reason as King in person.<sup>80</sup> As these two and a few workmen in the prints look warmly dressed, it seems possible that, with the hot sun damaging the panels in Room V and King himself about to leave for his summer holiday, he deferred to autumn the excavation of the fine panels that were beginning to emerge in Room I. At any rate, on 17 July 1903, just before leaving, he reported: "During this last week we have been most of the time filling in sculptures which still remain exposed, and shall just have time to get all shipshape by tomorrow evening. There won't be any risk now of these being smashed up for lime. During the vacation we are arranging to have a zaptieh at the mound as well as our ordinary guardian".<sup>81</sup>

Madhloom reexcavated the Room I–V area about 1965.<sup>82</sup> As he described to me soon afterwards, there were regular sloping lines of neat deliberate fill in all these rooms, but in and near Room I several bulls and important wall-panels, which had been photographed by King, were absent. None of them and no fragments of them have ever been located. Madhloom wondered whether they could have been removed by King before refilling, but anyone could have done the refilling, perhaps merely to facilitate the planting of crops. Russell remarks that "it seems clear that despite King's claim to have reburied this area, the sculptures at the north end of the throne room either remained exposed or were later uncovered and destroyed." Russell also wonders whether King may have failed to backfill the Court H area, which was the last to be excavated in this vicinity.<sup>83</sup> Yet King always appears to have been a loyal servant of the Trustees of the British Museum. It would seem most uncharacteristic for him to send false reports to his employers, claiming to have done what had not been done.

A similar question arises over his discoveries on the western side of the South-West Palace. In this area, in two accounts of 10 July 1903,<sup>84</sup> King reported "the find of another bull and a colossal figure of Gilgamesh strangling a lion, and a thirty-foot terrace stretching along the front of the palace on the W. side above where the Tigris used to flow... The two bulls and G. form a group to the N. of the main entrance and there ought to be a similar group on the other side." "We have now cleared a considerable portion of the earth on the W. side of the palace down to the platform level, and, in addition to the bull already reported, we have unearthed a second bull and a colossal figure of the hero Gilgamesh struggling with a lion. The second bull and the figure of Gilgamesh had fallen, and lay, with their sculptured sides downwards, in huge fragments in front of the wall; only the base and the lower part of the sculptures remain in position. Beyond the second bull is the main entrance to the palace on the W. side."

<sup>79</sup> Russell 1998: pl. 98.

<sup>80</sup> Barnett et al. 1998: I, 54.

<sup>81</sup> D'Andrea 1981: 180.

<sup>82</sup> References in Russell 1998: 45–49.

<sup>83</sup> Russell 1998: 47.

<sup>84</sup> D'Andrea 1981: 178–179.

“In this part of the mound I am not merely trenching but am clearing away the earth right to the edge of the mound. In front of the palace I have found a terrace some 30 ft. wide, and in places the paving still remains. It consists of four layers of burnt bricks set one upon the other and bedded in bitumen. When tunnelling in the S.E. corner of the palace I found traces of a similar paved terrace with some of the stone blocks in place, which faced its outer edge and concealed a drain for carrying off the surface water. It is probable that the terrace surrounded the palace on every side.”

“Beyond the newly discovered bulls I have traced the exterior wall of the palace for some way to the N., but after a little it disappears where a more modern house of rubble and cement has been built over the ruins of the palace. Many of the sculptured fragments of the exterior wall represent the sea surrounded by flat lands covered with date-palms, and I think the subject of the reliefs is an expedition to the shores of the Persian Gulf.”

This is a highly circumstantial and convincing account, and we have a photograph that surely shows these sculptures, identified by Russell.<sup>85</sup> They should have been filled in before King’s summer holiday, as stated on 17 July 1903, although it would have been difficult to do so if he had previously dumped all the earth “down the slope” of the mound. Yet later these very sculptures were apparently still visible. On 11 September 1903 King showed the site to the great German archaeologist Robert Koldewey, who was “very keen on the new bit of the palace”.<sup>86</sup> On 27 October Jouannin saw what sounds like the same sculptures, and gives further details. “Cette nouvelle découverte prouve une entrée monumentale du palais face à la rivière, flanquée de grands taureaux ailés, portant des inscriptions relatant l’endroit où les pierres dont elle se compose ont été tirées et la façon dont elles ont été apportées en ce lieu. On voit même, dans les socles qui supportent ces taureaux, de fortes échancrures qui sont des dégagements pour les cordages qui liaient ces immenses statues, pendant la mise en place. Ces inscriptions apprennent ainsi que les matériaux ont été extraits des environs de Djéziréh, et ont été descendus par la rivière au moyen de *keleks* (radeaux), tels que ceux qui sont employés encore aujourd’hui. Dans les salles du palais avoisinant cette entrée, se trouvent de fines sculptures dont j’ai pu prendre quelques photographies.”<sup>87</sup> Which Sennacherib text is this? Where were the “fines sculptures” if not Room I? What happened to Jouannin’s photographs?

By this period, e.g. 8 October 1903,<sup>88</sup> King’s reports increasingly refer to work in parts of Kuyunjik away from the South-West Palace; Jouannin explains that he was searching systematically for the Ishtar Temple, and had identified five archaeological strata in the mound. For instance, in King’s letter of 20 November 1903, “Another interesting find is one we have made in the E. part of the mound. Here I am still tunnelling along the water-channels which run under and (in places) above the pavement on the 2nd Assyrian level. In our tunnel during the next few days we have been finding large bricks, and lately tiles, brightly painted with designs in yellow, black and white (which may have been blue originally). The bricks are painted with feathers and parts of the wings of mythological creatures, a stream of water,

85 Barnett et al. 1998: I, 49; II, pl. 25, no. 8d: not nos 788–789 on pl. 521.

86 D’Andrea 1981: 189.

87 Jouannin 1904.

88 D’Andrea 1981: 202.

part of a star, rosettes and geometrical patterns etc. The colours are quite bright when we take them out but get dull or fade after a few hours in the air. The importance of the find is that they prove we must be near a building, possibly a temple whose walls were decorated with these bricks and tiles. They all occur just above the pavement on to which they have evidently fallen. I mean to continue tunnelling here for a few days and then start cutting a big open trench from the surface. The building if it exists will be about 26 ft.[c. 8 m] below the surface”.<sup>89</sup> This sounds like the remains of one of the Ishtar Temple facades.<sup>90</sup>

In due course, after King’s departure, Thompson’s excavations also explored other parts of the mound, and he identified the location of the Nabu Temple. He touched on the South-West Palace, but does not seem to have found any sculptured rooms, although he did find the remains of bulls in the East Gate of Kuyunjik. Letters of 2 and 17 December 1904<sup>91</sup> suggest that Thompson too aimed to refill at least all those excavations in which significant Assyrian remains were exposed and vulnerable to depredation.

So exactly what happened to the bulls and panels in the Room I area and on the west side of the South-West Palace, remains unresolved. King could have excavated and reburied them twice over, both before and after his 1903 holiday, but there is no evident reason why he should have done so. We have no reference to temporary types of protection such as mats rather than earth. Surely he never deliberately left the sculptures, least of all the new western facade of which he was so proud, exposed without protection. It seems conceivable that a theft happened during 1903–04, when he was absent or alone and sick, that the damage was buried, and that he himself, whether or not he knew what had been done, did not inform London, just as he does not seem to have reported his failure to prevent a mob of fanatics attacking Room V before his very eyes. It is just conceivable that, after the excavations ended in 1905, Ottoman officials had some things reexcavated with the intention, perhaps never realised, of dispatching them in the direction of Constantinople. We do not have a satisfactory scenario, but there is an additional reason, discussed below, for the eventual disappearance of any sculptures that did still remain accessible on the site after King and Thompson had gone.

### **The Sale of Nineveh**

Plenty of people watched British excavations at Nineveh and hoped to profit from them. For instance, as reported by Budge, about February 1889, “Another day the Wali sent a small cart drawn by four men to carry away the ‘treasure’ which he said had been found: the truth being that a part of a small Persian coin had been found a few feet below the surface... Certain officers of the government, more notably Hassan Effendi, the chief of the Belediyeh, and Nasif Pasha, the chief of the Suniyyeh, sent to the mound and carried away stones and other objects before I had the opportunity of seeing them”.<sup>92</sup>

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89 D’Andrea 1981: 216–217.

90 See e.g. Nadali 2008.

91 Klein 1992: 123, 128.

92 Budge 1889.

British excavators at Kuyunjik allude repeatedly to protracted negotiations with the Ottoman authorities and the land-owners of Kuyunjik over various issues. One was rent. In 1903, for instance, Salim Agha who owned the south-eastern half of the mound had already sublet his land and it was being used to grow melons and cucumbers (Fig. 16). There must have been some compensation for lost crops, and King agreed to pay a rent of 5 Turkish lira to excavate for six months, but the Ottoman authorities, who would have liked a cut for themselves, told Salim that he could have got 100 lira.<sup>93</sup> Another issue that arose was the ownership of precious metals, as there were occasional coin hoards; they were a special class of antiquity (comparable with English “treasure trove”), the disposal of which again involved the authorities.

While land-owners do not seem to have objected to the removal of recognised “antiquities”, a third issue was the ownership of “modern” stones found in the excavations. Squared stones had value as building material, especially for people who feared the discomfort and even danger of using the countless natural sources of limestone and alabaster situated a mile or two out of town. It suited everyone that “modern” should cover whatever was not recognisably “Assyrian”; no one on the spot in 1903, whether English or Ottoman, had much regard for other historical periods. Standard practice before 1903 had reputedly been that these “modern” materials belonged to the land-owner, and were taken by him to sell on his own account. In 1903, however, after six or seven weeks of work, a local official claimed that the government owned these stones, and he was then supported by the local governor. The matter was settled, but such difficulties were always liable to recur.

So there was ample scope for discussion of the financial value of the site. This became timely in the summer of 1905. Budge’s final report to the Trustees of the British Museum, dated 30 March 1905, besides mentioning rumours that the Germans intended to “schedule Kuyunjik into the course of” the Berlin-Baghdad railway, and to buy the mound with the intention of clearing it altogether, said effectively that the site was finished and the British Museum should abandon it.<sup>94</sup> The following day, in a report of 31 March, Budge drew the attention of the Trustees “to the faithful service of Mr Nimroud Rassam in watching the site of the excavations at Kouyunjik, since 1882 up to the present renewal of work, for which he has received from £36 to £40 a year;” and recommended “that this expenditure be now discontinued, but that Mr Rassam receive the thanks of the Trustees together with a suitable gratuity in recognition of his services.” The Trustees agreed to send their thanks.<sup>95</sup> So Nimrod’s responsibilities for guarding Kuyunjik then lapsed, and the watchman whom he had employed for this purpose also lost a handy source of income.

Less than a year later, on Thursday, 15 March 1906, the same helpful English lady who once drew my attention to the Assyrian canal at Faida<sup>96</sup> visited Kuyunjik and reported: “rode up on to the mound and spent the whole morning exploring it—going down those shafts that are not closed in, and searching among the refuse of stone and brick for bits of cuneiform inscriptions. There are the remains of a flooring of slabs carved with rosettes and the lotus,

93 D’Andrea 1981: 171–172.

94 Klein 1992: 54.

95 Minutes, 8 April 1905.

96 Reade 1978: 159.

but this is all there is to be seen of the once wonderful palaces of Sennacherib and Ashurbani-pal.”<sup>97</sup> It sounds as if all she found was a door-sill, perhaps one in the North Palace recently excavated by King.<sup>98</sup> Louisa Jebb had a similar experience on visiting Kuyunjik about 1907: “Of winged bulls, of lettered slabs, of all the wondrous contents of the palaces of the ancient Assyrian kings, now ensconced in the museums of western cities, the only indication we had on the spot were the subterranean tunnels, now choked with fallen debris, from which these evidences have been removed; and the broken bits of masonry and pottery which were strewn promiscuously about the surface.”<sup>99</sup>

David Fraser, who spent an hour on Kuyunjik in the summer of 1908, is more severe. “One of the famous Assyrian bulls, of which there are specimens in the British Museum, we looked for in vain, though a few months before it had lain in the sand seemingly protected by its formidable appearance and ponderous bulk. But we afterwards heard that what any museum in Europe would have given thousands of pounds for, had been ignominiously sold by the Vali for a few pieces of silver, to be broken, burnt, and powdered into lime by the masons of the city. Turkish law now forbids the export of archaeological valuables, and there was no other way by which this greedy and ruthless official could profit by so precious a relic of the past.”<sup>100</sup> Apparently the bull had been gone for over two years rather than a few months, but Fraser’s account shows that he is relying on friendly informants rather than certain knowledge.

For what looks like a more authoritative account of what had happened, we are indebted to Mrs M.E. Hume-Griffith, who was in Mosul from about 1905–06 until May 1909 as wife of Dr A. Hume-Griffith of the Church Missionary Society. The doctor appears in some of her photographs, with his own fine handlebar moustache —Gertrude Bell, a critical observer, in a letter of 28 April 1909,<sup>101</sup> described the pair as “both extremely nice”, and our limited information suggests they were perceptive and intelligent.

In a journal article Mrs Hume-Griffith writes: “The next picture shows a group taken on the ruins of Sennacherib’s palace at Nineveh. The form of the rooms still remains in some cases, and up to a few months ago pieces of sculpture might be seen, and one large monster animal, but now they have all gone—sold by the Government for two pounds, to make mortar for building.”<sup>102</sup> Although the picture cited is unhelpful, merely showing two Japanese tourists, four other people, and two horses in a flat area with a mound behind and some loose stones on the ground (Fig. 20), she gives a more detailed description in a slightly later book.<sup>103</sup> Kuyunjik “contains the ruins of the palace of Sennacherib, before whom Jonah stood and delivered his message; but nothing now remains to tell of its former glory and wealth. When we first visited the spot over three years ago, there was one huge man-headed lion remaining, and a few pieces of sculpture representing fish swimming in water, &c. But now even these

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97 Anonymous 1909: 122.

98 Campbell Thompson & Hutchinson 1929: 61.

99 Jebb 1908: 196.

100 Fraser 1909: 217.

101 [www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk).

102 Hume-Griffith 1908: 438.

103 Hume-Griffith 1909: 173–174.

have disappeared, for about eighteen months ago the Turkish Government sold *all* the visible remains of Nineveh for the enormous sum of two Turkish liras (36s.)! the buyer grinding everything to powder, including the huge statue, for purposes of building!" This is yet another instance of the word "lion" appearing for "bull"; the "fish swimming in water" might have belonged to King's "expedition to the Persian Gulf".

The sale, apparently for the benefit of Mustafa Bey to whom Wigram mistakenly ascribed the demolition of the Nergal Gate, provides an easy explanation why so many of the sculptures that had been visible in 1903, including wall-panels whose location just below the surface of the ground can have been no secret, had disappeared by March 1906. Mining of the site could have begun soon after the British Museum stopped paying Nimrod Rassam as guard in 1905. The internet suggests that 36 shillings sterling in 1906 may correspond very approximately to a figure around £180 in 2013. So Nineveh was not particularly cheap, and the purchaser will have needed to ensure that he had his money's worth..

### Smaller Antiquities from Nineveh

There are countless references to the discovery of small antiquities in the ruins of Nineveh. An early account dates to 1 March 1821, in Rich's diary.<sup>104</sup> "Kosrou Effendi, who is most excellent authority, tells me today that Bekir Effendi, when digging for stones to build the bridge of Mousul, found on digging into the Koyunjuk a sepulchral chamber in which was an inscription; and in the chamber, among rubbish and fragments of bone, the following articles: a woman's *khalkhal*, or ankle bracelet, of silver covered with a turquoise-coloured rust; a *hejil* of gold; ditto a child's; a bracelet of gold beads quite perfect; some pieces of engraved agate. All these articles, and the chamber in which they were found, were seen and handled by Kosrou Effendi. The gold and silver were melted down immediately, the agates were thrown away, and the chamber broken up by the stones being taken out and then buried in the rubbish." Rich notes that a *hejil* is "an ankle bracelet, but different from the *khalkhal* in this respect, that the latter has bells attached to it." The description suggests a seventh-century royal tomb in one of the palaces, probably the domestic wing of the South-West Palace near the citadel-wall, but might also fit a Greco-Parthian tomb, like those excavated in January–June 1852<sup>105</sup> whose location nearby is given on Jones' plan of Kuyunjik (Fig. 12).

Small antiquities from Layard's work at Nineveh naturally went to the British Museum. He had a permit that entitled him to export anything he wished, and he possessed the kind of character and experience that enabled him to deal sensibly with the Ottoman authorities. With this precedent established, with the practical businessman Christian Rassam acting as British Vice-Consul in Mosul, with British ships on the lower Tigris and capable British representatives at Baghdad and Basra, with British India dominating the Gulf, and against a background of pro-Ottoman British government policies, the British continued to export whatever they wanted from their excavations until 1855. There was plenty besides cuneiform tablets and carved wall-panels, All the publications describing the nineteenth-century British excavations at Nineveh refer to an abundance of small objects, both from the Neo-Assyrian destruction deposits and from Greco-Parthian and other occupations.

<sup>104</sup> Rich 1836: II, 126.

<sup>105</sup> Curtis 1976.

When George Smith arrived for his two seasons of work in 1873 and 1874, official Ottoman attitudes to antiquities were changing, with new legislation. “Just as Europeans had justified their tactics of antiquities acquisition as precautionary measures against Turkish negligence, the Ottomans justified their new laws as precautionary measures against European pilfering”.<sup>106</sup> Travelling overland, Smith succeeded in taking the finds from his first season away from Mosul, only to have them confiscated by Customs at Alexandretta and forwarded to Constantinople, whence they were rescued through the intervention of the British Ambassador.<sup>107</sup> In 1874 Smith was obliged to surrender duplicate antiquities to officials in Mosul, so presumably he only brought half his finds to London, though the word “duplicate” is flexible. He seems to have organised matters in such a way that he did get all the cuneiform tablets, which is what he actually wanted.<sup>108</sup>

Hormuzd Rassam, on his return in 1878, naturally knew how to negotiate. At this stage we encounter for the first time an official representative sent from the capital, with the aim of ensuring that work was being properly done and recorded. A result of this innovation was possibly the first ever field inventory of small finds from Kuyunjik, much like the one made simultaneously for material from Nimrud, dated 17 May 1878.<sup>109</sup> The British Museum and the Imperial Museum shared the material. Later in 1878 Layard himself was appointed Ambassador in Constantinople, and got a permit which permitted the British to excavate at Nineveh (and elsewhere) for four years, keeping everything they found except duplicates.<sup>110</sup> Hormuzd and Nimrod Rassam continued work accordingly until 1882, and most of their finds were duly exported to England.

The situation changed further with the appointment of Osman Hamdi (usually called Hamdi Bey in English documents) as director of the museum in Constantinople in 1881. He reformed and revitalised Ottoman policies towards archaeology. In 1884 the law became more stringent, and the export of antiquities became unlawful in principle, though in practice the Sultan or officials could overrule the regulations.<sup>111</sup> The British Museum still wanted inscribed tablets and fragments from Kuyunjik, and may even have claimed an entitlement to them under earlier permits. It was argued, in particular, that many tablets already in London were broken, and fragments still in the ground were needed to complete them. Osman Hamdi was a brilliant and well-informed man who will have understood the situation, and may have had the authority to make this concession, at least informally. Budge, who met him in November 1888 says that he obtained a new permit that allowed the removal of “any tablet or inscribed document”, while other finds were to go to Constantinople. When Budge reached Mosul, the governor denied that his own copy of the permit included this formulation, but it was within the governor’s power to help.<sup>112</sup> Whatever the wording of the permit, if indeed there was only one version, Budge preferred not to advertise the discovery of tablets while

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106 Shaw 2003: 89.

107 Smith 1875: 117–118.

108 Smith 1875: 151–152.

109 Reade 2002: 202–203.

110 Reade 1986b: xvii.

111 Shaw 2003: 117–118.

112 Budge 1920: I, 350–361, II, 65–66.

working at Kuyunjik. As he reported to the British Museum, “By increasing the number of men in the large room of Sennacherib’s palace we found it possible to draw the attention of the Turkish soldiers from the place where tablets were discovered.”<sup>113</sup> Tablets found by him and by Nimrod Rassam in 1889–91 are accordingly in London. Other finds, unless left in Mosul or lost in transit, should be in Istanbul.

The situation in the later 1890s, as viewed by Warkworth who at Mosul had been a guest of Nimrod Rassam, now Vice-Consul like his father before him (or possibly Acting Vice-Consul), was that “no excavations have been permitted for many years, and the expense of obtaining a concession from the governor [government?], increased as it is by inordinate demands for backsheesh, would be in itself a sufficient discouragement, apart from the condition invariably attached to the firman, that all the more interesting and valuable ‘finds’ must be handed over to the museum in Stamboul. The consequence is that such digging as takes place must be carried on by stealth, and seal-cylinders and slabs of inscribed brick and marble from the sites of Babylon, Koyunjik, Nimrod, and Kaleh Shergat are hawked about in all the bazaars from Mosul to Bussorah, with a plentiful sprinkling of excellent forgeries executed by an enterprising firm at Baghdad for the benefit of the unwary antiquarian.”<sup>114</sup> King, while visiting in 1901, collected 35 fragments<sup>115</sup> that the watchman on Kuyunjik had accumulated over the years; they probably derived from earlier excavations.

The excavations of King and Thompson in 1903–05, when Osman Hamdi was still in charge in Constantinople, seem to have been conducted under the same provisions as those of Budge. At any rate the tablets continued to be sent to London. King’s report of 12 May 1903, concerning part of the South-West Palace, states that “We have found up to date sixty-four tablets and fragments including some good letters, some broken reports and contracts, and parts of historical cylinders, explanatory lists, omen-texts, and religious and bilingual compositions, of which I have secured fifty-six”;<sup>116</sup> so 56 pieces are somehow safe where King wants them to be. A letter from Budge to King dated 26 October 1903 acknowledges receipt of three boxes which had travelled to England by way of Baghdad.

By 10 July 1903 King was increasingly concerned that the Turkish authorities were opening museum correspondence,<sup>117</sup> and references to his discoveries can be opaque. Tablets were already classified in museum parlance as “workers” and “fraggers”, i.e. pieces that were complete enough to work on as individual texts, and fragmentary pieces that might be useful for joins. This usage generated an elementary code. Thus on 12 February 1904 King reported that, while clearing the North Palace, “we turned up a nice little nugget of twenty workmen all together in one place. I hope this may lead to more but we must work discreetly watching times and seasons for obvious reasons”.<sup>118</sup> Then, on 19 February 1904, “I think I told you in my letter last week that I had hired a number of workmen in the Northern Palace. This week I have hired some thirteen more, with about thirty work-boys. Some of the workmen are fine

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113 Budge 1889.

114 Warkworth 1898: 193.

115 BM collection 1902-5-10, 1–35.

116 D’Andrea 1981: 99.

117 D’Andrea 1981: 178.

118 D’Andrea 1981: 244.



fellows, though in a commercial line of business, and they would all be better for a good clean".<sup>119</sup>

This sounds like an archive of about thirty-three contract tablets in good condition, and about thirty smaller fragments. They should now be in the Ki 1904-10-9 collection at the British Museum, and so they are, listed by Mattila.<sup>120</sup> There are 52 museum numbers, but 5 joins and 2 envelopes reduce the number of objects to 45. One of them, nos 172–73, concerns Ishtar Temple money and is presumably one mentioned by him that was found well away from both palaces, while two more were found near the South-West Palace,<sup>121</sup> and there might be others from elsewhere. Yet 42 could be a reasonable total for King's North Palace archive if about 21 fragments were joined and did not receive museum numbers of their own.

In December 1904 Thompson was visited by an inspector from the Imperial Museum. Although years later this man became "His Excellence Bedri Bey",<sup>122</sup> Thompson mocks him publicly as a "learned official" in a book published during the First World War,<sup>123</sup> and was much more scathing in a letter to Budge of 24 December 1904, after having had to explain to Bedri Bey why he was apparently not finding any tablets at all.<sup>124</sup> Thompson, then alone in Mosul, became keen on secrecy. In the same letter he alludes to his "Machiavellian telegram" of 26 November, which had stated that he was "engaging Naabs house"<sup>125</sup> — Naab being the name of a German doctor who had treated King. The telegram was intended to inform Budge that Thompson had identified the location of the Nabu Temple on Kuyunjik and was beginning to dig it, with hopes of a decent archive of tablets. The message left the British Museum baffled: no one understood it.

Most of the material that reached London from the Nineveh excavations, including that from Thompson's 1927–32 work at the site, has received some degree of scholarly attention. Most obviously there are the great catalogues of cuneiform texts, which never even suffered from restrictions on access. Plenty of other things have been published with varying degrees of competence.<sup>126</sup> Fortunately there has now for several years been an exceptional, admirable and growing on-line catalogue of the British Museum collections. A search for Nineveh in the public database on 11 September 2013 returned only 1,828 results, with 43 results for Kuyunjik and 35,074 for Kouyunjik (mostly tablets), so the system is still evolving, and errors need correction, but it works. There is an enormous amount of Nineveh material still awaiting thorough study, from prehistoric flints to Hellenistic figurines, from Parthian bronzework to Zengid coinage, let alone items of Neo-Assyrian date; it is accessible, as is stratigraphic information from King's Kuyunjik pits.

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119 D'Andrea 1981: 246.

120 Mattila 2002: 377.

121 D'Andrea 1981: 212, 216.

122 Campbell Thompson & Hutchinson 1929: 66.

123 Campbell Thompson 1915: 61–62.

124 Klein 1992: 129.

125 Klein 1992: 122.

126 See e.g. Searight et al. 2008.

As for the Ottoman shares of antiquities from Nineveh, the first batch was excavated by Smith in 1874. “Before leaving town, I pointed out to the Turkish officers who had charge of the collection I had given to the Porte, a number of fine sculptures and a colossal statue which I recommended them to remove to Constantinople, but they said they would not pay for moving them; and I had even to give them a box to keep the smaller antiquities in which I had presented to them”.<sup>127</sup> The Imperial Museum was allocated a half-share of the finds in early 1878, more duplicates in 1878–82 (with other material from Babylonia), and nearly all the finds except cuneiform texts in 1889–91 and 1903–05.

The 1903–05 excavations, especially in the South-West Palace, had been highly productive. For instance, in King’s letter of 12 May 1903, “in the earth removed from the courts and chambers just enumerated we have found huge stones fallen from the paving of the upper storey [presumably some Greco-Parthian official structure built over the palace, some of which was visible above Court H in 1965], quantities of charred cedar, masses of unburnt brick, burnt bricks inscribed with the name and titles of Sennacherib, coloured bricks from the walls of the chambers, inscribed gate-sockets, fragments of pottery, small bronze objects and weapons, fragments of glass vessels, lumps of clay impressed with the royal seal, a gold ring, and other small objects”.<sup>128</sup> On 1 July 1903, King says that “In Rooms XXVIII and XXX we have also found a group of iron objects including a ladle, a sickle, a comb, spear-heads, arrow-heads, rings, staples, and large nails. In the same place we found two black basalt mace-heads, a flat grey marble dish, and fragments of vases of stone, alabaster and coloured marble. On the W. side of the palace we have found a double-edged iron saw, and pieces of two small limestone statues of a king”.<sup>129</sup> Jouannin related how “La chaleur du feu fut tellement considérable, que M. King a trouvé dans les chambres du palais des armes de bronze fondues; quelques briques du sol étaient ainsi recouvertes de deux ou trois centimètres de métal fondu, provenant certainement d’armes ou d’objets de bronze....”<sup>130</sup> This sounds almost like metal overlay melted from one of Sennacherib’s colossal composite figures. The excavations continued to be productive during 1904–05.<sup>131</sup> In his final report to the Trustees after the close of Thompson’s excavations, Budge noted that “all the large stone objects, bronze vessels, a mass of crystal, and very many slabs inscribed with the dedication to Nabu, were handed over to the authorities in Mosul, who had been appointed by the Turkish Govt. to take charge of the same”.<sup>132</sup>

All the 1903–05 objects thought worth keeping should now reside, together with those retained from previous British excavations at Nineveh, in the Museum of the Ancient Orient in Istanbul, alongside comparable material from the German excavations at Ashur. The British excavations were presumably the source of all or most of the fragments of Sennacherib wall-panels in Istanbul listed by Gadd,<sup>133</sup> but otherwise Olof will know much

127 Smith 1875: 151–152.

128 D’Andrea 1981: 99.

129 D’Andrea 1981: 175.

130 Jouannin 1904.

131 Campbell Thompson & Hutchinson 1929: 65–69.

132 Klein 1992: 53.

133 Gadd 1936: 224–228.

more than me about that collection. There are three items, however, that may be there and which I should myself have thought to mention in previous publications.

On 8 October 1903 King noted: “Some distance to the N. of Sennacherib’s palace and 24 ft. below the surface we have come on a great mass of Assyrian debris consisting of bricks, fragments of limestone, pottery etc. among which is a section of a solid burnt clay statue of a god or king. This debris I think is too far from Sennacherib’s palace to have come from there and is more probably from some building more in the centre of the mound”,<sup>134</sup> i.e. the Ishtar Temple. Then, on 21 October 1903, “.. in the central part of the mound ... we have come across part of a baked clay statue, like the one found in the mass of debris not far off. This one is painted, the figure wearing a white robe with yellow stripes. It must have stood about 3 ft. high. Both these baked clay statues are very odd: they were made in separate sections, like bricks, which must have been baked separately and afterwards fitted together”.<sup>135</sup> One if not both of these figures was presumably glazed rather than painted. The description recalls the glazed statues of worshippers dedicated in the Middle Assyrian Ishtar Temple at Ashur. It also recalls the composite brick figures from the Kassite Inanna Temple facade at Warka— not a unique facade, as comparable fragments were found, together with many glazed tiles shaped like crazy paving, in another unpublished excavation, the 1960–62 work on the temple area in front of the ziggurat at Dur-Kurigalzu (Fig. 21). The Ashur statues were not composite so far as I know, and the Kassite facade figures were taller, but the Nineveh fragments sound as if they derive from one of two major Middle Assyrian restorations of the Ishtar Temple at Nineveh, by Ashur-uballit and Shalmaneser I.<sup>136</sup> Assyria had recently conquered Nineveh, and was then asserting itself as a potential world power; the Ishtar Temple will have displayed all the latest fashions in glazing and ceramic technology.

Also, in a letter of 18 March 1904, King reported that “in the second diagonal trench in the western part of the mound, we have found the body, legs and part of the tail of a hawk of hard white stone which when complete must have been about 2 or 2.5 feet high. He is wearing a pectoral with a bull’s head on it and a hollow where a jewel was probably set in. He belongs to a later period than Assyrian times and is rather in the style of those creatures cut in the catacombs or rock-tombs of Alexandria”.<sup>137</sup> Thompson, referring the next day to what must be the same figure, says that the trench was “north of Sennacherib’s palace”.<sup>138</sup> There are several stone hawks from Hatra, and several statues and statuettes found there retain some of their bright original colouring or inlay.<sup>139</sup> King’s piece was surely another relic of Greco-Parthian Nineveh,<sup>140</sup> a city whose singular misfortune was to be situated on top of the city of Sennacherib.

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134 D’Andrea 1981: 202.

135 D’Andrea 1981: 206.

136 Reade 2005: 369–372.

137 D’Andrea 1981: 255–256.

138 Klein 1992: 71.

139 Safar & Muhammad Ali 1974: 28, 143–147, 396–399.

140 Reade 1998b.

## Conclusion

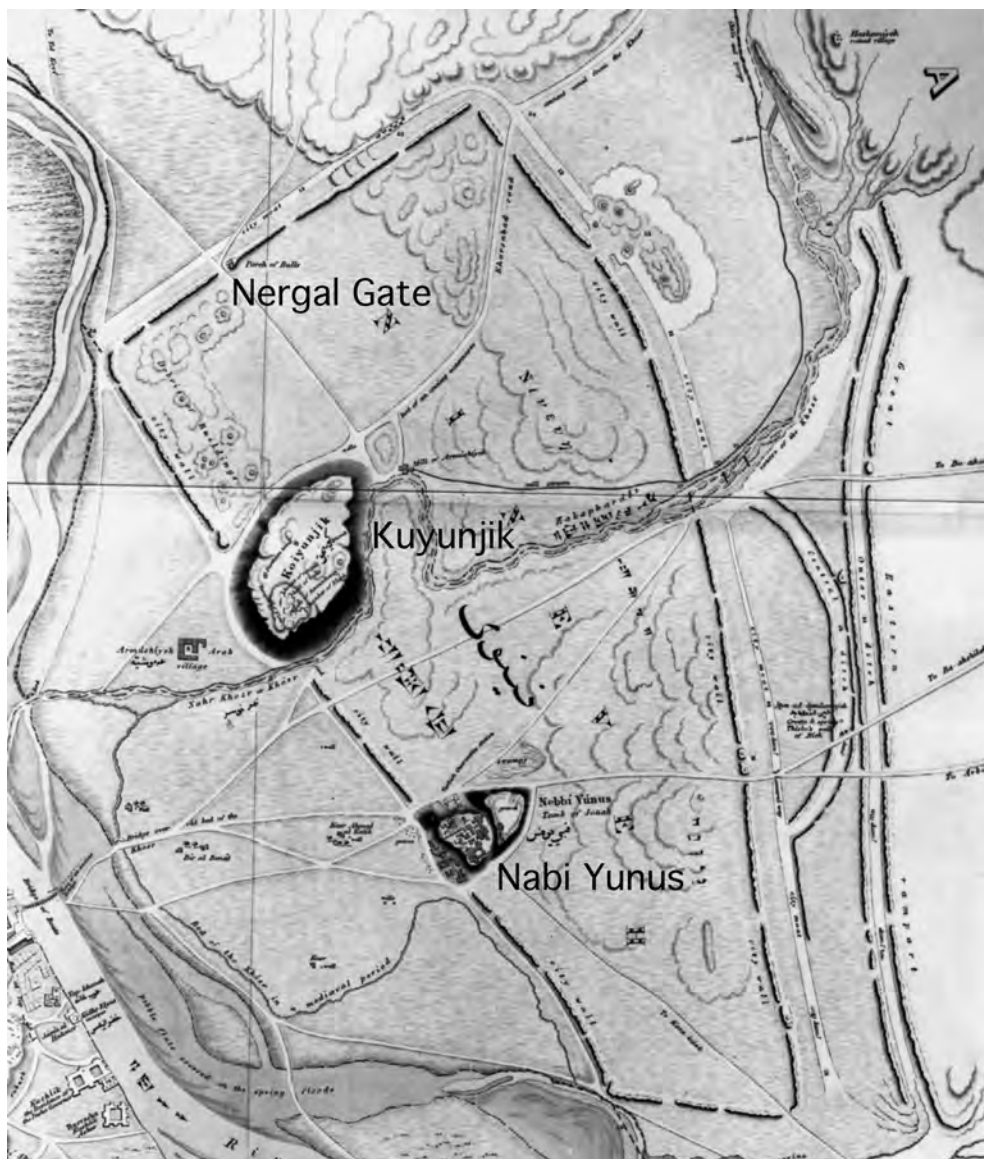
Soon after the British had displaced the Ottomans, Ethel Stevens (Lady Drower), one of the most perceptive of western visitors to Iraq, visited Nineveh and was unaware of the vicissitudes of the South-West Palace over the previous century. “In the brief twilight we scrambled about the mound of Kuyunjik, holes and openings here and there showing where excavations had been made. Layard kept his word with the Turk, and scrupulously covered up all that he might not remove to England, and it is fortunate that he did so, for little would remain if he had not. As it is, Nineveh has been a brickyard for Mosul for many centuries, and even now its walls are supplying blocks for the rebuilding of the mosque of Nebi Yunus, which fell last winter”.<sup>141</sup>

So the South-West Palace appeared to her to have been preserved, and somehow she thought that Layard had promised this. Actually Layard had left it in a seriously vulnerable state, later British excavations had demolished large parts of it, and the visible remains had been sold by a Turkish governor for scrap less than twenty years before. As for the Nergal Gate, nearly half the sculptures had been recycled by the people of Mosul in the nineteenth century. So “The Final Sack of Nineveh”, as John Russell called his 1998 book on the aftermath of the 1991 Second Gulf War, was merely one phase in a long process, soon to be followed by the consequences of the 2003 Third Gulf War. These Assyrian sites and buildings are continually, in one way or another, needing salvage, and we do it as best we can. We are indebted at Nineveh to many people, especially Mahmud ‘Ainachi, Tariq Madhlloom and John Russell, just as we owe Olof much gratitude for all his work on the material found at Ashur.

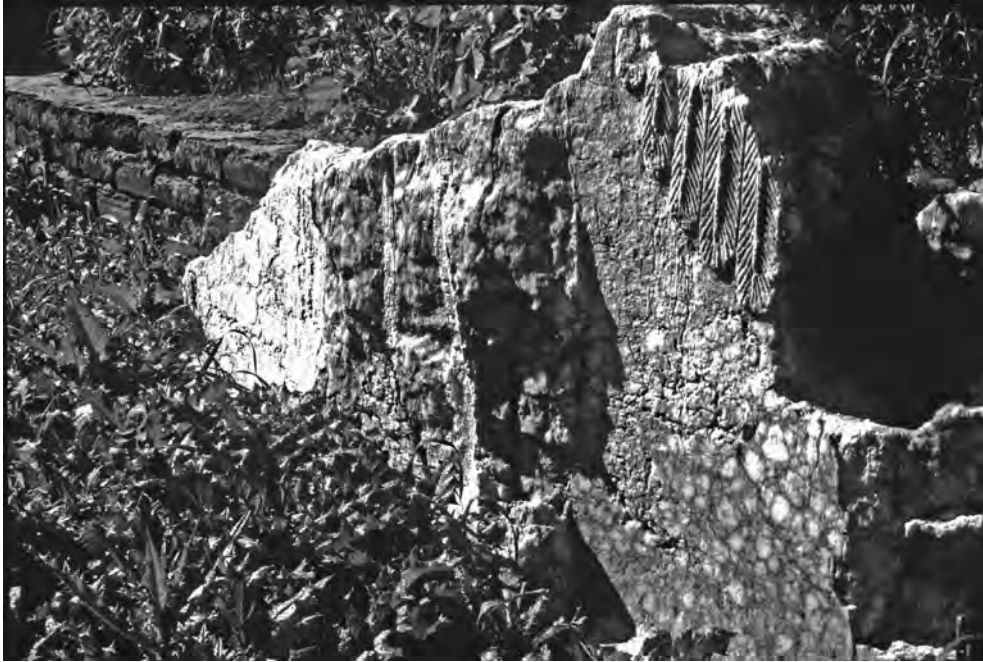
This paper was originally submitted on 16 October 2013. The Islamic State (Da'esh) organisation captured Mosul on 19 June 2014. A video released about 26 February 2015 included scenes of the subsequent destruction of sculptures at the Nergal Gate, see Fig. 16. The previous condition of the gate is shown in photographs taken by Alexander Kozlovsky in December 2012 (near the end of the website [forum.awd.ru/viewtopic.php?t=194227](http://forum.awd.ru/viewtopic.php?t=194227) [accessed 13 June 2015]). Further information on the Nergal and related “Shamash” Gates is given by the author in Reade 2016.

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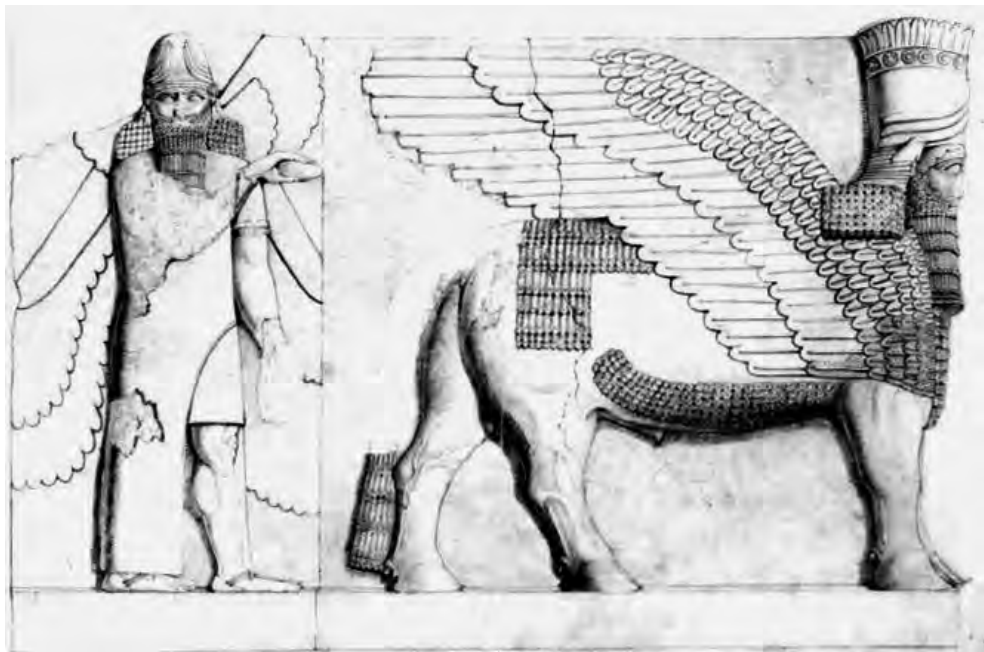
141 Stevens 1923: 99.



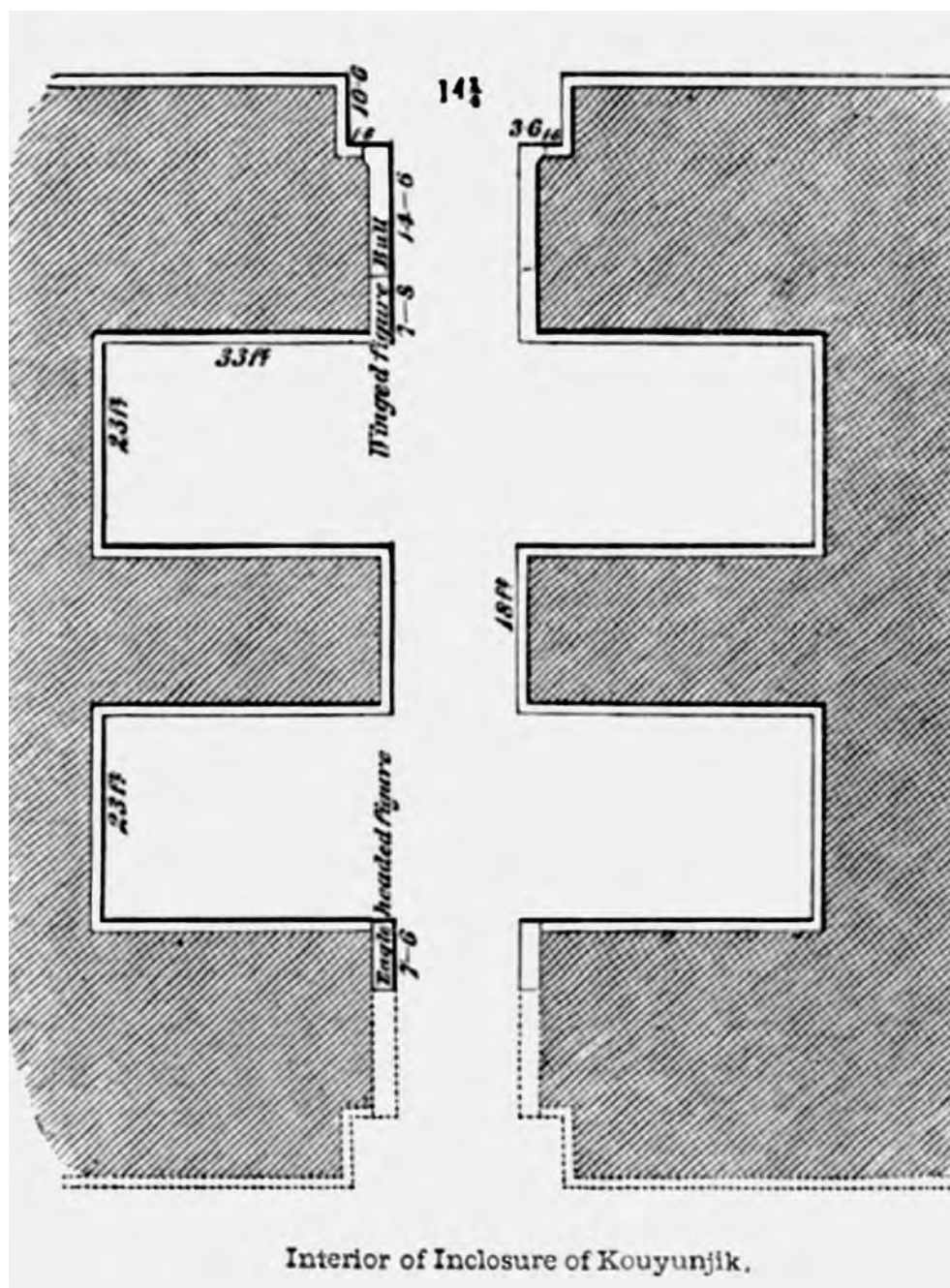
**Fig. 1:** Nineveh in 1852. Detail from survey by Felix Jones (Jones 1855: sheet 1). Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 2:** Nergal Gate: remains of winged figure, probably on western side of southern entrance. Photograph by John Russell, 2001.

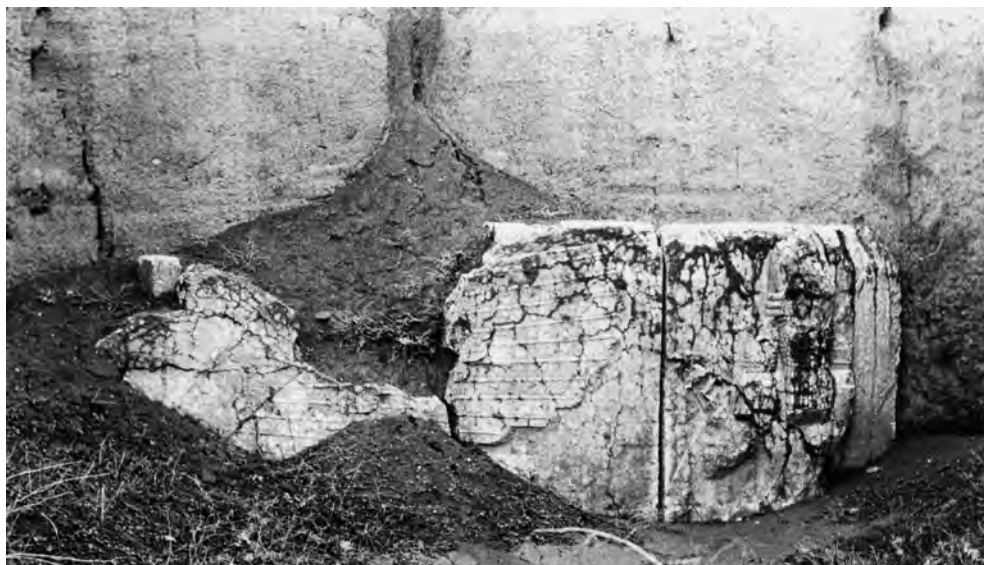


**Fig. 3:** Nergal Gate: bull and winged figure, in northern internal entrance. Drawing by F.C. Cooper. Or.Dr. I, 32 = Gadd 1936: 61, pl. 24. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 4a:** Nergal Gate: chambers as planned in 1849 by Layard (1853a: 122), with “Kouyunjik” referring to the entire walled city.





**Fig. 4b:** Nergal Gate: winged bull and protective spirit on north side of gate-chamber originally excavated by Layard (Assur Photograph 2088, by courtesy of Eva Strommenger).



**Fig. 5:** Nergal Gate: view to east from trapyard, showing bulls at northern internal entrance. Photograph by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Fakhri, 2009.



**Fig. 6:** Nergal Gate: eastern bull in northern internal entrance. Photograph by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Fakhri, 2009.

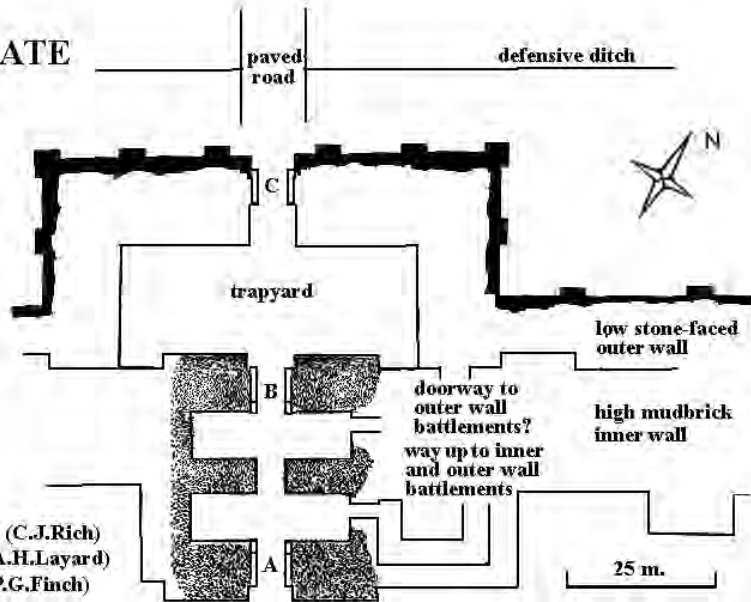
# **NERGAL GATE NINEVEH, c. 700 BC**

Rough sketch  
of suggested  
original plan,  
not to scale.

J. E. Reade  
October 2013

## **Winged Bulls**

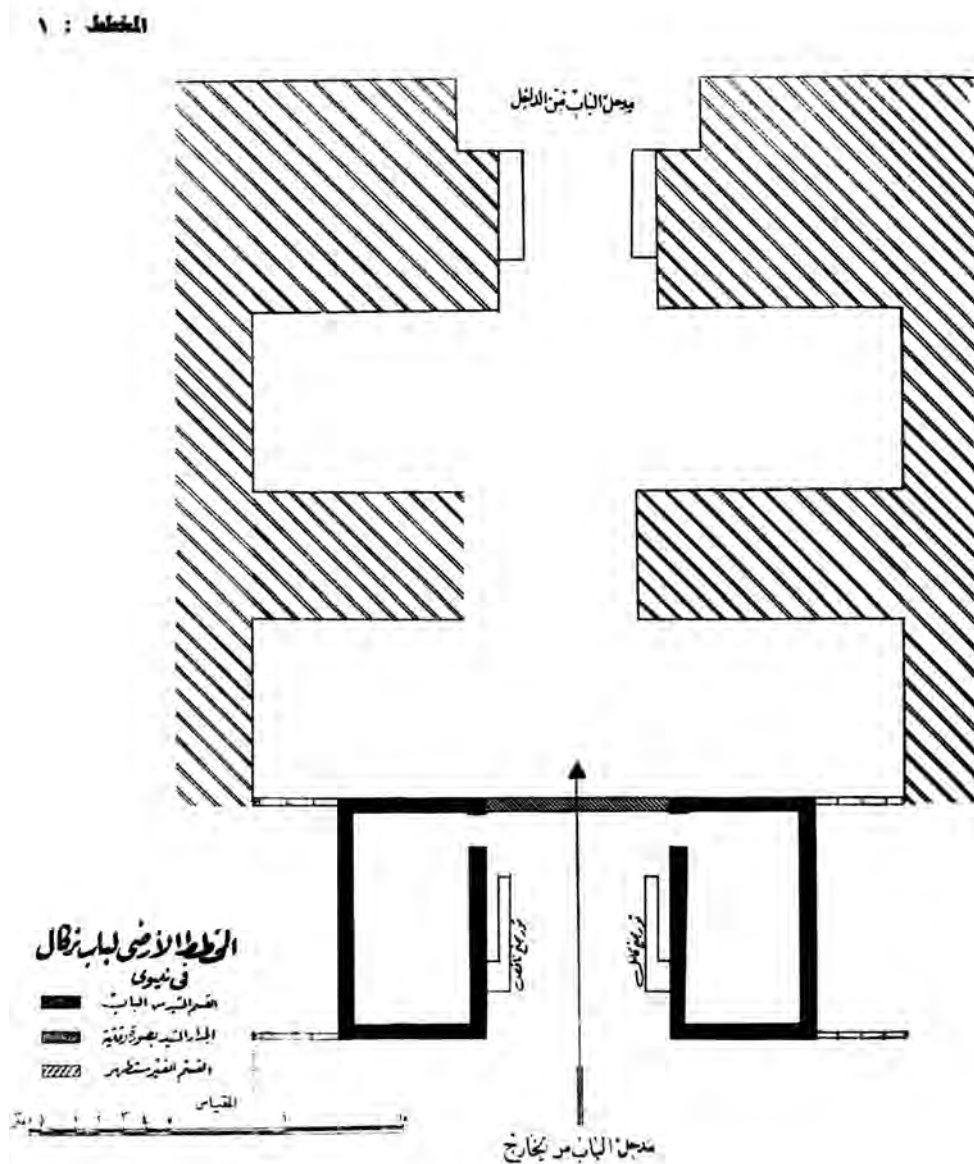
- A: destroyed c. 1800 (C.J.Rich)
- B: excavated 1849 (A.H.Layard)
- C: exposed 1941 (J.P.G.Finch)



**Fig. 7:** Nergal Gate: suggested ground-plan. Drawn by author.



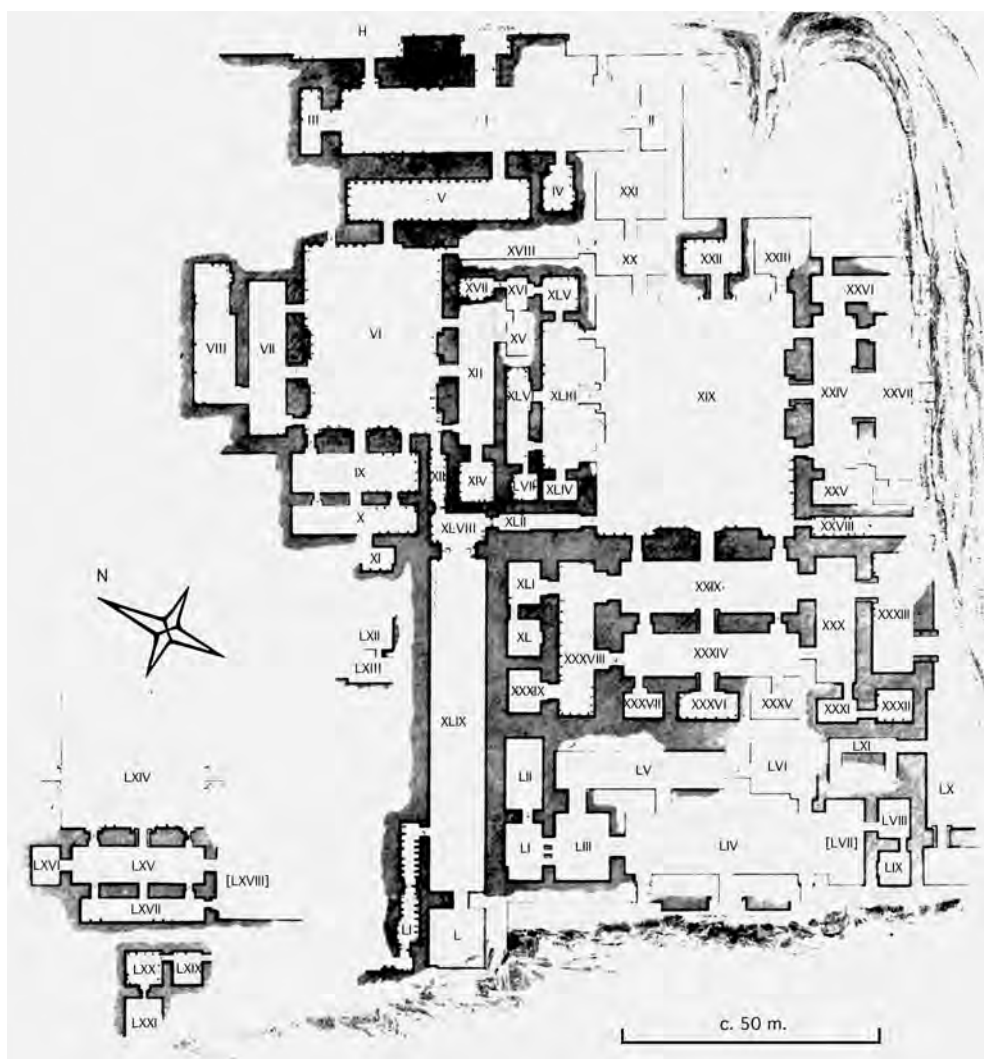
**Fig. 8:** Nergal Gate: bull recently exposed in northern external entrance. Photograph by William Beckerley, 84 Squadron, RAF (Mosul airfield), 1941.



**Fig. 9:** Mahmud 'Ainachi's ground-plan for reconstruction of a tower (outlined in black) above the 1941 Nergal Gate bulls, incorporating Layard's (hatched) 1849 ground-plan (fig. 4). 'Ainachi 1956: fig. 1.



**Fig. 10:** Mahmud 'Ainachi's tower above the 1941 Nergal Gate bulls, on a Friday afternoon with visitors from Mosul enjoying a picnic. In the background, rattletrap Land Rover of the British Nimrud expedition. Photograph by Ann Searight, 1962–63.



**Fig. 11:** South-West Palace: Layard's 1851 plan (Layard 1853b: plan 1). North point adjusted by author.

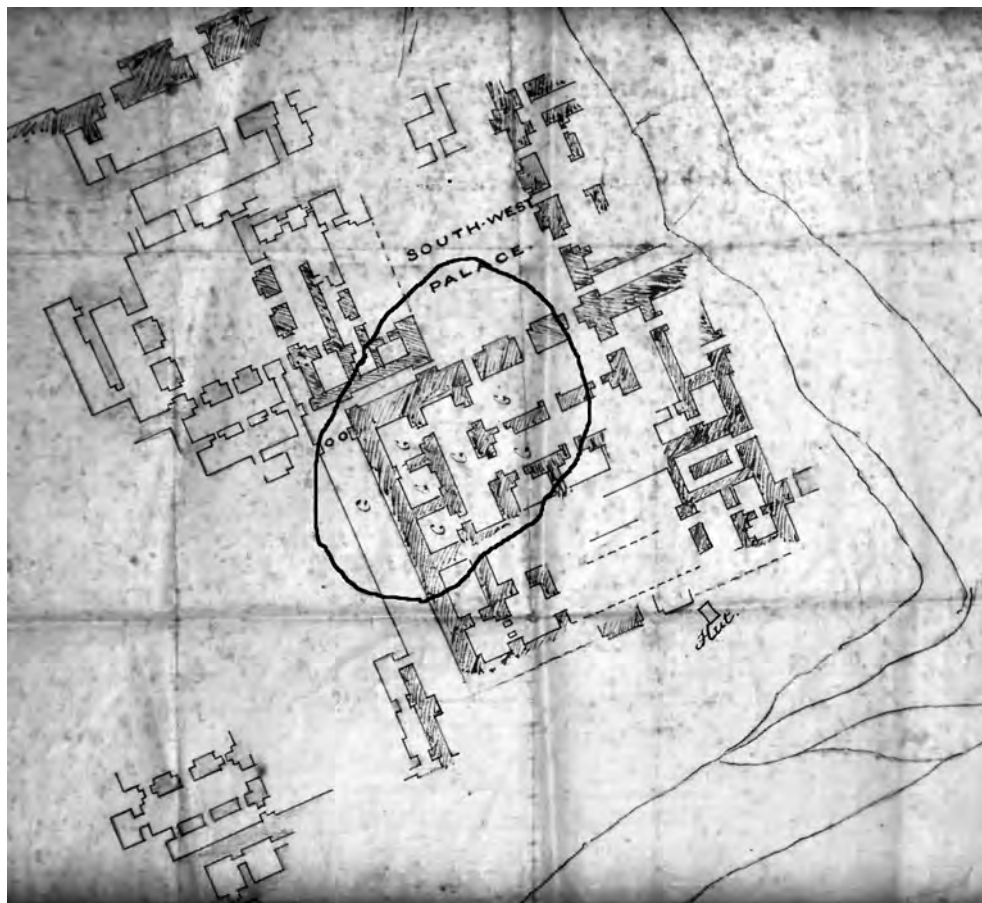


**Fig. 12:** Kuyunjik in 1852. Detail from survey by Felix Jones (Jones 1855: sheet 1). Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.

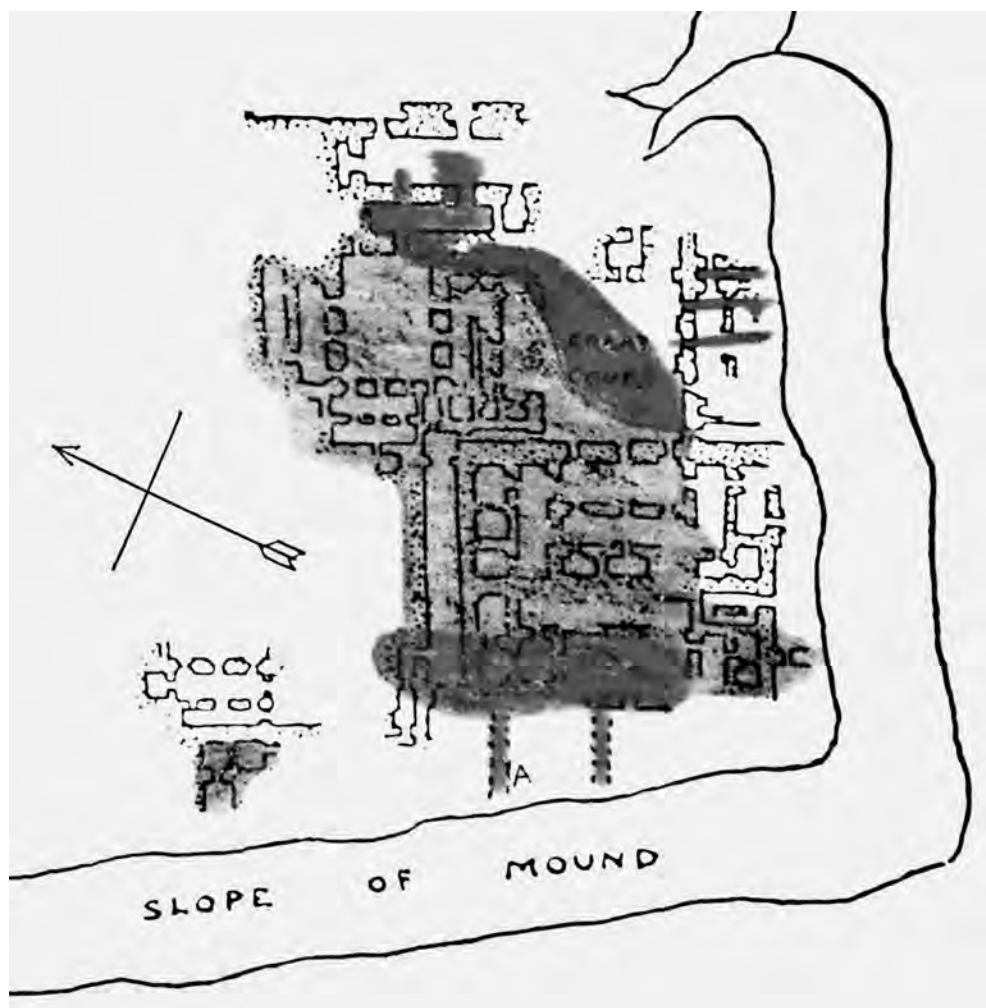




**Fig. 13:** Tree, with birds panicking as Assyrians cut down trees, “in the branches of which are perched the nests and younglings of the feathered tribe, craving for food, or essaying a flight on their own account, in the true fashion of nature” (Jones 1855: 361). South-West Palace, Room XLVIII, slab 11, detail. Probably drawn by F. C. Cooper. Or.Dr. IV, 60. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 14:** South-West Palace: detail of G. Smith's tracing of Layard's 1851 plan, with G marked by him in Rooms XL–XLI and nearby. Line of oval excavation suggested by author. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 15:** South-West Palace. Detail of L. W. King's copy of detail of Lieut. Glascott's 1849 plan of Kuyunjik (Barnett et al. 1998: pl. 2) with a plan of the South-West Palace inserted (Layard 1853b: pl. 71). Angles adjusted. Green (lighter shading): areas cleared during 1873–91. Red (darker shading): areas cleared during 2.iii–12.v.1904. A (near MOUND): “position in trench of newly discovered bull forming part of the Western Entrance of the palace.” D’Andrea 1981: 370. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 16:** Kuyunjik: sketch by L.W. King, April 1903. Angle adjusted. Green (shaded areas): crops of melons and cucumbers. Dotted line: path dividing the two properties. A: South-West Palace. B: North Palace. C: Mohammaden tomb. D'Andrea 1981: 371. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 17:** Kuyunjik: contour map by L.W. King and R. Campbell Thompson, 1904–05. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 18:** South-West Palace: view west from Room I through door into Room III, with man standing against far wall. Photograph by L.W. King. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 19:** South-West Palace: view north from Room I through door towards man standing in Room III. Photograph by L.W. King. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.



**Fig. 20:** Visitors to South-West Palace, c. 1906 (Hume-Griffith 1908: 438).





**Fig. 21:** Moulded bricks and glazed tiles from temple quarter at Dur-Kurigalzu (Agar Quf site museum). Photographs by author, 1968.



**Fig. 22:** Detail from Islamic State (Daesh) video showing attack on the western winged bull in the outer entrance of the Nergal Gate.

# The Female Breasts in Sumerian Literature: the sign(s), the contexts and the Akkadian correspondences

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Professor Olof Pedersén was my first teacher in Assyriology, and thus introduced me to the wonderful world of cuneiform. With this paper I wish to direct deep and sincere thanks for all I have learnt from you, Olof.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the philological and semantic context of the Sumerian word for “female breast” as it is used in literary texts. Already the sign itself gives us a semantic context, and therefore we will start with investigating its development up to the Old Babylonian period.

The interpretation of the texts is due to our choices of reading the signs. Our sign can be read both ubur and akan. We shall discuss possible distinctions of these readings, which may be due to the fact that our sign is used for both humans and animals. The readings must of course be related to Akkadian translations in the lexical lists as well as a discussion of the meaning of the corresponding Akkadian words.

Since the “ubur/akan of heaven” is such a common motif in Sumerian literature it will be treated in a separate section. In one section we will discuss the (very rare) use of the word usually denoting the chest (gaba) for “female breast”, and compare it with that of ubur/akan. The text excerpts I use here are transliterated and translated and have been given a number. The numbering hopefully makes it easy to read the philological commentary to these excerpts, which comes at the end.

## The sign

In the Old Babylonian (OB) period the sign for ubur/akan belongs to a group of signs made up of DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×S(ign). The group is found in Proto Ea, and there we find twelve entries with the base DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>, and with an inscribed sign, e.g. LU.MAŠ<sub>2</sub>, UŠ and NE (=> amaš, utul<sub>6</sub>, šurun<sub>4</sub>) including DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub> with inscribed GA, which represents ubur/akan.<sup>1</sup> According to Landsberger this group arose as a result of a writing reform which was finished in Nippur during the Isin period. Through this reform different signs with their different meanings were brought together by the invention of a basic form (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>), and then being differentiated by the inscribed sign.<sup>2</sup> Thus, these signs which in the OB period are related must not have been so previously.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Entries 824–835. DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×LU.MAŠ<sub>2</sub> occurs twice. After 835 there is a lacuna (836–839) and then comes another sign (MSL 14: 62).

2 MSL 2: 98.

3 The reason for grouping together several phenomena under a common basic sign may of course partly

The signs DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub> as a part of the here investigated sign do however predate the writing reform mentioned by Landsberger; in all but the oldest sign representing ubur/akan we have these signs as a part of the compound. The oldest form for ubur/akan is found in the archaic texts from Uruk published by Falkenstein.<sup>4</sup> The relevant signs in Falkenstein's list have the numbers 772–780. They represent a sheep and an udder (see sign no. 1 in Fig. 1, below). Before our sign takes the OB form ubur<sub>(1)</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA)<sup>5</sup> we have other variants called ubur<sub>2</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×LU), ubur<sub>3</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×'IR') and ubur<sub>4</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×'IR'.LU).<sup>6</sup>

The oldest variant of DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×S for ubur/akan is ubur<sub>2</sub>, which is found on the Stele of the Vultures.<sup>7</sup> In the next stage the inscribed sign is one that Landsberger writes is similar to IR, and this compound is called ubur<sub>3</sub>.<sup>8</sup> The third stage of the post-archaic ubur/akan we find in Gudea Cyl. B iv:9 in the form of ubur<sub>4</sub>. Here there are two inscribed signs of which Landsberger writes "'IR', LU".<sup>9</sup>

Landsberger writes about ubur<sub>2</sub>: "Wir sehen in Z1 die Konfiguration Schaf mit Euter', deren Urform durch Falkenstein [1936] Zeichen Nr. 772–780, repräsentiert wird".<sup>10</sup> It seems then, that according to Landsberger, the sign KISIM<sub>5</sub> corresponds to the udder-sign of the archaic Uruk texts. The central signs of ubur/akan, then, before it took its OB form, were *the udder and the sheep*. The sheep was replaced by a sign similar to IR in a middle phase, but came back in Gudea's Cylinder besides 'IR'. Some conclusions can be drawn from our discussion:

1. The Sumerian sign for "female breast" was not originally used for "female breast", but designated the udder of a sheep together with a sheep.
2. The signs for "female breast" (after the archaic period) were four and from the OB period on ubur<sub>(1)</sub> is used throughout.
3. The female breast was conceptually comprehended as being so similar to the udder of a sheep, that the sign of the latter was also used for the former.
4. The nurturing aspect of the female breast was most probably more important and accentuated than the sexual one, both since it was related to the udder of a sheep and since the sign GA ("milk") from early on was a part of the sign.

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or wholly have been due to a semantic or associative relation between the phenomena.

4 Falkenstein 1936.

5 According to Landsberger this is throughout the writing from the OB period on (MSL 2: 98). The only literary texts I know of that have another writing than ubur – both also being pre-OB – are Gudea Cyl. B iv:9 (ubur<sub>4</sub>) and Šulgi P, text B, 16, 25 (ubur<sub>2</sub>). For Gudea, see Edzard 1997 and for Šulgi P, see Klein 1981: 34–41.

6 For the numbering of the signs, see Borger 1978: 281.

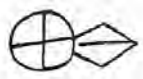
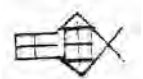




7 Fossey 1904–26: sign 17365, see plate 1.

8 MSL 2: 99.





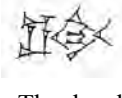
9 MSL 2: 99.

10 MSL 2: 100.

1. archaic      2. ubur<sub>2</sub>      3. ubur<sub>3</sub>      4. ubur<sub>4</sub>      5. ubur<sub>1</sub>

- 1  ATU 772 (see also ATU 773-780)
- 2  Fossey 17365 (see also Fossey 17366-17369)  
= ubur<sub>2</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>xLU)
- 3 a  Fossey 17353 (see also Fossey 17354-17358)  
=ubur<sub>3</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>x"IR")
- b  Fossey 35378 (see also Fossey 35379)  
=ubur<sub>3</sub>
- c  FLP 145, rev. 26 (Owen 1981: 32) = ubur<sub>3</sub>
- 4  Gudea Cyl. B iv: 9 (=TCL 8, pl.XXXIV)  
= ubur<sub>4</sub> (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>x"IR".LU)

5. Examples of ubur<sub>1</sub>: (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>xGA) (Source: a database at the Institut für vorderasiatische Archäologie und altorientalische Sprachen, University of Bern, which I had the opportunity to use during my stay there 2002–2003).

- |   |  |   |                       |
|---|--|---|-----------------------|
|  | Enmerkar and<br>Ensuhkešdana<br>C: 95  |  | Nanše Hymn<br>A1: 204 |
|  | Enmerkar and<br>Ensuhkešdana<br>R: 199 |  | Rimsin C: 23          |
|  | Lugalbanda II A: 202                   |   |                       |

**Fig 1:** The development of the sign denoting the female breast

## The reading

Of the three readings of the sign DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA, two are of interest for us:<sup>11</sup> ubur and akan, which both refer to the female breast/nipple/teat. To my knowledge akan is attested once as a gloss in a literary text, as is ubur. Ubur is also found written syllabically. (These instances will be treated below.) Both words are also attested as glosses in lexical lists. Furthermore, in the younger lexical lists also the Akkadian translation is given.

In Proto-Ea 830, the reading given for our sign is u<sub>3</sub>-bur. In the younger lexical lists both the readings ubur und akan appear. The word akan is written a-kan in Sb Voc. II 248 and Ea IV 60 and is in both places translated with *šertu*; in Hg B IV i 33 (with gloss a-ka-ni) the sign is translated with both *šertu* and *tulû*. In the three instances in the younger lists where ubur is lexically attested it is equalled to Akkadian *tulû* (u-bur in Sb Voc. II 247 and u<sub>2</sub>-bur in Ea IV 59, 65; in the last entry the Akkadian equivalence is *tu-lu-u ša<sub>2</sub> A.MEŠ*).<sup>12</sup>

Both *šertu* and *tulû* are attested in the OB period. In the first few examples below, *šertu* appears in an early OB bilingual incantation from Nippur and *tulû* in an OB letter:

### No. 1 Geller 1989: 197

48'b. DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA a<sub>2</sub> kuš<sub>3</sub>-a-ni [zu<sub>2</sub>] ħe<sub>2</sub>-ku<sub>5</sub>-ku<sub>5</sub>-e  
*še<sub>2</sub>-re-es-sa<sub>3</sub> i-na am-ma-t[i-š]a li-ba-ši<sub>2</sub>-ir*

May she bite off her breasts/teats with her elbows.

### No. 2 Kraus 1964: 26–27, No. 31, rev.

7. *šum-ma ta-ta-ap-la-as<sub>2</sub>-ma tu-l[u]-ša la da-mi-iq*  
 8. *a-na mu-še-ni-iq-ti ša-ni-ti-im-ma*  
 9. *šu<sub>2</sub>-ħa-ra-am id-ni*

7. If you have indeed seen that her breasts are not good,  
 8.–9. (then) give the child to another wet-nurse.

In the *CAD*, sub vocem *širtu*, besides the references to the lexical lists, there are only Standard Babylonian attestations of *šertu*. In the *AHw* III instead, there is also one OB attestation, which comes from Bogazköy, and which is a parallel to the above cited early OB incantation from Nippur. The attestations of *šertu* are very scarce; the *CAD* has five references – two from Labat 1951, two from Enūma eliš (Ee), and one from *šumma izbu*. In the *AHw* there are six references of which four correspond to those of the *CAD* (the *AHw* only cites one

11 The third reading is *kisim<sub>7</sub>* “sour, stinking milk”, see Sjöberg 1973a: 113, l. 157 and page 138; *CAD* K, 421 sub *kisimmu* and Borger 1978: 293 (supplement) for the value *kisim<sub>7</sub>*. A further reading of our sign is *subx*, and it is then denoting the verb corresponding to Akk. *enēqu* “suckle”, *našābu* “suck (in)”. This is a late reading, and to my knowledge it is only attested in “Enlil and Sud”, l. 5, see Civil 1983: 50, 61.

12 MSL 14, MSL 3, and MSL 9.

attestation from Labat 1951), one is the incantation from Boghazköy, and the sixth is probably not referring to *şertu* as breast/teat.<sup>13</sup>

Noticeable is that *şertu*, Labat 1951 not counted, is found in non-human and “anomalous” contexts. In the OB incantation the word refers to the breasts of a witch, in *šumma izbu* to those of an animal and in Ee to goddesses in very specific contexts. As to the goddesses of Ee, Tiamat is described as having animal form with a tail, and she also has *şertu*.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the goddesses who suckle Marduk might be understood as having non-human form since their suckling is so described in connection to the relevant passage.<sup>15</sup> It is only in Labat 1951, then, that *şertu* is used about the breasts of a normal woman. However, in Labat 1951, the word for breast is most often logographically written (16 times), and syllabically four times with *tulû* and twice with *şertu*. The word *şertu* seems to refer to the whole udder (or breast) rather than the teat (or nipple); at least in the case from *šumma izbu*, since there it is said that “if the *şertu* of a fetus is full of milk when it is born...”.<sup>16</sup> To conclude, the word *şertu* is attested from the OB period as well as from the first millennium. The dictionaries give a picture of a word not at all frequently used, and when used it mainly occurs in relation with animals or supernatural beings (four times of six). Because of the few attestations however, it is not possible to determine for sure in what contexts *şertu* is normally used.

The picture of *tulû* is different; it is quite often attested. The *AHw* has about thirty references, logograms not included. We find it in the OB and subsequent periods, including Standard Babylonian, and also in Neo-Assyrian texts. It is used for women, but also for goddesses, for Lamaštu, the *ardat lilî* (female demons) and once for a man.<sup>17</sup> In several of the syllabically written cases *tulû* is found in a wet-nurse context. Also in the cases of logographical writing (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA) the majority is found in a wet nurse context. Regarding connection to sex, the female is by far the most represented as having *tulû*.

In the *CAD* we find most of the attestations of *tulû*/DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA found in the *AHw*, and the picture there is roughly the same; both with syllabic and logographic writing, *tulû*/DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA is primarily found in wet-nurse contexts. Besides the nine syllabic writings in wet-nurse contexts, the *CAD* also has five other examples when *tulû* refers to women or goddesses: a man is placed between breasts of goddesses (= *AHw*); “if her nipples are pale” (= *AHw*); “the golden breasts for Annunītu” (= *AHw*); “if a woman’s breasts have

13 The sixth is found in Falkenstein 1931: no. 33 line 40: [...] TUK *şer-ti ina tu-le-e-ša2*, which he probably correctly translates as “Schlange (?) an ihrer Brust”. For *şertu* as snake, see *CAD şirtu* B and Sjöberg 1996: 17.

14 Ee V: 57. *iš-pu-uk ina şer-ti-ša2 š[a-de]-[e] bi-ru-ti*, 59. *e-piš zib-bat-sa dur-ma-ḥi-iš u2-rak-kis-ma*, see Lambert & Parker 1966: 29.

15 Ee I 95. *erbetta inā(IGI.II)-šu2 erbetta uznā(PI.II)-šu*; 99. *u gu4-lu ina ilāni(DINGIR.DINGIR) šu-tur la-a-an-[šu]*, see Lambert & Parker 1966: 4.

16 Leichty 1970: 171: 79’ and 80’: BE *iz-bu ki-ma* U3.DU2 *şe-ri-si-su GA ma-[la-a-at-ma]*.

17 Furthermore, the logogram DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA is once used for the god Bēl, Ebeling 1931: 15: *nūnī(KU6).MEŠ tu-la-tu-šu2 GIŠ.tināti(PEŠ3).MEŠ DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA.MEŠ-šu2 šamni(13).MEŠ dimāi(ER2).MEŠ-šu2* “His worms are fishes, his breasts dates, his tears oil”. However, the similes of the body parts in this text are quite dissimilar from the actual body parts and therefore no conclusion on the exact reference of DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA can be made here. To note though, is that an attestation of the breasts of Bēl written syllabically is found in the *CAD*.

been pulled off her chest (see also *CAD*, *irtu* 1', p. 184); "if a woman's breasts are small". Furthermore, as the *AHw*, also the *CAD* has four instances where a syllabic *tulû* refers to the breast(s) of a man; "if there is a mole on the breast"; "they pummeled my breast" (= *AHw*, text No. 3 below); "whom Bēl had pushed away from his breast"; "you cleanse his [...] breast with oil". The *CAD* also has one instance where the logogram (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA) refers to the male breasts; "if his right breast is red he will live, if his left breast is red he will die". Although there are five instances (syllabic and one logographic) when a male is associated with *tulû*, also in the *CAD* the female is almost always the one connected with *tulû* (about 32 attestations of 37 if Labat 1951 is counted as one source, or about 57 of 62 if all instances from Labat 1951 are listed).

The *CAD*, furthermore, gives one MA example when *tulû* might be written syllabically, referring to the teats of sheep: 2 UDU.MEŠ *tu-le*.<sup>18</sup> However, this text is differently read by the *AHw*; there it is understood as UDU.MEŠ<sup>tu</sup>, i.e. the -tu is read as a gloss, denoting that we deal with female sheep, *immertu*. The association between an animal and *tulû* in the *CAD* is unique in the dictionaries, and the same reference is found under the entries *immeru* and *tulû* alike. Otherwise such a usage is found neither under *immertu*, nor under *immeru*. I tentatively conclude that *tulû* is not normally used for animals.

Whereas the *CAD* translates *tulû* as "breast", the *AHw* translates *tulû* as "Brust(warze), Mamma". Since *tulû* is also used in connection with men it may be suspected that it also refers to the nipple. On the other hand, for men also the breasts – the two chest muscles and the nipples – can be specifically referred to. As can be seen in the examples given above, *tulû* on a man can be interpreted as the whole breast(s) rather than the nipple. In the following example it does not seem likely that *tulû* only refers to the nipples, since the man is hit on his *tulê*:

**No. 3** Lambert 1960: 42

62. [ir-ti] im-ḥa-šu tu-le-e iṭ-ṭe<sub>4</sub>-[ru]

They struck my [chest] (and) repeatedly beat my breast.

A further argument against the translation "nipple" of *tulû* is that there is another expression for nipple: *appi tulê*.<sup>19</sup>

In wet-nursing contexts it is seldom clear whether *tulû* refers to the nipple or to the whole breast. *Šurpu* III 97 could be used as an argument for "nipple", whereas the following line 98 could be quoted as an argument for "breast":

**No. 4** *Šurpu* III (Reiner 1958)

97. ma-mit tu-li-i ina KA šer<sub>3</sub>-ri ša<sub>2</sub>-ka-nu

18 *CAD* I/J, *immeru*, 1. 2' b'; and T, *tulû*, 2 (KAJ 238: 2). Since the other reference in the *CAD* when *tulû* is allegedly used with an animal is in fact a logogram, given as UBUR, that instance is disregarded here.

19 See *CAD*, *tulû* 3'd.



98. *ma-mit ši-bit' tu-le-e* [...] - x

Oath of “to put the nipple into the mouth of a small child”.

Oath of “[to cause] the seizure of the breasts”.

Other instances when we have to translate *tulû* as “breast” are the following attestations:

**No. 5** A Sumero-Akkadian Hymn of Nanâ (Reiner 1974: 224)

3. *ina* UNUG<sup>ki</sup> *ḥa-ri-ma-ku ina* <sup>(uru)</sup>*da-du-ni* [*t*]*u-la-a kub-bu-ta-ku* (Var. *tu-le-ia kab-bu-te*)

I am a *ḥarimtu* woman in Uruk; in Daduni my breasts are heavy.

**No. 6** Era IV (Gössmann 1955: 30–31)

121. *tu-la-a* (Var. *tu-lu-u*) *lu-ša<sub>2</sub>-bil-ma la i-bal-lut šer<sub>2</sub>-ri*

I will cause the drying up of the breasts, and the child will not live.

Besides the overwhelming usage of *tulû* in wet-nursing contexts, there is also one instance of a sexual context found in the “Assyrian Dream Book”:

**No. 7** The “Assyrian Dream Book” (Oppenheim 1956: 337)

12. [DIŠ] BARA<sub>2</sub> *ina* MAŠ<sub>2</sub>.GE<sub>6</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> KI SAL *ša-lil* [...]

13. [DIŠ] BARA<sub>2</sub> *ina* MAŠ<sub>2</sub>.GE<sub>6</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> NUNDUM MUNUS [...]

14. [DIŠ] BARA<sub>2</sub> *ina* MAŠ<sub>2</sub>.GE<sub>6</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> *tu-le-e* x [...]

15. [DIŠ] BARA<sub>2</sub> *ina* MAŠ<sub>2</sub>.GE<sub>6</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> SAL *tu-[le-e-ša<sub>2</sub> ...]*

12. If the king sleeps with a woman [...] in his dream

13. If the king [...] the lips of a woman in his dream

14. If the king [...] the breasts [of a woman] in his dream

15. If the king [...] a woman, [her bre]asts, in his dream

As has already been pointed out, the word *tulû* is mainly used for the normal female breast, of a human or a goddess. However, it is also used about Lamaštu, the female demon specialized in afflicting pregnant or birthing women and newborn children, as well as about the *ardat lilî*.

In one text Lamaštu says:

**No. 8** (AO 6473, Thureau-Dangin 1921: 163)<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the similar text in Myhrman 1902: 174: 31–32 with the correspondences to our lines.

rev.

19. *bi<sub>2</sub>-la-ni DUMU.MEŠ-ki-na lu-še-ni<sub>q</sub> u DUMU.SAL.MEŠ-ki-na lu-ut-tar-ra*

20. *a-na pi-i DUMU.SAL.MEŠ-ki-na lu-uš-tak-ka-na tu-la-a*

19. Bring me your sons – I will wet-nurse them, and I will unceasingly lift your daughters.

20. I will unceasingly give the breast to the mouth of your daughters.

In some other instances the word *tulû* is also used together with *Lamaštu*, as part of a description of her, which includes her bad traits:

**No. 9A** (Falkenstein 1931: 33)<sup>21</sup>

obv.

37. [...] *x-x-it-ta-ša<sub>2</sub> pi-ti tu-lu-ša<sub>2</sub>*

/---/

40. [...] *TUK šer-ti ina tu-le-e-ša<sub>2</sub>*

Her x x x [is ...], her breasts are uncovered.

[...] x x snakes upon her breasts.

Finally, in a Late Babylonian text, the *ardat lilî*'s breasts are also called *tulû*:

**No. 10A** (W. 22653, von Weiher 1983: no. 6)

43. *ki-sikil ubur-a-ni ga nu-ĝal<sub>2</sub>-la a gig-ga i-i*

*/MIN ša<sub>2</sub> ina tu-le-šu<sub>2</sub> ši-/iz[-bu la ba-šu<sub>2</sub>-u maršiš issi (?)]*

The young girl/*ardat lilî*, in whose breasts there was no milk, cried bitterly.

Previously it was said that *šertu* seems mainly to be used with animals and supernatural beings, and in the discussion about *tulû* it can be concluded that the latter word is primarily used about normal women or goddesses. *Lamaštu* and the *ardat lilî* are exceptions to these tendencies. However, the lines from Example 8, above, could be understood as an attempt by *Lamaštu* to cheat the mothers of children that she is an ordinary wet-nurse. That would explain why we don't have *šertu* here. This interpretation is not possible for the line from Example 9A, where *Lamaštu* is described with her negative traits and nevertheless the word *tulû* is used. The *ardat lilî* is a borderline case, since she is originally an ordinary woman who died prematurely.

Thus, from the about thirty instances of *tulû* in the *AHW* the word is used twice in a descriptive way about a supernatural, abnormal being. These two instances do not seem to be the common usage of *tulû*. The examination of the two Akkadian words *šertu* and *tulû* indicates that *šertu* is mainly used for animals and that its main meaning is "udder, teat". These are also the meanings given in the *AHW* and the *CAD*. What has been done here is perhaps to

<sup>21</sup> Falkenstein (1931: 9) enumerates this line as 42 in his transliteration.

throw some further light upon the usage of the words. The word *şertu* seems not only to be used for animals, but also for “anomalous” beings, as was suggested since it is used for the goddesses of Ee and the witch in the OB incantation. Regarding *tulû* we have seen that it is mainly used in wet-nursing contexts.

The equation *akan* = *şertu* and *ubur* = *tulû* in the lexical lists combined with the probable meanings of *şertu* “udder, teat” and *tulû* “breast; nipple” suggest that the sign DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA should be read as *ubur* in relation to humans and anthropomorphous goddesses and as *akan* when used for animals and anomalous beings. This is also supported by the syllabic writings of *ubur* outside the lexical lists, all of them in a wet-nurse context:

**No. 11** Cohen 1981, eršemma No. 79, 63

5. <sup>d</sup>un<sup>u2</sup>-ma<sub>3</sub>-i-bi<sub>2</sub>-ma-al ama ubur<sup>u2</sup>-bi-ur zi-da

Unma’ibimal, mother of the right breast!

**No. 12** de Genouillac 1925: 124, rev. 3, 5<sup>22</sup>

3. lu<sub>2</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>4</sub><sup>l</sup>-ra u<sub>3</sub>-bur zi-da-ni mu-na-la-e

5. lu<sub>2</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>4</sub>-ra u<sub>3</sub>-bur ga-bu-na mu-na-la-e

3. She gives her right breast to the human.

5. She gives her left breast to the human.

**No. 13A** de Genouillac 1930: 75 (Pl. CXLIII)<sup>23</sup>

31<sup>l</sup>. u<sub>3</sub>-bu-ur<sub>2</sub> gu-a GA<sub>2</sub> LA GA<sub>2</sub> KA

To my knowledge, there is only one syllabically written attestation of *akan* outside the lexical lists. It is found in Ali 1964, letter B 18, by the author called “Dedication of a Dog to Nintinugga”. Here is the line, which is a part of a description of the goddess Nintinugga:

**No. 14** Dedication of a Dog to Nintinugga (Ali 1964: 144)

5. *akan*<sup>a-ka-an</sup> du<sub>10</sub> kur-kur ša<sub>3</sub> si-si nam-ḥe<sub>2</sub>-a laḥ<sub>4</sub>

Good breast/teat, satisfying all the countries, bringing that of abundance.

As we saw, the lexical lists equal *akan* with *şertu*, and *şertu* is mainly used with animals. This interpretation may be applied also here. Nintinugga was a healing goddess belonging to the same type as Gula/Ninisina/Ninkarrak,<sup>24</sup> and was later also syncretized with these goddesses. The syncretism is also expressed in the above mentioned letter, since a dog was dedicated to

22 Dupl.: VS II 3 II, 9–11, see Falkenstein 1959: 98, n. 3.

23 See also van Dijk 1960: 89–90 and Falkenstein 1933: 302–303.

24 See e.g. Kraus 1951: 70–74 and Frankena 1971: 695.

Nintinugga. The dog was the attribute and symbol of the other healing goddesses as well.<sup>25</sup> As a symbol, the dog may have represented the goddess even to identity,<sup>26</sup> just as Šamaš = sun or weather god = bull.

However, the understanding of ubur = *tulû* = female breast, and akan = *šertu* = udder, teat, becomes problematic in the light of the fact that the feeding place of the cattle pen is also glossed as ubur:

**No. 15** Kramer 1980: 7

8. maš<sub>2</sub> tur-tur-zu e<sub>2</sub> ubur<sup>u2-bu-ra</sup> -ka er<sub>2</sub> gig i<sub>3</sub>-[še<sub>22</sub>-še<sub>22</sub>]

Your small kids we[ep] bitterly in the feeding pen.

**No. 16** Išme-Dagan J (Klein 1998: 206–209)

19A. e<sub>2</sub> bu-ra-ka ku<sub>4</sub>-ra-zu-de<sub>3</sub>

21B. e<sub>2</sub> ubu[r]-ra-ka ku<sub>4</sub>-ra-[zu]-de<sub>3</sub>

When you enter the feeding-pen,

One explanation may be that in Sumerian ubur and akan are synonyms and originally were used for both humans and animals.<sup>27</sup> The equation of akan with *šertu* and ubur with *tulû* may then have been an interpretation of the Akkadians, based upon the semantics of their own words.

### The use of gaba for the female breasts

Besides the use of ubur (DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA) for female breasts in Sumerian literature there are also four well-known passages where the word gaba is used instead. First gaba is used about Ereškigal's breasts in Inana's Descent (ID), where she is described as a woman lying in pain:

**No. 17** ID (Sladek 1974; Black et al. 1996–2006)

230. ama-gan-e nam-dumu-ne-ne-še<sub>3</sub>

231. <sup>d</sup>ereš-ki-gal-la-ke<sub>4</sub> i-nu<sub>2</sub>-nu<sub>2</sub>-ra-am<sub>3</sub>

232. ur<sub>5</sub> ku-ga-na gada nu-un-bur<sub>2</sub>

<sup>25</sup> Seidl 1971: 487; Avalos 1995: 101.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Avalos (1995: 101): “Gula, Ninisina, Ninkarrak, Bau and Nintinugga may be viewed as different names of a single female healing deity who was envisioned as a dog”.

<sup>27</sup> This is just a suggestion of a possible direction for further investigation. Cf. Mordwinian, a Finno-Ugrian language, where the word *pot'e* means both “female breast” and (animal) “teat”. At least once it is also used for “udder”, otherwise denoted by *odar*, which is an Indo-European loanword, Dr. Bernhard Wälchli, private communication.

233. gaba-ni bur-šagan-gin<sub>7</sub> nu-un-gid<sub>2</sub>

230. The mothers giving birth – because of their “that of having children”,<sup>28</sup>

231. Ereškigal is lying (there).

232. She has not spread linen onto her pure body.

233. She has not stretched out her breasts like šagan vessels.

These lines have a close parallel in “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld” (GEN), both in the Sumerian version and the version of the twelfth tablet of the Gilgameš epic (GE), although in the Sumerian version of GEN it is less certain that gaba refers to the female breasts:

**No. 18** GEN (Shaffer 1963; Black et al. 1996–2006)

200. i<sub>3</sub>-nu<sub>2</sub>-a-ra i<sub>3</sub>-nu<sub>2</sub>-a-ra

201. ama <sup>d</sup>nin-a-zu i<sub>3</sub>-nu<sub>2</sub>-a-ra

202. ur<sub>5</sub> ku<sub>3</sub>-ga-na tug<sub>2</sub> nu-um-dul

203. gaba ku<sub>3</sub>-ga-na gada nu-um-bur<sub>2</sub>

200. to her who lies, to her who lies,

201. to the mother of Ninazu who lies,

202. her pure shoulders are not covered with a cloth,

203. on her pure breasts no linen is spread.

**No. 19** GE (George 2003: 728–735)

GE XII 28. ša<sub>2</sub> šal-lat ša<sub>2</sub> šal-lat um-mu <sup>d</sup>nin.a.zu ša<sub>2</sub> šal-lat

GE XII 29. pu-da-a-ša el-le-e-tu<sub>4</sub> šu-ba-a-tu (var: -ta) ul kut-tu-ma (var: -mu)

GE XII 30. i-rat-sa ki-i pu-ri šap-pa-ti [l]a šad-da-at (var: [... šad-da-a]t<sub>2</sub>)

GE XII 28. she who lies, she who lies, the mother of Ninazu who lies,

GE XII 29. her pure shoulders are not covered by a cloth

GE XII 30. she does not stretch out her breasts like šappatu vessels.

Although Ereškigal is called “the mother of Ninazu” in GEN and GE, I understand her to represent the antithetical netherworld in ID; she lies there barren, envious of “real women”, *not* having her breasts stretched out in the same way as the mothers who had given birth. Within this context, where the netherworld is seen as a negation of the world of the living, we might understand GEN as representing Ereškigal as unmarried. Karel van der Toorn writes that “in Sumerian the verb *dul*, ‘to cover’, developed the connotation ‘to marry’”, and further that in a proverb it is said about the daughter of a poor man that “[s]he is a woman whom the man with whom she lies does not clothe/veil (*dul*), who is not given as his wife (*dam-a-ni*)”.<sup>29</sup>

28 The ama-gan-e in this line is commonly understood as referring to Ereškigal. I instead read it as referring to “mothers”, who are then the subjects of the plural in the following *nam-dumu-ne-ne*.

29 van der Toorn 1996: 45.

Thus, just as the poor daughter is not represented in the normative, married state, this can be the case also of the queen of the netherworld.

The two other instances of gaba are in a context of pleasure, and come from the “Dumuzi and Inana love songs”.<sup>30</sup> In the first we are in a context of wedding, when the bride bathes and adorns herself before meeting the groom, and when the groom brings gifts to his bride. The lines that are relevant for us are the following:

**No. 20 Dumuzi-Inana C (Sefati 1998)**

39. A i-da-lam gaba-me ba-su<sub>8</sub>  
     C [i]-[d]a-lam gaba-mu ba-g[ub-     ]  
     D [i-d]a-lam gaba-[                     ]
40. A i-da-lam gal<sub>4</sub>-la-me sig<sub>4</sub> ba-an-mu<sub>2</sub>  
     C i-[da]-lam gal<sub>4</sub>-la-ma<sub>3</sub> sig<sub>4</sub> ba-[         ]  
     D [i-d]a-lam gal<sub>4</sub>-[                     ]

39. Now our breasts are erect.

40. Now hair grows on our womb.

The lines from the second for us relevant love song are:

**No. 21 Dumuzi-Inana Y (Sefati 1998)**

39. ze<sub>2</sub>-ba-mu gaba-me-a su-ub-bi  
 40. gi-ru su<sub>6</sub>hur-za<sup>?</sup> unken-na dugud-da  
 41. šeš i<-bi<sub>2</sub>> sa<sub>6</sub>-sa<sub>6</sub>-mu gaba-me-a su-ub-bi

39. My sweet – caress our breasts!

40. Lover, your mane is weighty in the assembly.

41. My brother of beautiful eyes, caress our breasts!

Since we have only these four instances of gaba = “female breast”, it is difficult to determine in what contexts we have this use. However, these passages are highly interesting for those interested in Sumerian literature in general and female identity and sexuality as described in the literature in particular. The impression is that the word gaba is used for “female breasts” in the sense of young, budding breasts which have never swollen due to pregnancy and which have never lactated. In accordance with this interpretation, Ereškigal is described as a not fully developed woman, and as if in a state of eternal non-consummated womanhood.<sup>31</sup> Inana

30 The names of the deities in the first text are not mentioned in the song however, but as Sefati (1998: 138) writes, this song is linguistically and thematically similar to the (other) Dumuzi and Inana love songs.

31 There is a long tradition of Ereškigal as the mother of Ninazu, see e.g. Wiggermann 1998-2001: 330. At the same time the netherworld and its inhabitants were seen as the antithesis of the living and their world, the former being unable to produce life, see Sladek 1974: 65–67.

(/the woman in Dumuzi-Inana C) instead, is positively described as a woman with budding breasts, about to marry, and therefore accordingly on her way to fulfill her role as woman and to reach full womanhood. Inana's yearning will be fulfilled, whereas Ereškigal will always yearn in vain.

There is one text that I know of that seems to contradict the suggestion that the use of gaba in relation to women denotes the young breasts of a woman who has not yet given birth. Here the word ubur is used about an *ardat lilî*, a prematurely dead woman who has never given birth. We have already seen the relevant passage above, when discussing *tulû*. Here comes the Sumerian line of the bilingual text:

**No. 10B** W. 22653 (von Weiher 1983: no. 6)

43. ki-sikil ubur-a-ni ga nu-ĝal<sub>2</sub>-la a gig-ga i-i

The young girl/*ardat lilî*, in whose breasts there was no milk, cried bitterly.

This is a late Babylonian text, and if gaba originally had a special denotation regarding young women before pregnancy and birth-giving this may have been lost during the more than 1000 years since Sumerian was a spoken language.

Furthermore, relevant is also whether *irtu* is used denoting the female breasts, which it is seldom – if ever. The only possible instances I have found are the line above from GE XII 30 (No. 19, that describes Ereškigal), and Falkenstein 1931 referred to in the *AHW*. The latter text is already referred to above (No. 9A) where Lamaštu is described. Here come the relevant lines again:

**No. 19** GE (George 2003)

GE XII 30. *i-rat-sa ki-i pu-ri šap-pa-ti [ul šad-da-t]a*

GE XII 30. she does not stretch out her breasts like *šappatu* vessels.

**No. 9B** Falkenstein 1931: 33

Vs.

37. [...] *x-x-it-ta-ša<sub>2</sub> pi-ti tu-lu-ša<sub>2</sub>*

/---/

40. [...] TUK *šer-ti ina tu-le-e-ša<sub>2</sub>*

[...]

44. [*i-na da*]*mi ru-um-mu-ka ir-ta-a-ša<sub>2</sub>*

37. Her x x x [is                   ], her breasts are uncovered.

[...]

40. [                   ] x x snakes upon her breasts.

[...]

## 44. Her chest is bathing in blood.

In GE the word *irtu* is as far as I can see clearly used for the breasts of Ereškigal. Can this be due to a translation from the Sumerian *gaba*, resulting in an anomaly in the Akkadian language? Regarding the lines about Lamaštu, although the mentioning of *irtu* comes after *tulû*, I do not find it likely that we shall understand *irtu* as denoting the female breasts.

Lastly, the word written *dumugabû* in the dictionaries (the *CAD* also has the expressions *mārat irti/ša irti sub irtu 4' b'*) and translated with “suckling”, literally “the child of the breast/chest”, relates the word *gaba* to wet-nursing. According to the *AHW*, the word is a Sumerian loan word, and in the examples given in both the *AHW* and the *CAD* it is always logographically written. Of the dictionaries, only the *CAD* gives one possible syllabically written *ša irti*, but the context is broken, and therefore the reading is uncertain.

The Sumerian word *dumu(munus).gaba* is seldom attested, and in the literary texts we do not meet it at all. In *Ĥĥ* I we find it in the following context: 100. *ibila* = *ap-lu*, 101. *dumu.gaba* = *ŠU-u*, 102. *dumu.munus.gaba* = *ŠU-u*. In *Ĥg* I A we instead read: 7. *dumu.gaba* = *LÚ.TUR ša<sub>2</sub> DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA*, 8. *dumu.munus.gaba* = *DUMU.MUNUS ša<sub>2</sub> DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA*.<sup>32</sup> Thus, the lexical lists give two interpretations; in *Ĥĥ* “heir” and in *Ĥg* “suckling”. According to Waetzoldt the “milk-children” (*dumu.ga*) and the “breast-children” (*dumu.gaba*) are recorded in Presargonic and Old Akkadian documents.<sup>33</sup> Gelb refers to these Old Akkadian documents in his discussion of the ration system.<sup>34</sup> He writes that in this period the system can best be reconstructed from the Gasur and Susa texts. Besides the attestations found in Waetzoldt and Gelb, I only know of two texts where we meet the term *dumu.gaba* in the Sumerian material: 1. In an Ur III text published by Watson, where both *dumu.munus.gaba* and *dumu.nita<sub>2</sub>.gaba* are met with.<sup>35</sup> 2. In an OB Mari list of personnel published by Talon, where we have three columns: *lu<sub>2</sub> | dumu | dumu.gaba*, and a vertical row of names which are then marked as belonging to either of these designations.<sup>36</sup> (Curiously none of the names is referred to as *dumu.gaba*, and therefore that column was actually unnecessary.)

There is a term *gaba* used in the breeding of animals that may be of interest for us. Heimpel, referring to *Ĥĥ* XIII 84, means that this term goes back to the Akkadian term *immer irti*.<sup>37</sup> This cannot be deduced from *Ĥĥ* with certainty however, since the main aim of this lexical list is to supply Sumerian words with Akkadian translations. Used with animals *gaba* often occurs besides *ga* in contexts like the following:

## No. 22 CT 32: 13

32 MSL 5: 16, 44.

33 Waetzoldt 1987: 132.

34 Gelb 1965: 232–233.

35 Watson 1993: no. 206H.

36 Talon 1985: 126 no. 221.

37 Heimpel 1993: 122.



## III

5. šu niġin<sub>2</sub> 7 sila<sub>4</sub> gaba
6. šu niġin<sub>2</sub> 1 maš<sub>2</sub> gaba
7. šu niġin<sub>2</sub> 6 munus AŠ<sub>2</sub>-GAR<sub>3</sub> gaba
8. šu niġin<sub>2</sub> 1 sila<sub>4</sub> ga
9. šu niġin<sub>2</sub> 1 maš<sub>2</sub> ga

5. In total: 7 “chest-lambs”
6. In total: 1 “chest-kid”
7. In total: 6 “chest-nanny goats (?)”
8. In total: 1 “milk-lamb”
9. In total: 1 “milk-kid”

Heimpel suggests that we shall connect the term *gaba* with the expression *maš<sub>2</sub> gaba tab* “to hold a kid at the chest”. Then the word can be understood as referring to lambs/kids that are still small enough to be held. This would also explain why there were no “chest-calves”, since they are probably too big to be held at the chest.<sup>38</sup> Another interpretation is offered by Steinkeller, who sees the term *gaba* as a probable abbreviation of the descriptions *silā<sub>4</sub> gaba u<sub>8</sub>* and *maš<sub>2</sub> gaba u<sub>3</sub>* of the Early Dynastic Ebla lexical list of animals B. Steinkeller therefore understands *gaba* as “(animal at the) breast (of its mother)”. He means that “the possibility that *gaba* could be an alternative term for ‘suckling’ (as in well-known (dumu.)*gaba* ‘suckling infant’) is precluded by examples in which this term appears together with *ga*”. He therefore suggests that *gaba* refers to semi-weaned animals.<sup>39</sup>

On the one hand we have the *dumu.ga* and *dumu.gaba* of the Presargonic and Old Akkadian texts. On the other we have similar expressions regarding animals. These two facts together with Steinkeller’s interpretation of (animal).*gaba* as referring to the “(animal at the) breast (of its mother)” make me suggest the following explanation for the background of *dumu.gaba*: *dumu.ga* most probably refers to suckling infants, just as (animal).*ga* most probably refers to suckling animals. Then *dumu(/animal).gaba* must refer to something slightly different, and Steinkeller’s suggestion “semi-weaned” – about the animals – seems to be a probable interpretation for both animals and humans. In sources younger than the Old Akkadian period *dumu.ga* seems to have disappeared, and in the Neo-Sumerian sources we only find instances of *dumu.gaba*. This word is then also found in Akkadian, at least from the OB period, as *dumugabû* with the meaning “suckling”.

In Akkadian texts *mār(at) irti/dumu(.munus).gaba* seems to be a special term, often used in contracts and in enumerations of people.<sup>40</sup> One example where we have a *dumu.gaba* in an Akkadian document, and unique because the child is mentioned by name in the following line:

**No. 23** Chiera 1922: 107

<sup>38</sup> Heimpel 1993: 122.

<sup>39</sup> Steinkeller 1995: 55.

<sup>40</sup> See e.g. Gurney 1949: 138, 147–148, and TCL 1: 65.

1–2. 1 DUMU.NITA<sub>2</sub>.GABA *i<sub>3</sub>-li<sub>2</sub>-a-wi-li* MU.NI.IM

One suckling, Iliawili by name, (...)

Important to note is that the juridical texts called “Akkadian” are sometimes for the most part written with logograms, in other words, in Sumerian, with only some Akkadian words. The text cited above only has two Akkadian words at the end. Then there are others that contain a large amount of Akkadian words, but also Sumerian formulas.<sup>41</sup> It is of course difficult to know if the logogram DUMU.(MUNUS).GABA originates from the Sumerian formulas or if it is an Akkadian expression written with a logogram.

The data referred to above shows a picture where *dumu.gaba* occurs in border regions of Mesopotamia; in Gasur, Susa, Ebla and Mari. Furthermore, all are found in a Semitic context. It may be that it originally goes back on a Semitic equivalent, and that the expression *mār(at) irti* is the primary expression.

Regardless of the origin of our word, it is certain that in comparison with *šerru*, another word for baby, infant, the word *mār(at) irti/dumu(.munus).gaba* is rather rare in the sources, at least this is the picture given by the dictionaries.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, as was noticed, in the literary texts we never meet *dumu.gaba*. In wet-nursing contexts the child is instead always called simply *dumu*.<sup>43</sup>

To sum up, following Steinkeller’s argumentation regarding *gaba* in relation to animals, I suggest that the use of *gaba* in relation to sucklings is a secondary development, and that it initially referred to “semi-weaned children”. If this holds true the word does not contradict our interpretation that *gaba* in some cases can refer to the budding breasts of women who have not yet given birth. In *dumu.gaba* the reference is children held at the chest, and it does not specifically refer to the breasts of the mother/nurse.

### The breasts/teats of heaven

In light of the previous discussions one question to pose here is whether the DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA an-na is denoting an animal teat or a human breast. The sky was often seen as having bovine form.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, in Gudea Cyl. B, the DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA of the cow of heaven are mentioned (see below, No. 28), a fact that also suggests that we are dealing with the *teats* of heaven. Therefore, since *šertu* probably = “teat”, and since *akan* is translated with *šertu* in the lexical lists, I will tentatively read DAG.KISIM<sub>5</sub>×GA as *akan* when followed by an-na. A well-known allegoric usage of the word *akan* is found in several royal inscriptions in the expression *akan an-na* “the teats of heaven”. I give three examples of the expression within its context of power and abundance.<sup>45</sup>

41 E.g. BE 6/I: 96.

42 See AHw sub *dumugabû* and *šerru*, and CAD sub *dumugabû*, *irtu* 4’ b’, and *šerru*.

43 See Black et al. 1996–2006, e.g. “The cursing of Agade”, l. 34; “Gilgameš and Ħuwawa A”, ll. 134, 169, and “Inana’s descent to the nether world”, l. 304.

44 Jacobsen 1976: 95.

45 I know of one further example of this expression: Nanna L, l. 24 (Sjöberg 1973b: 31–36, No. 5).

**No. 24A** Lugalzagesi 1 (Steible 1982: 310–325)

## III

19–21. nam-ti-ĝu<sub>10</sub> nam-ti ḥa-ba-daḥ-ḥe

22–23. kur u<sub>2</sub> sal-la ḥa-mu-da-nu<sub>2</sub>

/.../

27–28. akan an-na-ke<sub>4</sub> si ḥa-mu-da<sub>5</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub>

/.../

32–34. nam sa<sub>6</sub>-ga mu-tar-re-eš<sub>2</sub>-a<sup>1</sup> šu na-mu-da-ni-bal-e-ne

19–21. To my life may he add life.

22–23. May the foreign lands lie on the meadows under me (i.e. during my reign).

/.../

27–28. May the teats of heaven be caused to flow under me.

/.../

32–34. The sweet destiny that they (An and Enlil) determined they will not alter there (in the land) under me.

**No. 25A** Išme-Dagan D (Sjöberg 1973b: 13–15, No. 2; Sjöberg 1977: 29–32, No. 7)

## A obv. ii

3. nam-tar-ra-zu ki-bi-še<sub>3</sub> ši-gar <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-ban<sub>3</sub>-da-me-e[n]

/.../

10. a-a <sup>d</sup>en-ki <sup>d</sup>iš-me-<sup>d</sup>da-gan [...] /di/ki tur gal ḥe<sub>2</sub>-x [...]

/.../

## B rev. and A rev. 1

3. nir ḥe<sub>2</sub>-ġal<sub>2</sub> kur-kur lu-a-ba gaba-gi<sub>4</sub> na-[an-TUKU.TUKU]

4. <sup>d</sup>iš-me-<sup>d</sup>dagan sig-da igi-nim-še<sub>3</sub> [...]

/.../

6. <sup>i7</sup>idigna <sup>i7</sup>buranun-e si ḥu-mu-x [...-sa<sub>2</sub> (x)] / ḥe<sub>2</sub>-ġal<sub>2</sub> ḥu-mu-na-ab-[tum<sub>2</sub>-mu]

7. akan an-na-ke<sub>4</sub> ḡal<sub>2</sub> ḥu-mu-na-ab-tag<sub>4</sub>-[...] / buru<sub>14</sub>-bi ḥe<sub>2</sub>-na- [...]

/.../

10. a<-a> <sup>d</sup>en-ki <sup>d</sup>iš-me-<sup>d</sup>da-gan nam-lugal [...] / bala ḥe<sub>2</sub>-ġal<sub>2</sub>-la saġ-eš<sub>2</sub> [rig<sub>7</sub>-...]

## A obv. ii

3. (...) and thus that of your destiny was restored; you are Enlilbanda.

/.../

10. Father Enki! Išme-Dagan – [for him] may you [...] small and big [...]

## B rev. and A. rev. 1

3. May there be trust! In all those innumerable countries he has no rival.

4. Išme-Dagan, from (the lands) below to those above [(for him may he) ...]

/.../

6. The Tigris and Euphrates may he (Enki) [cause to flow strai]ght; abundance may he bring to him (Išme-Dagan).  
 7. The teats of heaven may he (Enki) open for him; their crops may he [...]for him.  
 /.../  
 10. Father Enki! Išme-Dagan – [for him may (you ...)] the monarchy ([...]); a reign of abundance bestow [upon him!]

**No. 26A** Rim-Sîn C (Steible 1975: 1–25; Charpin 1986: 275–278; Black et al. 1996–2006)

2. <sup>d</sup>ri-im-<sup>d</sup>sîn mu-pa<sub>3</sub>-da an ku<sub>3</sub>-ge nam gal an-na(-)tar  
 /.../  
 6. nam-sipa ke-en-gi ki-uri-še<sub>3</sub> zi-de<sub>3</sub>-eš pa<sub>3</sub>-da-me-en  
 /.../  
 15. nam-lugal kur niĝ<sub>2</sub> daĝal-la u<sub>4</sub> sud-ra<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> ħu-mu-ra-ab-sum  
 /.../  
 23. akan an sud-aĝ<sub>2</sub> ĝal<sub>2</sub> ħu-mu-ra-ab-tag<sub>4</sub> šeĝ<sub>x</sub> (IM.A)  
       an-na ħu-mu-ra-ab-šeĝ<sub>3</sub>  
 24. mu ma-da u<sub>4</sub> nam-ĥe<sub>2</sub> an ša<sub>3</sub>-ta za<sub>3</sub><sup>46</sup> ħu-mu-ra-ab-keš<sub>2</sub>
2. Rim-Sîn, called by name – for him pure An decided a great destiny.  
 /.../  
 6. You are righteously chosen to the shepherdship of Sumer and Ur.  
 /.../  
 15. The kingship over vast lands may be given to you until remote days.  
 /.../  
 23. The teats of shining heaven may be opened for you. The rain of heaven may be caused to rain for you.  
 24. Years of the land and days of abundance may be collected for you from heaven's interior.

As we see here, our word is used in a context where the king expresses a wish of royal power and a flourishing rule. Thus, these concepts – power and abundance – are intertwined; without a stable and flourishing country, the power and legitimacy of the king were threatened, and therefore were a prerequisite for power.

#### **Appendix: the verbs (most commonly) used with ubur/akan**

##### **si...sa<sub>2</sub>**

The verb si... sa<sub>2</sub> together with ubur/akan is found in the following lines:

**No. 27** Nanna L (Sjöberg 1973b: 31–36, No. 5)

24. akan an-na-ke<sub>4</sub> si-sa<sub>2</sub>-e-de<sub>3</sub>

<sup>46</sup> So collated by Charpin (1986: 275), contra Steible (1975: 22) who reads an ša<sub>3</sub> ĥe<sub>2</sub> ĝ[al]a<sub>7</sub>, which is based upon a collation by Walker.

To cause the teats of heaven to flow (...)

**No. 28** Gudea Cyl. B iii (Edzard 1997)

8. im-ma-al an-na-ke<sub>4</sub>

9. akan si ba-ni-ib<sub>2</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub>

The cow of heaven was caused to make her teats flow.

**No. 24B** Lugalzagesi 1 (Steible 1982)

27–28. akan an-na-ke<sub>4</sub> si ḥa-mu-da<sub>5</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub>

The teats of heaven may be caused to flow under me.

**No. 29** Temple Hymn No. 30 (Sjöberg & Bergmann 1969: 39–40)

390. nu-bar-ra akan umun<sub>7</sub><sup>1</sup> si sa<sub>2</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub>-e

(Ninisina/the temple) makes the (vessel of) “seven teats” flow for the nu-bar.

**No. 30** Šulgi F (ll. 1–29: Wilcke 1974: 184–185, 201)

10. ab<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>3</sub>-ge šul<sup>d</sup> suen-na-ka akan<sup>?</sup> amar-e si um-sa<sub>2</sub>

The pure cows, those of Suen’s young man, have made the udder flow for the calves.

**ḡal<sub>2</sub>...tag<sub>4</sub> (da<sub>13</sub>-da<sub>13</sub>)**

The verb ḡal<sub>2</sub>...tag<sub>4</sub> (da<sub>13</sub>-da<sub>13</sub>) is in this context semantically related to si...sa<sub>2</sub>; both denote an action which makes water flow (the relevant lines are also cited above, No:s 25A, 26A, but there discussed from another point of view).

**No. 26B** Rim-Sîn C (Steible 1975: 1–25; Charpin 1986: 275–278)

23. akan an sud-aḡ<sub>2</sub> ḡal<sub>2</sub> ḥu-mu-ra-ab-tag<sub>4</sub> šeḡ<sub>x</sub> (IM.A)  
an-na ḥu-mu-ra-ab-šeḡ<sub>3</sub>

**No. 25B** Išme-Dagan D (Sjöberg 1973b: 13–16, No. 2; Sjöberg 1977: 29–32, No. 7)

B rev.

7. akan an-na-ke<sub>4</sub> ḡal<sub>2</sub> hu-mu-na-ab-tag<sub>4</sub>-[...] / buru<sub>14</sub>-bi ḥe<sub>2</sub>-na- [...]

**gu<sub>7</sub>**

**No. 31** Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta (Cohen 1973)

212/530. akan ab<sub>2</sub> zi-da-ka gu<sub>7</sub>-a-ar

For the one who has been fed at the udder of the good cow.

**No. 32** Enlil and Sud (Civil 1983: 43–66; this line, 50; A, B: Old Babylonian, U: Neo-Assyrian)

5. A, B [ x x ] [x]-na mu-ni-in-buluĝ<sub>3</sub>  
                     /ubur ga du<sub>10</sub> mi-ni-in-gu<sub>7</sub>  
     U [               du<sub>10</sub>]-ga mu-ni-in-sub<sub>x</sub>  
       [               t]u-le-e ʾa-biṣ e-niq

5. She raised her in her [...] and she (Ninlil) ate sweet milk (at) the breast.

**No. 33** Lipit-Eštar D (Römer 1965: 6–9)

6. ubur du<sub>10</sub>-ga-na ka ma-ra-ni-in-ba ga nam-sul-la mi-ri-in-gu<sub>7</sub>

At her sweet breast she made you open your mouth, she fed you with milk of youth.

**No. 34** Ninĝišzida A (van Dijk 1960: 81–107)

5. [ubur k]u<sub>3</sub>-ga-na ga zi gu<sub>7</sub>-a uš<sub>11</sub> piriĝ sub<sub>x</sub>.sub<sub>x</sub>-ba

who has drunken good milk at her pu[re breast], sucked lion poison,

**No. 13B** TCL 16, 75 (Pl. CXLIII) (see van Dijk 1960: 90 and Falkenstein 1933: 302–303)

31'. u<sub>3</sub>-bu-ur<sub>2</sub> gu-a GA<sub>2</sub> LA GA<sub>2</sub> KA

**la<sub>2</sub>**

**No. 35** Enmerkar and Ensuhkešdana (Berlin 1979: 38–59)

95. ubur zi-da-ni ma-an-la<sub>2</sub> ubur gab<sub>2</sub>-bu-[ni ma]-an-la<sub>2</sub>

(she) extended her right breast to me, she extended me her left breast to me.

**No. 36** Rim-Sîn I 1:1–8 (Transliteration from an unpublished glossary of Institut für vorderasiatische Archäologie und altorientalische Sprachen, Bern.)

1–2. d<sup>i</sup>škur en ur-saĝ dumu an-na  
 3. su-zi maḥ ri-a  
 4. te-eš du<sub>11</sub>-ga-ni-ta  
 5. duĝu<sub>x</sub> sir<sub>2</sub>-ra

6. akan utaḥ-ḥe taka<sub>4</sub> la<sub>2</sub>
7. ki-šar<sub>2</sub>-ra ma-dam ḥe<sub>2</sub>-ḡal<sub>2</sub> šar<sub>2</sub>-re
8. lugal-a-ni-ir
9. ri-im-<sup>d</sup>EN.ZU

- 1–2. For Iškur, lord, hero, son of heaven,
3. collector (?) of great awe-inspiring splendor,
4. at the roaring of his speech
5. amongst the dense clouds
6. the teats of heaven are opening,
7. (and) abundance is flourishing (onto) the horizons (of) the land,
8. for his king,
9. (did) Rim-Sîn (...)

**No. 37** Eannatum 1 (Steible 1982: 123)

27–29. <sup>d</sup>nin-ḥur-saḡ-ke<sub>4</sub> ubur zi-da-ni m[u-na-la<sub>2</sub>]

Ninḥursaḡ [offered him] her right breast.

**No. 38** de Genouillac 1925 (C 124 Rev. 3, 5 (=A) & Dupl. VS II 3 II 9, 11 (=B; contains only half of the line))

- A. 3. lu<sub>2</sub>.lu<sub>2</sub>.u<sub>4</sub>-ra u<sub>3</sub>-bur zi-da-ni mu-na-la-e (...) 5. lu<sub>2</sub>.lu<sub>2</sub>.u<sub>4</sub>-ra u<sub>3</sub>-bur ga-bu-na mu-na-la-e  
 B. u<sub>3</sub>-bu-ur<sub>2</sub> zi-ga-na mu-na-la-e u<sub>3</sub>-bu-ur<sub>2</sub> ga-bu-na mu-na<sup>?</sup>-ku-ud

### Verbs appearing only in single instances

**No. 39** Šulgi F, 47 (Transliteration from an unpublished glossary of Institut für vorderasiatische Archäologie und altorientalische Sprachen, Bern.)

47. an-ne<sub>2</sub> ki-e akan-bi bi<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-su<sub>3</sub>-ud

**No. 40** Šulgi P “Section b” (Klein 1981: 35–41)

16. B ubur<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>3</sub>-ga-na mi<sub>2</sub> mu-na-ni-[in-du<sub>11</sub>]

/.../

24. ur<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>3</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub>-a mu-ni-ib<sub>2</sub>-buluḡ<sub>3</sub>-en<sub>3</sub>

25. B ubur<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>3</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub>-a nam ma-ra-ni-tar

16. And she spoke tenderly to him at her pure breast.

/.../

24. You have been raised on my pure lap.

25. I determined a destiny for you at my pure breast.

**No. 41** The Nanše Hymn (Heimpel 1981: 65–139, this line 94–95)

204. ubur ga ġal<sub>2</sub>-la-ni-a ba-da-an-naġ

(s)he (the child) drank at her milk-filled breast.

**No. 42** Inana G (Kramer 1963: 503–504)

69. in-nin<sub>9</sub> ubur-zu gan<sub>2</sub>-ne<sub>2</sub>-zu ħe<sub>2</sub>-a

70. <sup>d</sup>inana ubur-zu gan<sub>2</sub>-ne<sub>2</sub>-zu ħe<sub>2</sub>-a

71. gan<sub>2</sub>-ne<sub>2</sub> dagal-e gu de<sub>2</sub>-a-zu

72. gan<sub>2</sub>-ne<sub>2</sub> dagal-e še de<sub>2</sub>-a-zu

69. Lady, your breast is your field.

70. Inana, your breast is your field,

71. your wide field pouring out plants,

72. your wide field pouring out grain.



# Whirlwinds and the ‘Babel of the tongues’: Remarks on Secondary Iconization

Gebhard J. Selz with the collaboration of Judith Pfitzner

The following lines are offered to Olof Pedersén on the occasion of his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday as a small token of gratitude for interesting discussions during our common stays at the Free University of Berlin.

The dispute over *the* ‘original’ language behind the invention of Mesopotamian cuneiform writing will certainly continue in the coming decades. In our eyes it may well be possible that cuneiform writing originated in a multi-lingual environment. However, the iconic origin of the earliest cuneiform signs – when traceable – has received little attention so far. This is certainly due to the fact that many of the proposals of father Anton Deimel<sup>1</sup> or Kurt Jaritz are not very convincing.<sup>2</sup> The work of latter was heavily criticized by Wolfram von Soden<sup>3</sup> and others, and it may well be that this is one of the reasons that research in this field is somewhat disparate und difficult to access. In order to illustrate the iconic origin of cuneiform writing most works describing the evolution of early cuneiform refer to the signs **SAG**, **KA**, **KU<sub>2</sub>/GU<sub>7</sub>** and **NAG**.<sup>4</sup> We note that other examples also show a certain preference for the uses of parts of the human or animal body, predominantly the animals’ heads.<sup>5</sup> However, when compared to the roughly contemporary Hieroglyphic signs from Egypt, the iconicity of the Mesopotamian proto-cuneiform signs is less clear and quite often their origin remains in the dark. For the earliest periods we find occasional remarks from various authors, chiefly Adam Falkenstein, and especially in his ATU. Quite recent are the systematic observations of Theo Krispijn (1991–1992) and Jean-Jacques Glassner (1999, 2000). They attempted to demonstrate how original iconic signs underwent various manipulations in a rather systematic way, in order to specify particular semantics connected to such signs.

An interesting example is perhaps the Late Uruk variation of **RA** and **RAx** from ZATU 431 and 448 respectively, to be compared with the younger word **/ra(h)/** (**RA = rah<sub>2</sub>**) “to beat, to kill, to drive (animals)”.

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1 In his now largely outdated *Šumerisches Lexikon* 1928–1932 Deimel provides at the beginning of the respective lemmata a brief sketch of the proposed sign etymologies.

2 Jaritz 1967.

3 Von Soden 1970; cp. also Biggs 1969.

4 See appendix.

5 The latter received a detailed study by C. Mittermayer in 2005.

431 RA		Lex: unattested. ----- Adm: only W 29274.36 (III), 20327.4 (III), 21054.2 (IV). ----- Sign form is SI+UDU+TAR. Possibly used as dative postposition in DN-ra (W 20274.36). ----- Compare: EN+UDU, SI+GU <sub>4</sub> . ----- = UET If 273; LAK 710.
448 SI+GU <sub>4</sub>		Lex: unattested. ----- Adm: only W 20327.4 (III). ----- Compare: RA.

Both signs are composed of the logogram for an animal, e.g. **UDU** “sheep” or **GUD** “ox, bull”, and with the **SI** sign which probably refers to a “whip”.<sup>6</sup>

In any case, the switch from ideographic-logographic<sup>7</sup> to syllabographic or glottographic writing should remain in the focus of any research into cuneiform script. The importance of this becomes clear from our underlying hypothesis that the earliest narrative texts are attested in iconographic disguise<sup>8</sup> whereas for a longer period cuneiform writing is restricted to lexical lists and administrative “spread-sheets”, to use a term Niek Veldhuis so aptly applied to the earliest documents.<sup>9</sup>

6 See also the later word /asi/ wr. <sup>kuš</sup>a<sub>2</sub>-si; <sup>urud</sup>a<sub>2</sub>-si; <sup>kuš</sup>a-si “whip; hinge; strap”.

7 A feature of logograms is that a single logogram may be used by a plurality of languages to represent words with similar meanings. Throughout this paper we will stick to the term logograms (in an extended sense) being aware of course that a great number of such logograms may better termed as “ideogram” in so far as the sign or sign combinations represent ideas directly or semantically related concepts, rather than words and morphemes. However, it seems that most of the earliest scripts combine features of a logographic (in the narrow sense) and an ideographic system. We note here A. Falkenstein’s skepticism towards this approach; in 1936: 31 he states: “Die Frage, ob die ältesten Belege der Schrift ... Reste einer ... mehrfach angenommenen Vorstufe der Wortschrift, der “Ideenschrift”, erkennen lassen, ist ziemlich sicher mit nein zu beantworten.” The (later attested) meanings and readings of the sign DU, e.g. “to go”; “to stand”; “to bring” and numerous comparable signs may illustrate our point. For the time being we suggest that several principles co-occurred in the Uruk period texts: ideographic and logographic writings, rebus writings, and most likely also *matres lectionis*, where the syllabic elements may be rather *abugidas* than *abjads*. It is well-known that disparate languages may use the same or similar alphabets, *abjads* (a modern and more precise term than “consonantal alphabets”), *abugidas* (a specific syllabic writing with vowel notations only of secondary status), syllabaries and the like.

8 Selz 2007.

9 Archaic cuneiform texts “do not record administrative events in a narrative fashion, but use the layout of the tablets (columns, obverse and reverse) to indicate the relationship between items, totals, and persons involved”. This writing “is more like a modern spreadsheet than a modern writing system” (Veldhuis 2012: 4).

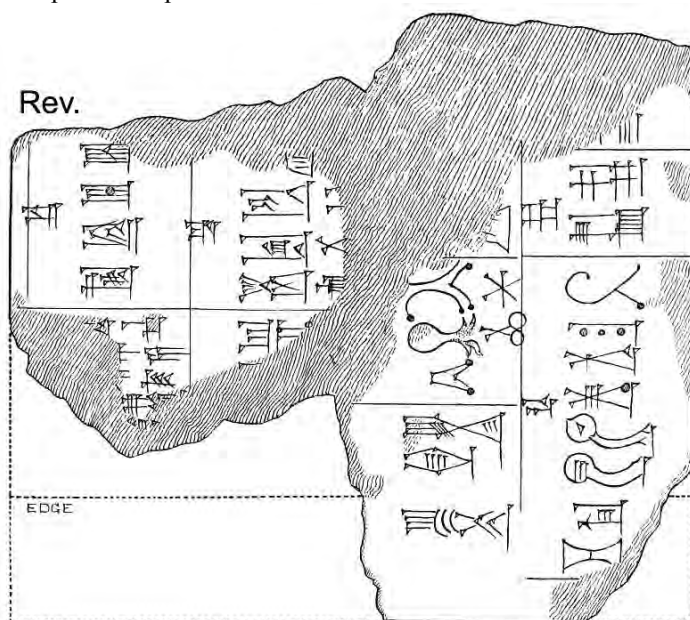
It is well-known that, induced by the writing material clay, the iconic references became less and less clear; only inscriptions on stone preserved them much longer. Nevertheless, the scribes' occupation with the iconic origin of cuneiform signs becomes quite evident with the Kassite script when they attempted to "adopt" the old Sumerian traditions even for writing their cuneiform signs. However, in the Kassite period a number of signs were re-invented or altered to an alleged "original" form which had never existed before. When we learn the Neo-Assyrian script – the usual starting point for students – it is – for us – very hard to see the iconic picture behind the seemingly arbitrary assemblage of horizontal and vertical wedges and *Winkelhaken*. However, we should reckon with the possibility that even the late scribes sometimes might have possessed an idea of the original picture behind these sign forms. That they indeed did care about iconicity can be demonstrated by several observations.

First, it is well-known that the "physiognomic omina" relate physiognomic features to sign forms; this shows how deeply rooted, albeit highly speculative, the iconic perception and interpretation of cuneiforms sign was until the late periods. Compare, for example, *Alamdimmû* III 76-118<sup>10</sup>:

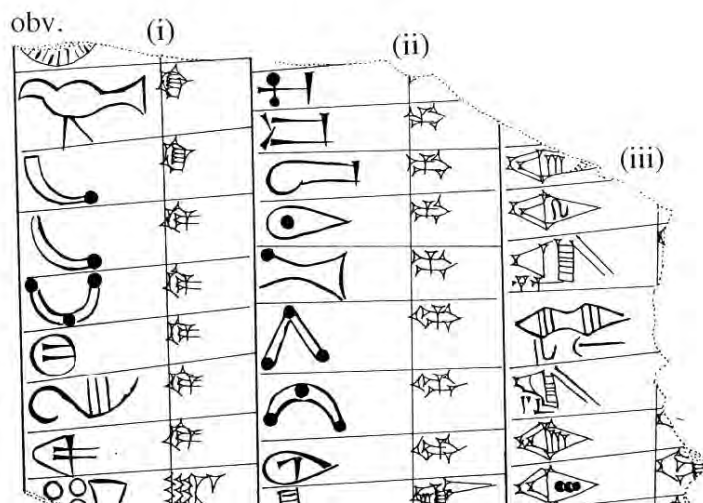
"If the form of the forehead of a man:  
(if) on the forehead of a man the DINGIR-sign is *drawn*,  
that man is evil.  
If the LAK-sign (is drawn) the hand of the king will catch  
that man.  
(...)  
If the MU//BI-sign (is drawn) the sons will ruin the  
house/domain of their father.  
If the BU-sign (is drawn), his (the man's) name isn't existent.  
(...)  
If the KA-sign (is drawn) disagreement will be in the house  
of (that) man.  
(...)  
If the IGI-sign (is drawn) (there is) satisfaction.  
If the KI-sign (is drawn) fire will [eat] (that) man's house.  
(...)  
If the AS//LUGAL-sign (is drawn) he will die the king's death //  
the death of the well.  
If the LI//TU-sign (is drawn) he will die the death of the river //  
a quick death."

10 After Böck 2000: 92–95.

Second, we can demonstrate that the Mesopotamians of these periods made attempts to establish the paleography of specific signs which yielded somewhat astounding results: Compare CT 5 pl. 7:



and CTN IV 229 obv.:



Third, the so-called DIRI writings – at least in principle – seem to date back to periods when script was basically logographic (see below).

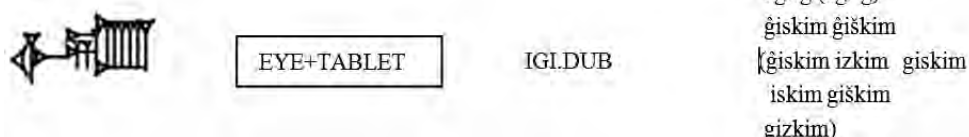
Fourth, we possess several examples of a secondary iconization of cuneiform sign, meaning sign forms which clearly provide meta-linguistic information illustrating the semantics of the words written with these signs; those are the focus of our subsequent remarks.<sup>11</sup>

In cuneiform studies the term DIRI writing is widely used, referring to a specific writing such as **uĝnim**<sup>12</sup> or **gud**.<sup>13</sup> That similar writings are attested in the earliest documents seems most likely. For examples we simply refer here to the numerous place names, recently studied by Selz (2013). Already in the late Early Dynastic period alongside many ‘mixed writings’, such as the title **PA.TE.SI = ensi**<sub>2</sub> or place names like **NU<sub>11</sub>.BUR.LA**<sup>(ki)</sup> = **lagaš**<sup>(ki)</sup> which in changing position show a syllabic indication for the intended readings (e.g. /si/ and /la/), many true logographic DIRI-writings are also attested.<sup>14</sup> Compare:

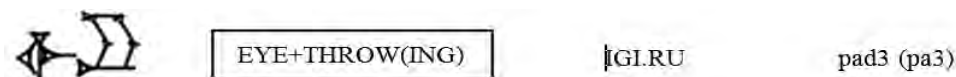
- a) “tear”, in younger texts also verbally “to weep”



- b) a chief administrator; “(ominous) sign”



- c) “to find, discover; to name, nominate”



11 In this article we do not deal with the scribal UD.GAL.NUN tradition; earlier ideas by Glassner and Selz concerning commentary-like elements in this “orthography” were discarded in the thorough PhD dissertation of K. Zand 2009: 87: “Als Erklärung für die UGN Orthographie als solche ist sie [this assumption] aber ungeeignet, denn die UGN-Orthographie ist nicht nur auf Logogramme beschränkt sondern wird auch bei Determinativen und Syllabogrammen verwendet. Da Determinative und Syllabogramme, im Gegensatz zu Logogrammen, keines religiösen Kommentars bedürfen, scheidet die Interpretation der UGN-Texte als ‘kommentierte’ und mit esoterischer Bedeutung versehene Version eigentlich normalorthographischer Texte aus”; but compare now Johnson and Johnson 2013. – We express here our gratitude to Kamran Zand who made his dissertation available to the present author.

12 {**uĝnim**} ‘army > camp’ = **KL.KUŠ.LU.UB<sub>2</sub>.GAR**. Sign etymology = **ki kuš-lu-úb-gar** “place where the bean-shaped leather bags are placed”. However, the word etymology is probably /**uĝ+nim**/ “the tall men; troops” (cp. Prussian “Lange Kerls”). For **uĝnim** (**KL.SU.LU.UB<sub>2</sub>.GAR**) Nigga 540. LEX/Old Babylonian/unknown [[**uĝnim**]] = **KL.SU.LU.UB<sub>2</sub>.GAR** = *um-ma-nu-um* OB Diri “Oxford” 342.

13 “Sign etymology” = {(gi) u<sub>2</sub> ki si<sub>3</sub>-ga} “plants placed on ground (object class [REED])” 𒄀𒄁𒄂𒄃

𒄀𒄁𒄂𒄃. Cp. also Johnson 2013. – Note, that the writing refers to the nests of water birds in the marshland. We wish to thank here Cale J. Johnson who so competently discussed these issues with Selz.

14 The following lines are based on M. Maiocchi 2012. We acknowledge here our gratitude to Massimo for making electronically available this very useful tool.

- d) “to bathe” (in ED sources as composite verb **a—tu<sub>5</sub>** “to bathe in water”; in younger texts attested as **A.ŠU.NAGA = tu<sub>17</sub>**)



- e) a term for priestesses



- f) “shepherd”



- g) “cowherd”<sup>15</sup>



Numerous similar writings are attested in the the Early Dynastic periods, and later on their number is constantly increasing.<sup>16</sup> We contend that the origin of this sort of writings – often with no indication of how they were actually pronounced – may date back to the earliest stages of proto-cuneiform writing. This would certainly support the hypothesis of an alleged iconic origin of the earliest cuneiform signs.<sup>17</sup>

This becomes clear when we look at the following two examples:

<sup>15</sup> The original reading may have been /**unu(d)**/ and meant “(the one who) let lair (the animals in) the grass”; this interpretation is suggested by numerous literary references; for the late ED period see Luzag. 1 2:17–18 and 3:22–23 (*ABW* = *FAOS* 5/2). Note that ED sources have for *utullu(m)* the syllabic rendering **ú-du(-l)** (*FAOS* 6, 340). For the interpretation of the not entirely clear sign **KU/TUŠ** as “bottom” or “anus”, cp. Sumerian Proverbs 2.100 (following ETCSL):165–166: **gala-e bid3-da-ni ḡa-ba-an-da-ze2-er / aḡ2 ga-ša-an-an-na ga-ša-an-ḡu10 ba-ra-zi-zi-de3-en-e-še** “The lamentation priest wipes his bottom: ‘One should not remove what belongs to my mistress Inana’”. Note that **gala**, a term for a cultic, especially mourning singer (castrate?) is itself a DIRI-writing, **NITA.KU/TUŠ** [MALE]+[BOTTOM/SIT].

<sup>16</sup> This can be also seen in the different versions of the series DIRI = *Watru(m)*; cp. Judith Pfitzner who in her Master’s thesis discusses many of them, suggesting several more or less probable interpretations.

<sup>17</sup> True enough, the identification of the iconic origin of these signs often remains enigmatic; this is especially true for the numerous signs depicting standards or similar symbols. The matter becomes even more complicated because of a more or less systematic manipulation of such signs which has been a salient feature in the evolution of (proto-)cuneiform signs (Krispijn (1991–1992) and Jean-Jacques Glassner (1999, 2000)).

**SAGŠU** “head covering, a type of hat or helmet, cap”



Following the later tradition which differentiates between **SAGŠU** and **UGU**, ZATU 440 and 442 may allow to differentiate **U.SAG**<sup>18</sup> = **ugu**ₓ

440	SAG+U		Lex: unattested. ----- Adm: only W 20274.43 (III). ----- Perhaps = UGU. ----- = LAK 319.
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from **SAGŠU(?)**, later **tug<sub>2</sub>sagšu (tug<sub>2</sub>-sagšu)**<sup>19</sup>, which is perhaps attested also in the Late Uruk material:

442	SAGŠU(?)		Lex: Dog: šubur-sagšu (30). ----- Adm: only W 16012.a, 16012.c, 17729.fh (all III). ----- Identification uncertain; perhaps = UGU.
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This differentiation is, however, disputable, as indicated by the remark in ZATU “perhaps = UGU”. Concerning the early OB traditions we find in *ePSD* the following entry: **sagšu** [TURBAN] (8x: Old Babylonian) wr. **tug<sub>2</sub>sagšu** “turban; cover of a pot” Akk. *kubšu*. Most probably, this logographic writing is not a DIRI writing because the alleged **U.SAG** is likely to be an anagraphic writing for **SAG+ŠUŠ (ŠU<sub>4</sub>)** = [HEAD]+[COVER(ING)].

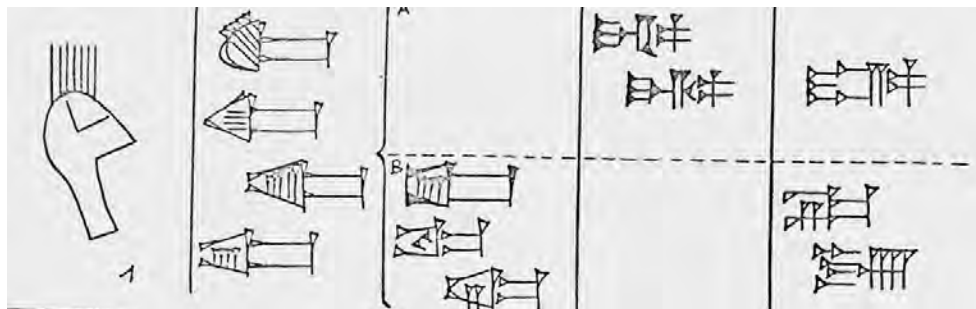
Somewhat different is the case of **SUR<sub>2</sub> /sur/** transliterated as **šur<sub>2</sub>** or **sur<sub>2</sub>** = *ezzu* “(to be) furious, angry” attested from the Late Uruk, ED, Ur III periods onwards.

The paleography of the sign is the following<sup>20</sup>:

18 Later **U+KA** = **UGU**.


19 It's not entirely clear whether **tug<sub>2</sub>** is an (unpronounced) classifier; thus the sign semantics is perhaps [CLOTH]+[HEAD]+[COVER(ING)].

20 Drawing from Labat 1988: 150 no. 379. Note that the earliest sign-form of Labat is taken from ATU 6 (fig. 79; W 9656eg) which according to ZATU 543 “is not from Uruk IV/III”. Green and Nissen 1987 describe the single attestation from that period as **SAG-gunû**. The evidence is scarce; therefore an assumption that we have in ATU 6 a very early attestation for secondary iconization is perhaps too far-fetched.



It seems reasonable to assume that the earliest of these forms was developed on a metaphorical notion; cp. perhaps the English expression for ferocity “the hair stand on end”, or the German “die Haare zu Berge stehen”.

In the following we will just discuss a sample of sign-combinations which demonstrate that “iconicity” remained operative in cuneiform script, even when a reference to a supposed or alleged pictorial origin of the sign was not traceable anymore. We deal here with examples for second order iconicity and may thus speak of a “phase of secondary iconization”.

Sign forms and their modification often display a (secondary) iconic level. As mentioned earlier the sign **KA** is a modification of the **SAG** sign adding strokes in the region of the mouth to indicate that this part of a human head is referred to. (One could also describe the sign **KA** as **SAG-gunû**<sup>21</sup>.) Such formations – clearly basically iconic – are attested from the proto-cuneiform periods onwards. Another major alteration the Mesopotamians labeled *gilmû* signs, that means crossed signs. This designation itself is derived from the Sumerian word *gililm/b*  “to lie across; to be entwined; to entwine, twist; to block; (to be) difficult to understand”. According to the Mesopotamian tradition the sign could also be described as **GI-gilimmû** and the iconic background is perfectly clear. Such iconically motivated sign forms are also attested in later periods.

Our first example concerns the writing of the Sumerian word **(im.)dalhamun** meaning “whirlwind, dust storm” and, by semantic extension, also “disaster”; the Akkadian equivalent is *ašamšutu*.<sup>22</sup> As **dal** = *naprušu* means “to fly”, **hamun** has the Akkadian equivalent *mithurtum*<sup>23</sup> and the interpretation “opposing, clashing” – as usual – is applicable here. The


21 Derived from the Sumerian word **gun3** “coloured”, a sign alteration widely used in cuneiform script. For a review of the emic description of sign modifications, see Gong 2000.


22 The second Akkadian equivalent provided by lexical texts is *hāb/pu* “a dark coloured earth used as dye” (CAD H: 86, also written **im-dal(=RI)-ha-mun** in Nabnitu B 121–122) is clearly motivated by a different semantic of the sign **IM**, with the meaning “clay, dust, earth” and therefore a reading **im-ri-ha-mun** is correctly “dust carried (from) opposing directions.” Note further that the sign **IM** as word for “wind” is usually rendered as **im** and **tum9**; both readings are attested and a probable distinction between them has not been established.


23 For reasons unknown *ePSD* gives for **hamun** = *mithurtum*, simply “harmony”, which is incorrect and misleading; see already CAD M/2, 137–138.






meaning of **/dalhamun/** is therefore rather obvious “blasts from opposing directions”, clearly derived from **(im-)dalhamun** lit. “flying (blowing) and opposing (winds)”.<sup>24</sup>




Besides the syllabic writing **dal-ha-mun** and the somewhat enigmatic **IM.ŠITA**<sup>25</sup> , this notion is also iconically expressed in some cuneiform signs.

Compare Fossey 1926 no. 26620:  where the cruciform arrangement of the **IM** signs provides a perfect picture for the meaning of **/dalhamun/**.<sup>26</sup>

In Diri IV 117 we find  **IM**×**IM** with the reading **/agar/** and the Akkadian equivalent *rādu* “heavy rainfall”. A few lines later in IV 126 **IM**×**IM** has the reading **dalhamun**<sub>6</sub> again with the Akkadian equivalent *ašamšūtu*. OB Diri Ur: 001 gives **IM.EN**×**EN** with the Sumerian pronunciation **/mermer/**<sup>27</sup> and the Akkadian equivalent is again *ašamšūtu*.

However, **EN**×**EN**+**IM**×**IM**  has the reading = **dalhamun**<sub>3</sub>.<sup>28</sup> Note also the related writing of **mermer**<sub>2</sub>  – cruciform arrangement of four times EN. We note here that the

**EN**×**EN**  part of these signs has a separate reading **adamins**.<sup>29</sup> Clearly the notion of **/adamin/** “confrontation, duel” (see below) is used here in order to mark out the opposing directions from which the winds blow. Because several writings of **/adamin/** indicate the opposition of two persons involved – be they simple humans (**lu**<sub>2</sub>), princes (**nun**) or ‘lords’ (**en**) – we can receive impressions of the role of the personification of the natural forces in ancient Mesopotamian thought, an observation which is corroborated by the fact that the raging of storms is often metaphorically compared to the raging of demons or “dust devils”<sup>30</sup>. Other forms of writing **/dalhamun/**, however, escape any reasonable interpretation.<sup>31</sup>




Note further the writings of the semantically related **/mermer/** as **mermer**<sub>3</sub> , that is two times the sign **IM** thwarted, also written as **mermer**<sub>2</sub> , cruciform arrangement of four times **EN**, to be compared with **dalhamun**<sub>3</sub> **EN**×**EN**+**IM**×**IM** .

24 The same idea seems to be expressed by J. A. Halloran in his controversially received book *Sumerian Lexicon* (Los Angeles 2006). Although often highly speculative and erroneous – his etymological speculations are sometimes stimulating.

25 Assuming that the sign **ŠITA** here actually implies a reference to the Sumerian word *šita* (also *ešda*) which, among others, also has the meaning “weapon”. Therefore the logogram may imply a reference to the powerful force of the whirl wind, hence the meaning “disaster”.



26 The notion of “opposing winds” here is represented by the cruciform arrangement of the four times repeated sign **IM**.

27 The gloss is **me-er-me-er**. **Mermer** is certainly the Sumerian plural of **mīr** “(north) wind”, in Akk. *ištānu*; *meḥū*, meaning literally “the northern winds”.

28 Note also the related writing of **mermer**<sub>3</sub> , that is, two times the sign **IM** thwarted, also written as **mermer**<sub>2</sub>  and **mermer**<sub>4</sub> .


29 See also the related writing **EN**+**EN**-inv.  with the reading **adaminx**.

30 Compare the lexical section in CAD A/2 411f. sub *ašamšūtu*.

31 We have no suggestions for **NAGA** in the writings **dalhamun**<sub>7</sub> = **NAGA**+**NAGA**-inv.  and **dalhamun**<sub>5</sub> = **AN**.**NAGA**×**AN**.**NAGA**-inv. .

Our second example concerns the writings of /**adamin**/ and related words.<sup>32</sup> Several different, but intentionally iconic writings using the sign **LU**<sub>2</sub> are attested in Diri VI B:029-034.<sup>33</sup> The word /**adamin**/, in context usually written **a-da-min**<sub>3</sub> or sometimes **a-da-min**, is equated with Akkadian *tēšītu* “contest, debate, conflict”. It is often used together with **dug**<sub>4</sub> (**e**, **di**), this compound verb meaning “to start a contest”, or together with **ak**, this compound verb meaning “to contest”.

The exact etymology of /**adamin**/, more precisely of the part **a-da** remains uncertain. Civil considered **a-da** to be a primary noun with the meaning “verbal or symbolic ‘contest’”<sup>34</sup>; Attinger, however, proposed that **a-da** could also be a combination of [**?+da**], meaning “avec moi”<sup>35</sup>. If Civil's etymology is correct, writings in the so-called “Spell of Nudimmud” **a-da-en**, **a-da-nun**, **a-da-lugal-la** (lines 147–149)<sup>36</sup> may be understood literally as “contest between ‘En’/princes/kings”<sup>37</sup>; however, if, following Attinger, **a-da** is to be interpreted in the sense of [**?+da**] “with me”, a translation like “with me an ‘En’/prince/king” could be a possibility.<sup>38</sup>

Late and lexical writings for /**adamin**/ seem to try to illustrate the meaning of the word iconically, that is by the way it is written. For example in Diri VI B: 031 /**adamin**/ is written **LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.* (PTS 1) and **LU**<sub>2</sub> over **LU**<sub>2</sub> (IM 124475)<sup>39</sup>; the sign name *lu-u*<sub>(2)</sub> *min-na-bi gi-li-mu-u* indicates in both cases a thwarted writing. An excerpt of tablet V of Ea (Assur, VAT 9541 i line 21')<sup>40</sup> has **NUN**×**NUN** , tablet V/4 of Aa from Babylon (BM 40128 section A

32 The following is largely based on the master's thesis of Judith Pfitzner.

33 The main source for the following entries are IM 124475 = S. 9/2172 and PTS 1. Here we use the first source and note the differences only.

34 Civil 1987: 18; see also J. Klein 2000: 568 n. 29; most extensively discussed in Attinger 1993: 417-422.

35 Attinger 1993: 419.



36 In his translation Klein cites the different translations for these terms. Because of the context he particularly excluded the possibility that **a-da-en/nun/lugal** might be ways of writing **adamin**<sub>2/4/5</sub> (Klein 2000: 568 n. 29). One might consider, however, whether this are not simply word plays here, caused perhaps by the meaning of /**adamin**/ proposed by Civil?


37 Attinger 1993: 419. In addition he cited **a-da-min**<sub>3</sub>, meaning “joute entre deux”, and **a-da-ri**, meaning “joute entre ceux-ci”.

38 Attinger 1993: 419.

39 In this regard some words should be said about the peculiar ways the logogram **LU**<sub>2</sub> is written in the two main sources of Diri VI B – IM 124475 and PTS 1. Obviously this sign was not written at once, but in two attempts (the lines 29–38 of PTS 1 and the whole section of compounds with **LU**<sub>2</sub> of IM 124475 seems to indicate that) or perhaps better, the sign **LU**<sub>2</sub> was simply written twice (that is how, for example, the authors of CAD sub *tēšītu* read the line). As objection, however, one could quote the sign-names which indicate that the concrete sign in question was considered as one single (long) sign, as the sign name contains in both sources only once the sign **LU**<sub>2</sub> (except of those cases which *should* contain more than one **LU**<sub>2</sub>, for example **adamin** written **LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.*). This possibility is corroborated by the way **LU**<sub>2</sub> is written in lines 39-41 of PTS 1 also by the graphical difference between the first and the second part of the signs in IM 124475. The way **LU**<sub>2</sub> is written there could indicate that this sign was considered by the scribe as one single long sign which he probably, instead of writing it all at once, wrote in two halves by writing the second horizontal wedges directly following the first horizontal wedges. Because of these considerations we follow the transliteration of Civil 2004 and give the reading **LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.* instead of **LU**<sub>2</sub>+**LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.*+**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.* for line 29 and 30.

40 Civil 1979: 404.

line 5')<sup>41</sup> writes **EN**×**EN** , tablet VII/2 of Aa (unknown origin. CBS 1508 line 80)<sup>42</sup> contains **LUGAL**×**LUGAL** and tablet IV of Ea (for example A 2480 line 207)<sup>43</sup> has **KIB**  (**GIŠ**×**GIŠ**), all these quoted logograms and/or compounds are writings for /**adamin**/.

So what do these ways of writing indicate? Especially the writings of /**adamin**/ by compounds consisting of [RULER]×[RULER] or using the logogram **KIB**<sup>44</sup> indicate a more or less physical “clash” of the opponents or – in the case of the logogram **KIB** – of their weapons<sup>45</sup> (of course, this is specific, as a physical fight needed not always happen. Debates, for example, or the conflict between Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta were verbal, or by formulating and solving tasks which seem to be unsolvable), as well as the writing of /**adamin**/ by **LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.*  in Diri VI (PTS 1). Writing /**adamin**/ by **LU**<sub>2</sub> *over* **LU**<sub>2</sub>, in IM 124475 may simply indicate iconically two persons which are involved in a duel-like contest.<sup>46</sup>

In this context, it may be rewarding to have a closer look at the entries in Diri VI B which precede or follow /**adamin**/ and which read as follows (Diri VI<sup>47</sup>):

B:029	<b>gi-ga-am</b> <sup>48</sup>	<b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> . <b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> - <i>inv.</i>	<i>ip-pi-ri</i> “fight; conflict”
B:030	<b>en-bi-ir</b> <sup>49</sup>	<b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> . <b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> - <i>inv.</i>	MIN (= <i>ippiru</i> )
B:031	<b>a-da-min</b> <sub>3</sub>	<b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> <i>over</i> <b>LU</b> <sub>2</sub> <sup>50</sup>	<i>te-se-e</i> -[...], according to Civil for <i>tēšītu</i> <sup>51</sup> “discord, conflict”
B:032			<i>šit-nu-nu</i> “fighting” <sup>52</sup>

41 Civil 1979: 426.

42 Civil 1979: 463.

43 Civil 1979: 363.

44 In the concrete source A 2480 **KIB** is written **GIŠ**×**GIŠ** (see Hallock 1940: pl. VIII).

45 Compare the compound **giš** — **ra** “to beat, to thresh” (Akk. *rapāsu*).

46 However, it may be not excluded that this writing has additional connotations, that is by the fact that in the course of a contest one side is always superior and one is inferior to the other; whether it be because of actual superiority such as in “Enmerkar and Ensuhgirana” (ETCSL c.1.8.2.4, lines 281–282: **en-me-er-kar2 en-suh-gir11-an-na a-da-min3 dug4-ga en-me-er-kar2 en-suh-gir11-an-na dirig-ga-a-ba** “In the contest between Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana, Enmerkar proved superior to En-suhgir-ana (translation: ETCSL)”; or whether it be because of the decision of a third party (usually a deity or in one case also king Šulgi) which supports one party argumentatively and therefore takes the position of an implicit judge; cp. Volk 2013: 216.

47 According to Civil 2004. The basis of this table is IM 124475; differences in PTS 1 are noted.

48 Probably derives from **\*gi4-gi4-am3** “It is: to go back on each other” (see also **gi4** = *dāku* “to kill”), hence “conflict”.

49 The etymology of /**enbir**/ or /**inbir**/ remains uncertain.

50 In source IM 124475 the compound is written **LU**<sub>2</sub> *over* **LU**<sub>2</sub> (Civil 2004: 191: “**LU**<sub>2</sub>+**LU**<sub>2</sub> (superposed)”), in source PTS 1 it is written **LU**<sub>2</sub>.**LU**<sub>2</sub>-*inv.* The sign name is in both cases *lu-u(2) min-na-bi gi-li-mu-u*; see above n. 39.


51 Civil 2004: 190.

52 Source PTS 1: line 31.

B:033	<b>da-pa-ra</b> <sup>53</sup>	LU <sub>2</sub> ×4 <sup>54</sup>	<i>ka-ma-ru</i> <sup>55</sup> “defeat”
B:034			<i>ka-ra-šu<sub>2</sub></i> “catastrophe, massacre”
B:034a	<b>pa-ag-ra</b>	LU <sub>2</sub> .LU <sub>2</sub> -inv.	MIN (= <i>kamāru</i> ) <sup>56</sup>

In this context, especially interesting is the way how **/dapara/** in IM 124475 is written: twice horizontally and thrice vertically, forming a cross; this way of writing might illustrate the meaning of the word “defeat”, and, connected with this, “catastrophe, massacre” (one might think of crisscross lying dead bodies or chaotically standing prisoners). The words **/gigam/**, **/enbir/** and **/pagra/**, however, are clearly related – more or less in commentary-like mode – to the logographic writing and the extended meaning already proposed for **/adamin/**, that is the “clash of opponents”. We find almost all of these “ludic” scholarly writing only in the so-called canonical version of Diri; they do not occur in the Old Babylonian or Middle Babylonian versions of this list. Furthermore, as already mentioned above, these ways of writing **gigam**, **/adamin/**, **/daparu/** and **pagra** are rare and lexical; from these above mentioned only the word **inbir** (or **/enbir/**) are also attested in literary texts.<sup>57</sup>


It is indisputable that the arrangement of LU<sub>2</sub> in these writings shows that the ancient scribes developed iconic means in order to convey the notion behind the logograms beyond the simple readings and their interpretation *via* the Akkadian translations. It is noteworthy that none of these writings are attested in manuscripts earlier than the canonical version, that is they are still missing in the Old Babylonian and even in the Middle Babylonian version of DIRI. Interestingly these ‘canonical’ iconic writings for **gigam**, **adamin<sub>x</sub>**, **daparu<sub>x</sub>** and **pagra** are restricted to the lexical tradition. As for the readings, only the word **/adamin/** is well attested outside the lexical tradition; **inbir** and **gurud** are also, albeit rarely, found in literary texts and are apparently “true Sumerian words”.

The productivity of this iconic process can be further demonstrated by the following examples: the word **/urbingu/** = *šitnunu* means to “(to be) combative; to duel”. The sign form is  **UR**×**UR** = [DOG]×[DOG] or [HERO]×[HERO].<sup>58</sup>

53 This is most certainly related to *\*\*tapāru(m)* “sich herandrängen” (AHw 1380) or to *duppuru* “to go away”; “to expel” CAD D 186–188; certainly not to *dapāru* “to become sated” CAD D 104.





54 Transliteration following Civil 2004 and the sign name *lu-u li-im-mu-bi i-gi-gub-bu-u(2)*. In source PTS 1 the sign LU<sub>2</sub> seems to have been written four times, in source IM 124475 it is written once “normal” and once reversed horizontal and thrice vertical; these writings form a cross.




55 PTS 1: *ka-ma-ri*.

56 This line has to be understood as a commentary: as a result of a combat or a duel one of the participants may be killed, hence the loan word **/pagra/** from Akkadian *pagru* “body” and “corpse”; *kamāru* then reflects the tradition, attested already in the 3rd millennium, to heap up corpses to a “burial mound”. Cp. further the writing **pagra3** .

57 For example in Inana C (ETCSL c.4.07.3., line 50) which might indicate also another way of interpreting the compound LU<sub>2</sub>.LU<sub>2</sub>-inv.: **lu2-u3 lu2-ra igi mu-un-suh-re inbir igi bi-in-du8-ru**: “People look upon each other in anger, they look for combat (translation: ETCSL)”.

58 Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi 2000: 50.

The somewhat similar */lirum/* “strength, quarrel” is either written **lirum**<sub>6</sub> =  NUN×NUN, that is [PRINCE]×[PRINCE], which has also the reading **adamin**<sub>4</sub>, **lirum**<sub>7</sub>  KAL×KAL, [YOUNG MAN]×[YOUNG MAN] and also **URBINGU** = **lirum**<sub>8</sub>. This should be compared with */ulul/* = *qerbetu* which is written as **ulul**<sub>2</sub>  GAN<sub>2</sub>×GAN<sub>2</sub> but also **ulul**  KIB = **GIŠ**×**GIŠ** (as we have seen, the sign also has the reading **adamin**<sub>3</sub> and **lirum**<sub>3</sub>!).

As a final example for secondary iconization we would like to mention */gurun/* = *inbu* “fruit, flower”, written **gurun** = IDIM×4  and **gurun**<sub>x</sub> = IDIM over IDIM×4 , but also **gurun**<sub>x</sub> = TAB×4 = . Whether these writings were influenced by a meaning of the basic sign IDIM or just being an iconic innovation remains uncertain.

An improved understanding of the iconic background of logograms (or ideograms) and their persistent importance even in 1<sup>st</sup> millennium tradition during phases of secondary iconization leads us to our final remarks on the “Babel of the Tongues”. As mentioned earlier, *ePSD* attributes to **ha-mun** = *mithurtu* unprecisely the simple meaning “harmony”. The meaning is rather “opposing”, “conflicting” and the well-known expression **eme-ha-mun** = *lišān mithurti*<sup>59</sup> designates “contrasting, tongues”<sup>60</sup> or “opposing voices” and never a harmonic speech. So the underlying notion is perhaps not so far from our idea of the “Babel of the Tongues”, that is the confusion of languages as mentioned in Gen. 11:7.

In the preceding paragraphs we dealt with the role of logograms most specifically with their secondary iconization. The most important feature of iconic signs (icons) is that they convey their meaning almost independent of pronunciation. Their meaning actually might be expressed in any given language, providing that the “reader” is familiar with the relevant features of the iconic system, the code, a fact which in cuneiform is, in contrast to the Egyptian system, very complicated. Even in the phases of secondary iconization it was, however, necessary to know about the basic signs which were used to produce such complex iconic writings. In fact, the different readings given for many of the secondary iconic sign-forms, as discussed for the words */dalhamun/*, */mermer/*, */adamin/*,<sup>61</sup> and so on, demonstrate that a sort of “Confusion of the Tongues” can be traced here.<sup>62</sup> This is further supported by our notion that some of the discussed lexical entries clearly originate from “commentaries” with a presumable setting in teaching. Logographic “iconic writing” trespasses language boundaries. As modern icons do, they potentially and intentionally provide a remedy against the “Babel of the Tongues”.

59 See also **eme dal-ha-mun** = *li-ša-an sa3-ah-maš-tim* “chaotic speech” MSL SS 1, 17–27 iv 40.

60 See CAD M/2: 138.

61 For a discussion of the term */adamin/*, see also Mittermayer 2009: 244–245 and now Mittermayer 2019.

62 Or in other words ideographic notions prevailed over simple logographic features.



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