

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND NORTHERN MESOPOTAMIA IN THE LATE OLD BABYLONIAN PERIOD

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### PROLEGOMENA

The sources available for a study of the history of the later Old Babylonian period easily lend themselves to misunderstanding.<sup>1</sup> The historian is confronted with the disorderly remnants of a large number of contemporaneous archives, but is short of helpful texts of a narrative character. Historical research has therefore primarily focused on the corpus of year name formulae appearing in these texts, but interpretations of this corpus as signs of economic decline, limited state resources and weak performance in foreign policy are still more popular than the analysis as a body of programmatic statements aimed at communicating particular qualities of kingship. Archival texts have been used profitably to study various aspects of the state's economic and social institutions, but much work remains to be done in editing and analysing these terse and sometimes deceptive sources.

Yet, an informed political history of the late Old Babylonian state would be most useful in clarifying much of the "Mesopotamian Dark Age", but remains, in view of the present state of

documentation, an unachievable goal. Nonetheless, the late Old Babylonian archival sources, deriving from a limited number of cities in the core area of the Babylonian state,<sup>2</sup> should play a role in discussions of this topic. Obviously, these sources are too early to inform us of events that took place after the fall of the First Dynasty of Babylon. They are neither useful as tools to establish absolute dating. In contrast, their value lies in the fact that they are the most substantial corpus of cuneiform texts from the last century before the fall of Babylon, the period when records from other regions of Mesopotamia are scarce and historical developments remain obscure. Even though archival sources mainly deal with matters of local interest, their data can sometimes be used to observe events far beyond Babylonia's borders. These observations can be linked with the exact internal chronology of the First Dynasty of Babylon and have potential relevance for matters of synchronization of cultures in the larger area of Mesopotamia and beyond.<sup>3</sup>

In this article we will therefore concentrate on one particular type of document that makes explicit reference to areas outside of the Baby-

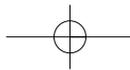
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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations: Ad = Ammiditana, Ae = Abiešuh, Aš = Ammišaduqa, Sd = Samsuditana, Si = Samsuiluna. Text editions are cited according to the list of abbreviations in the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* 14 (R), Chicago, 1999. Numbers refer to the list of slave sale contracts in the appendix. I would like to thank the following institutions and persons for their help in realizing this study: the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to refer to unpublished material in their collection; Prof. B. Salje and Dr. J. Marzahn of the Vorderasiatisches Museum for the possibility to examine Old Babylonian material in the Homsy collections, where the relevant tablet VAT 718 (appendix no. 40) was identified; Prof. F. Joannès for information about the unpublished texts from Ḥarradum (KD numbers); Prof. K.A. Kitchen for comments. This study was undertaken as part of a PhD research project financed by a grant of the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

<sup>2</sup> An exhaustive catalogue of sources published up to then is found in PIENKA 1998.

<sup>3</sup> This contribution will make no case for any of the various proposals for the absolute date of the Ur III – Babylon I block of time. The merit of GASCHE *et al.* 1998 and the following polemics is that they have effectively shown that none of the instruments applied up to now to assign absolute dates to the fall of Babylon is adequate. Until better tools are available, chronology must be based primarily on historical considerations and will for that reason remain inexact. I agree with GASCHE *et al.* 1998 that archaeological arguments support a lower date than the conventional Middle Chronology, but take note of the reservations of KÜHNE 1999: 203 note 1 and BECKMAN 2000 that an Ultra-low Chronology is problematic in the light of Hittite evidence. Textual evidence about early Kassite rule over Babylon also disagrees with the Ultra-low Chronology; the correction proposed by GASCHE *et al.* 1998: 88 fails to convince.





lonian state: the slave sale contract. In order to establish the value of these statements, the slave sale contract as a legal instrument and developments of law and custom concerning slavery in the course of the Old Babylonian period will be discussed first. An examination of slave trade practice and the prices of slaves will be necessary to determine whether patterns in our sample of geographical indications are significant. Finally, the implications of these data for the detection and dating of political structures outside of Babylonia will be discussed. The early history of the Mittani state and the role of a Kassite polity to the Northwest of the Babylonian core territory will then be our main concern.

#### SLAVE SALE CONTRACTS

The sale of slaves was a universal phenomenon in the ancient Near East and is attested throughout the Old Babylonian period in the form of a corpus of contracts recording the acquisition of slaves. It is well known that the wording of slave sale contracts issued under Babylonian law changed over time. This can be best observed in those from Sippir, where the phrasing of contracts dating to the reign of Abiesuh and later greatly differs from that of earlier specimens. The differences between earlier and later contracts can be illustrated with the following examples:

CT 48 28 (Si 9)

“One slave woman by the name of PN,  
a carpet knoter,

from SELLER

BUYER has bought.

For her full price BUYER paid x silver.

(The slave) was passed over the *bukānum*.

His (SELLER’s) heart is satisfied; the transaction is completed; they (SELLER and BUYER) swore by Šamaš, Aja, Marduk and king Samsuiluna that nobody will ever bring claim against the other.”

(Witnesses and date.)

(Seal impression of SELLER.)

TCL 1 147 (Ae h)

“One slave woman by the name of PN,  
an imported Subarean woman from the city of Qaṭṭarā,

from SELLER, the owner of the slave woman,

BUYER has bought (...).

For her full price BUYER paid x silver,

and placed x silver as SI.BI-payment.

Three days (for) investigation, one month (for) epilepsy; SELLER will be responsible for claims on her (the slave) in accordance with the royal regulation.”

(Witnesses and date.)

(Seal impression of SELLER.)

These differences were brought about by a number of independent developments. One of them is the disappearance of the *bukānum*-clause and the inclusion of a remark about the payment of an additional fee (the SI.BI-clause), which can be observed in sale contracts for all categories of objects. Another is the emergence of separate contract clauses for movable and immovable property in Northern Babylonian sale contracts. But two traits are typical for slave sale contracts only: late Old Babylonian specimens give a specific description of the sale object, and they contain a unique warranty clause.

This clause contains three separate elements. The first two fix terms for the seller’s warranty against hidden defects of the slave. These defects bear upon the slave’s health and status: the seller

guarantees against epilepsy and against the outcome of an “investigation”.<sup>4</sup> The third stipulates the seller’s liability to answer claims on the slave.

Although these three elements always appear together, they presumably originate from different sources. Warranty against eviction was an accepted feature of common law and is stipulated in earlier sale contracts from southern cities and from Dilbat.<sup>5</sup> The laws of Hammurabi (§ 279) prescribe it with regard to the sale of slaves. It is a standard element of late Old Babylonian sale contracts for movable property, where its inclusion can be traced back to a royal regulation that specified warranty for eviction of various objects of sale.<sup>6</sup> Guarantee against epilepsy was also traditional and recurs in the laws of Hammurabi (§ 278) and elsewhere.<sup>7</sup> Guarantee against “investi-

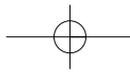
<sup>4</sup> For this translation of *tebītum* see STOL 1993: 134–135.

<sup>5</sup> WILCKE 1975–76: 260.

<sup>6</sup> VEENHOF 1997–2000: 69–71.

<sup>7</sup> STOL 1993: 132–141.





gation”, however, first appears in the reign of Abiešuh and must be interpreted as a legal innovation. The incorporation of these last two elements in the contract formula presumably goes back to another royal decree that stipulated requirements for the sale of slaves and concerned both traditional (epilepsy) as well as new (“investigation”) liabilities.

The introduction of liability for the outcome of an “investigation” into the contract’s phrasing must be linked with the simultaneous appearance of a statement concerning the origin of the slave. Both innovations indicate new regulations regarding the admissibility of countrymen as slaves.

#### THE CREATION OF SLAVES

It is well known that a number of mechanisms could turn freeborn individuals into slaves in ancient Mesopotamia. The head of a household was authorized to sell off his dependants and, under certain restrictions, the members of his family. He himself could be enslaved as a measure of punishment and could be forced into servitude as a result of insolvency for debts or in order to escape from famine. These forms of servitude could develop into full slavery. Foreigners, finally, when taken as prisoners of war or kidnapped or when sold by foreign merchants could enter Mesopotamian society as slaves.

The legal status of slaves varied according to the mechanisms that had brought them into this position. One can distinguish between chattel-slaves and debt-slaves: while both categories were characterized by the loss of personal freedom and submission to their master, only the first category could be freely traded as a commodity. When a debtor assigned property to his creditor as security for the debt, he could do so by handing over individuals who fell under his authority, like members of his family or his slaves. When the debtor

defaulted, the creditor retained the pledge or was entitled to take over property of the debtor, including members of his family or other dependants. As debt-slaves they obeyed the creditor and worked for him, but the creditor could in general not sell them, since he did not hold full title: they retained the traditional right of redemption with a price amounting to the sum of the original debt. Nevertheless, the right of redemption was in real terms probably limited or else the creditor could acquire full ownership of his debt-slaves by transferring their full value to the debtor. Sale of the slave and ceding full title to the buyer were then possible.<sup>8</sup>

Thus enslavement of countrymen under conditions of economic hardship, in particular forfeiture for a debt, was legally possible, but was at the same time perceived as social abuse. Mesopotamian legal systems contained various laws and measures of social justice to repair this disorder, and it was, according to royal ideology, especially the duty of kings to defend the weak. The efforts of the kings of Babylon to control debt-slavery manifest themselves in various royal statements with legal purpose: while the laws of Hammurabi prescribe liberation of debt-slaves after serving the creditor for three years, and thus prevent debt-slavery to develop into a permanent condition,<sup>9</sup> the royal equity-decrees stipulate remission of consumptive credits and the repair of their negative consequences, such as loss of property or freedom of distressed debtors.<sup>10</sup>

#### RESTRICTIONS ON SLAVE ALIENATION

Our knowledge about other royal measures intended to control slavery is sparse, but the development of slave sale terminology indicates that another legal innovation aimed at prohibiting sale of former freeborn citizens was implemented in the reign of Samsuiluna or his successor Abiešuh.

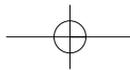
<sup>8</sup> WESTBROOK 1995: 1660–1662.

<sup>9</sup> CH ¶ 117 with WESTBROOK 1995: 1656–1657.

<sup>10</sup> The preserved texts of these equity-decrees only contain a paragraph about the release of debt-slaves from specific cities and countries (KRAUS 1984: 180 ¶ 20), but it is clear that these texts only contain a selection of measures covered by the equity act. For example, the preserved texts do not discuss the effect of the act on real property sold under force of a debt, whereas restitution of such property is abundantly documented. There is therefore every reason to assume that the act of

equity was intended to effectuate a nation-wide release of debt-slaves. This paragraph of the traditional text of the equity-decree was already incorporated in the exemplar published in the eighth year of Samsuiluna (HALLO 1995), and it must probably be interpreted as a fossilized text from an even earlier date. The enumerated toponyms are all known to have been integrated into the kingdom of Babylon during the fourth decade of Hammurabi’s reign. It seems therefore likely that the text was originally proclaimed by this king as a social measure for the newly incorporated territories.





All slave sale contracts from this time on specify that the object sold belonged to one of the following categories:

1. House-born slaves from Babylon.<sup>11</sup>
2. Foreigners identified as members of particular ethnic groups or as natives of some foreign place.

Since almost all contracts<sup>12</sup> state that the slave in question belonged to one of these categories, we conclude that from the reign of Abiešuh onwards the sale of slaves was only then legally possible if they fell into these groups. As the seller's assertion was evidently not sufficient to ascertain the slave's background, a term of two or three days was stipulated for "investigation". This refers to some type of inquiry, presumably involving the local authorities, meant to verify the seller's statement about the status of the slave. The seller's warranty indicates that the outcome of this procedure could invalidate the sale. This implies that sale of other categories of slaves, such as freeborn

citizens who had become enslaved through indebtedness or other reasons, was not permitted.

This new legal device was probably implemented by order of the king, but the historical background of such an act remains obscure.<sup>13</sup> Even its precise moment of introduction cannot yet be ascertained: the warranty against "investigation" and the distinctive description of the origin of the slave are present in the earliest examples of the typical late slave sale contract first attested in Abiešuh's reign. The corpus of slave sale contracts from the final decades of Samsuiluna's reign is limited, and so far no specimen to exhibit all features typical for the late contract type has come to light. But it is certainly relevant that in sale contracts from the third decade of his reign the typical description of the slave as either a house-born slave from Babylon or a foreigner first appears.

The following are the five latest slave sale contracts from Samsuiluna's reign:<sup>14</sup>

	<i>description of object</i>	<i>contract formula</i>
Si 24 CT 48 60	1 sag-ir tur lú-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> / <i>am-mu-wa</i> mu-ni	"old type"
Si 27 MHET 2/3 444	1 sag-géme <i>a-x-i</i> x x / <i>qá-du</i> dumu-munus-ša	"mixed type"
Si 27 BIN 2 80	1 sag-géme uru <i>ši-mu-ru-um</i> <sup>ki</sup>	[...]
Si 28 BM 22513	1 sag-ir <sup>d</sup> utu-[...] / sag-ir <i>e-[la-am-tim]</i>	"old type"
Si 30 VAS 29 5	1 sag-géme <i>i-na-qá-bi-ša-ab-lu-ut</i> mu-ni / <i>wi-li-id é ša ká-dingir-ra</i> <sup>ki</sup>	[...]

<sup>11</sup> For this concept see KRAUS 1984: 280–283 and HALLO 1995: 87–88.

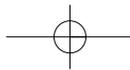
<sup>12</sup> Two examples of late Old Babylonian slave sale contracts without a description of the origin of the slave are presently known (BM 16495 and VAS 16 207). Remarkably enough, for both sales we also have slightly later contracts where a statement about the origin of the slave is included (see commentary to nos. 13 and 17 in the appendix). This suggests that the production of a new sale contract was necessary to prevent an annulment of the sale. The information about the background of the slave in the new contract might then be fictitious.

<sup>13</sup> A couple of references have been collected in the literature. Most telling is a letter of Samsuiluna to an administrator containing a tersely formulated official ban on the acquisition of citizens of Idamaras and Arrapha as slaves from Sutean merchants (AbB 3 1 with KLENGEL 1977: 67, KRAUS 1984: 72–74 and HALLO 1995: 86–87). This message was apparently not intended as a reply to an earlier question of the addressee, so that it can be

interpreted as the publication of a royal directive. The same king describes in a royal inscription the release of civil and military prisoners from Ešnunna and Idamaras (RIME 4.3.7.8 with KLENGEL 1977: 66–67). Finally, an undated legal record, probably from the same time, deals with the matter of the illegal enslavement of a citizen of Idamaras. As she is a freeborn woman (dumu-munus *a-wi-lim*), her detainment by a man from Mutiabal is unlawful and must be remedied "in accordance with the (royal) regulation" (AbB 6 80 with CHARPIN 1987: 43–44, WESTBROOK 1995: 1642 and VEENHOF 1997–2000: 62). While these references bear witness to Samsuiluna's efforts to restrict the sale of citizens of specific countries for political purposes, the relation between these measures and the introduction of a new check on all slave sales merits further investigation.

<sup>14</sup> The slave sale contract BDHP 46 is traditionally assigned to Si 33, but as it does not exhibit any of the typical later features, its fragmentary date formula must be interpreted as an earlier year name of Samsuiluna.





Only one of these contracts, MHET 2/3 444, seems to lack information about the origin of the slave, but it exhibits a number of other traits typical for later contracts:<sup>15</sup> it combines the old clause “the transaction is completed, his heart is satisfied” with the provision that the seller “will forever be responsible for claims on her (*i.e.* the slave woman)” and does not include an oath formula. Furthermore, the text contains a remark about the payment of a *SL.BI*-fee.<sup>16</sup> This shows that in Sippir during the third decade of Samsuiluna’s rule, contracts formulated according to the conventional pattern (CT 48 60 and BM 22513) were issued simultaneously with at least one example of a “mixed” type, where warranty for eviction (but yet without reference to the royal decree) is already mentioned.<sup>17</sup> As the clauses of other contracts are broken and no slave sale contracts from his fourth decade of rule have yet come to light, details about this reform are still lacking. But it seems nonetheless likely that the inclusion of information about the origin of the slave in the sale contract indicates that the slave trade had become restricted already in the second half of Samsuiluna’s reign. Shortly afterwards, either in his final decade or in the early years of his successor, a royal directive was given out to formalize these restrictions by introducing the instrument of “investigation”. About the same time another decree giving rules for warranty for eviction was issued, and these rulings shaped the typical wording of slave sale contracts for the rest of the Old Babylonian period.

Thus the post-Samsuiluna slave sale differs in one aspect fundamentally from earlier practice: while the seller traditionally guarantees title and quality (*i.e.* health) of the slave, the seller now also guarantees the slave’s status. As a result of this, the slave sale contract came to serve two purposes: it was a tool to provide evidence for title as well as for the status of the slave. The role of the contract as evidence for title is traditional: for this purpose the seller handed over older title deeds concerning the property to the buyer, and the history of the seller’s acquisition of ownership could be described when necessary. This principle is well known for real estate transactions, and the sale of slaves operated similarly: older title deeds for the same slave were kept by the new owner,<sup>18</sup> and the sale contract sometimes details how the seller acquired title.<sup>19</sup> The role of the sale contract as evidence for the slave’s status, however, is new and provides us with important information about the concept of nationality and the geography of slave trade in the later Old Babylonian period.

#### NATIVES AND FOREIGNERS

The restriction on slave trade is of importance for the question of the geographic extent of the Babylonian state, or, more precisely, the question which population groups were protected against the sale as slaves by Babylonian law. The area in question can be roughly described as the traditional territory of the Babylonian state before the expansion accomplished in Hammurabi’s

<sup>15</sup> The sale clauses of MHET 2/3 444 read as follows (colated): <sup>1-2</sup> object <sup>3</sup> ki <sup>d</sup>utu-*ša-ta-ka-lim* <sup>4-5</sup> buyer <sup>6</sup> *rī-nu[a]* *ḫar* [kù-babbar]-*ša* <sup>7</sup> [in]-*ši*-[in-s]a<sub>10</sub> <sup>8</sup> [šá]m-til-l[a-ni-š]è <sup>9</sup> [o] ma-na [o gín] kù-babbar na<sub>4</sub> <sup>d</sup>utu <sup>10</sup> [ù o] gín kù-babbar *SL.BI* <sup>11</sup> [i]-[l]á-e<sup>1</sup> <sup>12</sup> [inim]-bi al-til <sup>13</sup> [šà-g]a-a-ni al-du<sub>10</sub> <sup>14</sup> [u<sub>4</sub>]-kúr-šè *a-na ba-aq-ri-ša* <sup>15</sup> [i]z-za-az.

<sup>16</sup> This is the earliest attestation of the *SL.BI*-clause known so far; the next occurs in a contract for the transfer of a house plot from Si 31 (VAS 22 4), see WILCKE 1990: 297.

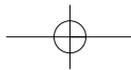
<sup>17</sup> The clause in CT 8 43c, a slave sale from Hammurabi’s 18th year, should not be interpreted as an (abnormal) early attestation for the statement of the seller’s warranty (thus WILCKE 1975–76: 257 note 9 and 262), as it probably stipulates warranty provided by another person than the seller (as in the Hammurabi-time house sale contract RA 85 43 no. 12).

<sup>18</sup> See no. 16: two sale contracts for the same slave are known, the first documenting the sale of the slave

woman from A to B (YOS 13 39), the second witnessing the sale of the slave from C to the final owner Ušriya (VAS 7 50). At least one more sale contract, for the transfer of the slave woman from B to C, is missing to complete this “chain of transmission”. Both documents were found in the archive of the last buyer Ušriya (for which see STOL 1973: 225). See also the commentary to no. 13 in the appendix.

<sup>19</sup> For example in VAS 22 19 (date broken, reign of Sd), the sale contract for “one slave woman, a suckling child [by the name of ...], a house-born slave of Babylon, daughter of the slave woman Atkal-ana-..., part of the dowry of Lamass[āni?], the daughter of Ana-pāni-Na[bium-nadi],” sold by the two brothers (see CHARPIN 1985: 272). The mother of this slave girl was part of the dowry of a woman whose inheritance had been passed on to the sellers (was she their mother?).





fourth decade, in combination with the adjacent territories then incorporated.<sup>20</sup> It has been observed that much of this area was no longer subject to Babylonian rule after the first decade of Samsuiluna's reign,<sup>21</sup> but if the paucity of mention of slaves from these territories in later sale contracts is significant, then this suggests that their inhabitants were as a rule still treated as Babylonian citizens.

The occurrence of slaves from the Diyala region forms a special case: slaves from Ešnunna and other cities in the "land of Ešnunna" are solely attested in the first decade of Ammišaduqa. Ešnunna was normally not considered as foreign territory and the admission of persons from Ešnunna as slaves was most likely brought about by special circumstances at that time.<sup>22</sup>

Native house-born slaves are exclusively labelled as "house-born slave from Babylon":<sup>23</sup> the absence of other city names in this combination would imply that the name of the city is used to refer to the territory it controlled. This seems to be earliest attestation for the use of the name of the capital city in the sense of "Babylonia".<sup>24</sup>

Suḫûm, the area located along the Middle-Euphrates, was under Babylonian control from the last third of the reign of Samsuiluna onwards.<sup>25</sup> Slaves from Suḫûm are described as "house-born slave from Suḫûm", but also as natives of a "town in the pasture land of Suḫûm". The first term suggests that trade in slaves from Suḫûm was likewise restricted to innate slaves only, but the second shows that other slaves from Suḫûm could also be sold. Thus this area seems to

have taken up an intermediate position between Babylonian domain and foreign country.

In the description of foreign slaves a number of general labels are used that are most often combined with the name of an actual city. These general labels in effect partition the geographic horizon of Mesopotamia into distinct zones: "Between-river" designates the area east of the Euphrates bend, including the Habur basin; to its eastern side arches Šubartum over the region at the northern course of the Tigris and east of this river; southeast of Šubartum lies Elam. Šubartum<sup>26</sup> and Elam<sup>27</sup> are traditional appellations for Mesopotamia's neighbours and function as ethnic terms, labelling persons as well as land. "Between-river", or "Land of the region between" (*birīt nārim, māṭ birītim*), seems to be a new name first attested in these contracts. It only functions as a geographic name and never serves to describe persons.<sup>28</sup>

Other cities, however, are not combined with a general label. Some of them, like Ḫaḫḫum and Ursum, are old and important trading centres to the Northwest of Mesopotamia. Perhaps these cities were not perceived as part of some bigger ethno-linguistic entity from a Babylonian point of view.

Acquisition orders for slaves also detail the origin of foreign slaves, but these descriptions differ from those found in sale contracts: one finds orders to buy "splendid Subarean slaves from Between-river"<sup>29</sup> or "Subarean slaves of splendid ... from Between-river",<sup>30</sup> each combining Šubartum and "Between-river" – categories

<sup>20</sup> These are the territories listed in the text of the equity decree (KRAUS 1984: 180 ¶ 20) that presumably goes back to the last decade of Hammurabi's reign (see footnote 10).

<sup>21</sup> CHARPIN 1987: 41–44.

<sup>22</sup> A slave from Dūr-Mankisayû was sold in Aš 16 (no. 36). If this place can be linked with Mankisum, then it would also be located within the territory traditionally taken to be part of the Babylonian realm. This isolated incident cannot yet be explained.

<sup>23</sup> VAS 29 5 (Si 30), YOS 13 248 (Ae u), VAS 29 3 (Ad 8?), YOS 13 5 (date broken, reign of Ad), BM 80420 (broken year of Aš) (uncertain: <sup>1</sup> I sag-géme tur-r[a] <sup>2</sup> munus<sup>us</sup>id<sup>2</sup>-x-a-gu-[o m]u-ni <sup>3</sup> wi-li-id é ša [...]) YOS 13 409 (date broken, prb. reign of Aš), VAS 22 19 (date broken, reign of Sd).

<sup>24</sup> Thus WILCKE 1975–76: 271 note 26. KRAUS 1984: 281 objects to this conclusion and refers to a "house born

slave woman from Dilbat" in TCL 1 133 (Si 11), but this text antedates the slave trade reform. A "house born slave woman from Sippir" appears in DK 105 (date broken, reign of Aš), but the phrasing of this sale contract deviates from the typical late Old Babylonian type.

<sup>25</sup> JOANNÉS 1992.

<sup>26</sup> STEINKELLER 1998, MICHALOWSKI 1999 and GUICHARD 2002: 134–137.

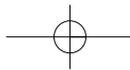
<sup>27</sup> POTTS 1999: 1–4.

<sup>28</sup> FINKELSTEIN 1962.

<sup>29</sup> CT 48 66 (Ad 22): sag-ir su-bir<sub>4</sub><sup>ki</sup> nam-ru-<tim> / [bi-ri-i]t id.

<sup>30</sup> VAS 22 49 (date broken, reign of Sd): sag-ir su-bir<sub>4</sub><sup>ki</sup> / x NI-BI-i nam-ru-tim / bi-ri-it na-ri according to the excavation photograph (PEDERSÉN 1998: 338), excluding the restoration [ša p]i-i nam-ru-tim (CHARPIN 1985: 271) or [gu-t]i<sup>1</sup>-i nam-ru-tim (WILCKE 1990: 299) proposed on the basis of the copy.





that are strictly distinguished in slave sale contracts. In this combination, Šubartum is used in a more general sense of “northern foreigner”, while “Between-river” points to a specific area. Another acquisition order stipulates the delivery of “splendid Gutean slaves”,<sup>31</sup> a label not attested elsewhere in our corpus. It is not clear whether at that time Gutium was still in use as the name of a specific Zagros polity, but it seems that the term was commonly used in a broad sense as denoting “mountain dweller” or the like. It was

applied to people serving as mercenaries and especially as bodyguards throughout the Near East in Old Babylonian times,<sup>32</sup> and perhaps in this case the acquisition of men with the appropriate physique to serve as bodyguard was required.

#### SLAVE TRADE ROUTES

In Figure 1 the toponyms attested as the place of origin of foreign slaves that can be located with some precision are put on the map (for locations

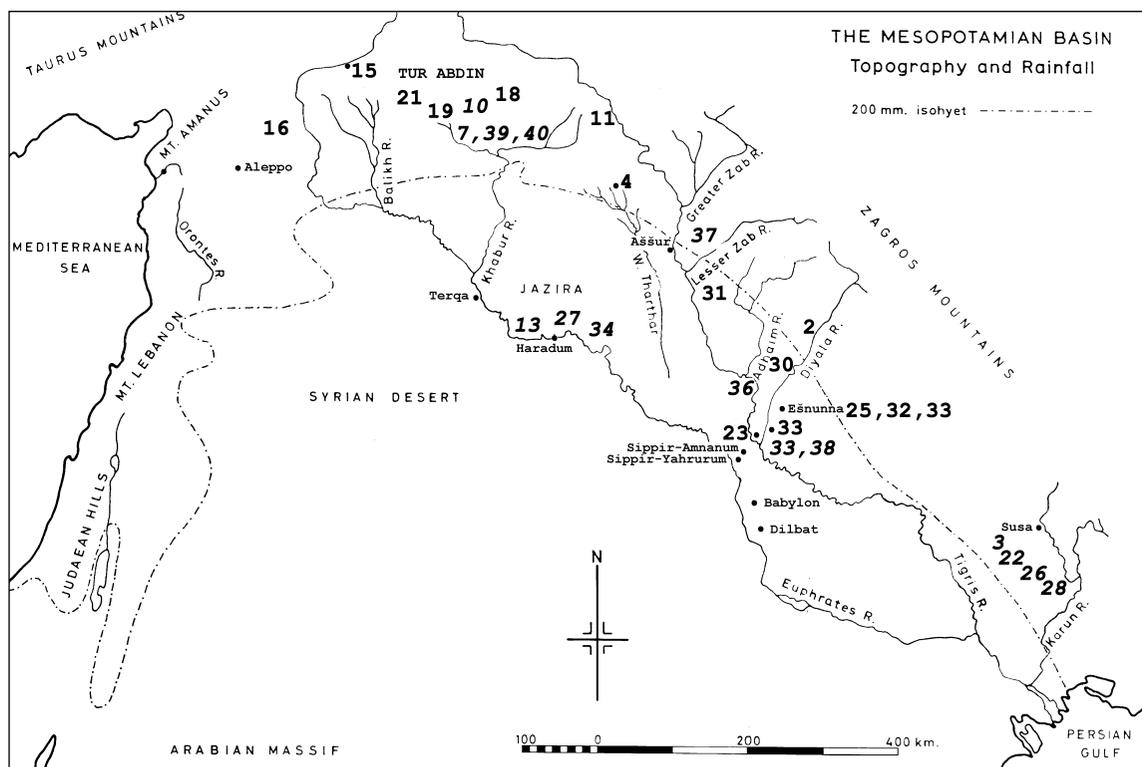


Figure 1 Origin of foreign slaves from Samsuiluna until Samsuditana

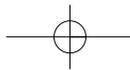
Si 27	2	Šimurrum	Ad 21	19	Ašlakkā	Aš 8	32	Ešnunna
Si 28	3	Elam	Ad 37	21	Talḫayum	[Aš 5–10]	33	Nērebtum, Ešnunna and Aškuzum
Ae h	4	Qaṭṭarā	Ad 37	22	Elam			
Ae m	7	“Between-river”	Aš 2	23	Zarilulu	Aš 10	34	Suḫūm
Ad 1	10	Idamaraš	Aš 3	25	Ešnunna	Aš 16	36	Dūr-Mankisayū
Ad 1	11	Mardaman	Aš 3	26	Ālum-ša-Sin-išme	Aš 17	37	Karanā
Ad 3	13	Suḫūm	Aš 3	27	Suḫūm	[Aš]	38	Kudla[...] <sup>?</sup>
Ad 4	15	Ḥaḫḫum	Aš 4	28	Elam	Sd 11	39	“Between-river”
Ad 7	16	Ursum	Aš 6	30	Arramu	Sd 12	40	“Between-river”
Ad 20	18	Šinaḫ	Aš 6	31	Ašuh and Lubda			

Confirmed or probable locations are indicated with a dot, approximate locations without. Digits in italics serve to indicate the region where the place can be located. Map adapted from D. OATES, *Studies in the ancient history of Northern Iraq*, London, 1968, fig. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Meissner BAP 4 (Aš 10): sag-ir-meš *gu-ti-iki* / *nam-ru-tim*.

<sup>32</sup> EIDEM and LÆSSOE 2001: 31–32 and EIDEM 1996: 80.





see the discussion in the appendix). Two early attestations, from the reign of Samsuiluna, can be located to the East or Southeast of Mesopotamia, and the identified suppliers from the reign of Abiešuh are positioned in the North. Then this picture reveals an important shift of direction: up to the end of the reign of Ammiditana, slaves were mainly imported from regions to the North and Northwest of Mesopotamia, while later most slaves came from regions to the East and Southeast of Mesopotamia.

It must be noted that this impression is based on limited evidence: some place names are broken while others are obscure or unattested elsewhere. Moreover, the corpus of slave sale contracts constitutes a limited sample resulting from random finds and is unevenly distributed over time: the lack of data from the reign of Samsuditana is particularly unfortunate. Nevertheless, the shift that can be observed in the period around the beginning of the reign of Ammišaduqa is supported by adequate evidence and seems to be significant. The reappearance of northern slaves in the reign of Samsuditana is also noteworthy.

To appreciate the historical implications of this shift, the trading system that supplied slaves for the Babylonian market must be briefly discussed.<sup>33</sup> Foreign slaves were imported by foreign as well as Babylonian traders. The sale contracts fail to specify whether the seller was the trader

who had imported the slave, or perhaps a middleman or a slave owner selling his property, but it is evident that foreign traders played an important role: some of them came from Aššur,<sup>34</sup> and also Suteans were prominent slave traders.<sup>35</sup> There is some evidence for slave markets: the slaves of nos. 30 and 31 were sold just three days apart, probably to the same buyer and certainly at the same place.<sup>36</sup> One of the sellers is an Assyrian who presumably acted as an import trader; the other bears a Babylonian name. Both their merchandise originates from the east Tigris region. All this suggests some kind of a slave fair where merchants from the same caravan sold their stock.

Agents sent abroad also obtained foreign slaves. There is substantial evidence for trading expeditions organised to buy foreign slaves and funded by wealthy Babylonian officials and the palace.<sup>37</sup> Some of these references belong to a type of commercial loans so far attested during Samsuditana's reign only: middlemen made silver of wealthy money lenders available to fund trade enterprises along the Euphrates.<sup>38</sup> Although in many instances the objective of such undertakings is not expressed, it is clear that slave acquisition was one of their primary goals.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, another source of foreign slaves were soldiers selling their share of the booty after a military campaign. Evidence for this practice from Babylonian sources is slim, but its importance should not be underestimated.<sup>40</sup> There is

<sup>33</sup> For a general discussion see LEEMANS 1960: 110–112 and LEEMANS 1968: 181–185.

<sup>34</sup> Judging by the names of the sellers of nos. 12 and 30.

<sup>35</sup> JOANNÈS 1997: 408, 411 and DE GRAEF 1999a: 21–22, 25.

<sup>36</sup> The texts share at least four witnesses: YOS 13 35: rev. 1'–3' = YOS 13 89: 28–30. Seal B on YOS 13 35 reappears on YOS 13 89, where it is marked as the seal of Gimillum, being the fifth witness Gimil-Marduk, whose name can thus be restored in the broken lines of YOS 13 35. The name of the buyer in YOS 13 35 is broken, but he might have been identical with the buyer in YOS 13 89. Other texts belonging to this buyer, Amurrunāšir son of Nabium-nāšir, are discussed by WILCKE 1982: 468–471.

<sup>37</sup> STOL 2002: 748–750.

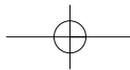
<sup>38</sup> References in PIENKA 1998: 309–310.

<sup>39</sup> Explicit in VAS 22 49 (with PEDERSÉN 1998: 338)(date broken, reign of Sd) and JNES 21 75b (Sd 13). Another objective was the acquisition of *i-[i-im]*, according to AoF 11 102 no. 11 (date broken, reign of Sd), which can be restored with the help of VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 391

no. 1 (Sd 11), VAS 29 62 (Sd 14) and VAS 22 55 (Sd 26/27). The meaning of the word *i-DI(-im)* in these texts is ambiguous, but new exemplars show that loans with the purpose of buying this product were common in the days of Samsuditana. This suggests that the commodity is “bitumen”, rather than “bracelets” as proposed by CHARPIN 1985: 272 (see also WILCKE 1990: 300 and PIENKA 1998: 287 note 39). Bitumen was extracted in the area of Hit in Lower Suḫûm (MICHEL 2001).

<sup>40</sup> The slave woman from Ursum in no. 16 came into possession of her last owner together with at least one other contract for a previous sale (see footnote 18). The seller in this earlier contract held a military title and is known from contemporary texts (for *Sîn-nādin-šumi* PA.PA son of *Sîn-išmeanni* see VAN KOPPEN 2002: 162–163). It is possible that he imported this slave woman when returning home, especially as another military commander who was associated with him is known to have done business in Naḫur, a city in the Habur basin, from where he brought slaves to Babylonia (AbB 11 158 with VAN KOPPEN 2002: 164–165 note 27).





also evidence that the palace occasionally disposed of slaves; this can presumably be explained as the selling off of war booty in excess of the palace's needs.<sup>41</sup>

Much less is known about the foreign suppliers of slaves. Obviously, social and legal systems aimed at protecting citizens against kidnapping and forced recruitment as slaves were also in force in the supplier states. The letters from Tell Leilan, for example, clearly show that local authorities were strongly interested in remedying incidents of that sort.<sup>42</sup> This policy included populations of allied countries, and letters from Mari speak of measures aimed at suppressing the trade in citizens from vassal states, arguing that it constituted a violation of and threat to the existing treaties.<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, the prominence of the topic of slave piracy in the Tell Leilan correspondence, mostly dating to a period of political instability, clearly shows how this practice flourished under conditions of social and political turmoil.

The importance of legal slave export, on the other hand, cannot easily be determined with the help of these letters, as they are largely devoted to matters of political interest. Yet from the Mari sources we know of an episode of slaves sold abroad with the consent of a local ruler,<sup>44</sup> and hence we should also assume the presence of a regular export market of slaves in the supplier states.

#### SLAVE PRICES

The fluctuation in slave prices during the Old Babylonian period shows a sweeping curve, with a major increase of prices setting in after the early years of Samsuiluna until the highest level was

reached in Abiešuh's reign. Thereafter, prices dropped steadily, again reaching a very low level in the first decade of Ammišaduqa's reign.<sup>45</sup> Price levels reflect, among other factors, supply, and it has for example been argued that a sudden drop in slave prices in Hammurabi's final years must be correlated with an increased influx of war captives.<sup>46</sup> Assuming that demand remained steady, the sharp price-rise in Samsuiluna's later years then indicates diminished supply, presumably due to the recently introduced restrictions on slave trade. Prices stayed at a very high level throughout the reign of Abiešuh, but the gradual reduction that followed indicates that supply increased again. Increased supply can perhaps be taken as a sign that the slave sale restrictions relaxed over time,<sup>47</sup> and certainly indicates that new markets were opened. This was the case early in the reign of Ammišaduqa, when low slave prices coincided with supply of slaves from the land of Ešnunna (attested in the years Aš 2-8, with two instances of broken dates) and Elam (attested in the years Ad 37-Aš 4). These slaves were sold at prices far below those paid for slaves in preceding decades. The development of slave prices under Samsuditana's rule is insufficiently documented.

The downward adjustment of slave prices from the reign of Abiešuh onwards can be followed with the data in Figure 2, where prices of native house-born slaves, slaves from Suḫûm and foreign slaves are listed separately.<sup>48</sup> Foreigners are divided in: "northerners", *i.e.* slaves from Šubartum and Between-river, and "easterners" from Ešnunna and Elam. A third category comprises foreign slaves designated with the name of

<sup>41</sup> TIM 7 45 (Aš 3). The place of origin of these slave women is not clear (*gú' id-ma-ra-da<sup>ki</sup>*; STOL 2002: 750 tentatively interprets this as Idamaras). The low slave prices and the unusual occurrence of slaves from the land of Ešnunna in the time when this text was written must probably be explained as the effects of warfare.

<sup>42</sup> EIDEM 2000: 261 and EIDEM 1996: 82 with note 17 on page 85.

<sup>43</sup> See ARMT 14 51 (DURAND 2000: 226–228 no. 1054) and ARMT 14 79 (DURAND 2000: 229–230 no. 1056).

<sup>44</sup> ARMT 27 117, where a royal official commissioned to buy slaves in Idamaras pays money to king Šubram of Susā, one of the states of Idamaras (*cf. e.g.* ARMT 9 298: 6 and DURAND 1988b: 109 A.1610<sup>+</sup>: 5, A.1212: 6). Did the king supply slaves himself, or was it necessary to pay for the cooperation of a local sovereign in order to gain access to the market?

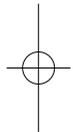
<sup>45</sup> FARBER 1978: 12–14. New data comply with this trend.

Note, however, that the price given by Farber for male slaves at the apex of the curve, 110 shekels, is certainly too high, for the high prices from the reign of Abiešuh and early in the reign of Ammiditana all concern female "northern" slaves. They were more expensive than their male counterparts, in sharp contrast to the prices for house-born slaves. Furthermore, CT 45 44 does not record a price of 107 shekels for one male (so FARBER 1978: 42), but gives the price of two slaves, both presumably female.

<sup>46</sup> FARBER 1978: 14.

<sup>47</sup> See footnote 12 above.

<sup>48</sup> The reign of Samsuiluna is excluded, as statements of prices in the five latest known slave sale contracts from his reign (discussed above) are all broken except in BM 22513 (Si 28), where a Elamite slave costs 25 shekels of silver. An Elamite slave woman sold in the same year costs 35 shekels (TLB I 216).

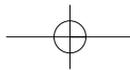


House-born slaves	Slaves from Subūm	“Northerners” (Between-river and Šubartum)	Identified by city and other geographic names	“Easterner” (Ešnunna and Elam)	Without ethnic or geographic specification
Ae u (a) ♀ 43		Ae h (4) ♀ 72 Ae m (7) ♀ 84 Ae m (i) ♀ 84,9	[Ae] (5) ♀ 75 (Ae) (6) ♂ 70		Ae 3 (o) ♀ 60(+)
Ad x (b) ♂ 60 [Ad] (c) ♂ 50	Ad 2 (13) ♀ 13	Ad 1 (10) ♀ 65 Ad 4 (14) ♀ 64 Ad 13 (17) ♀ 21 (j) Ad 20 (18) ♀ 57 Ad 21 (19) ♀ 54 Ad 37 (21) ♀ 12	Ad 2 (12) ♀ 53,5 Ad 4 (15) ♀ 25 (l) Ad 7 (16) ♀ 36>51 (m) Ad 25 (20) ? 20(+)		
[Aš] (d) ♀ 3 (e) Aš x (f) ♀ 5	Aš 3 (27) ♀ 4  Aš 10 (34) ♀ 5(+)	Aš 6 (31) ♀ 28 Aš 6 (31) ♀ 30	Aš 2 (24) ♀ 3 Aš 3 (n) ♀ 3,9 Aš 4 (29) ♀ 4  Aš 16 (36) ♂ 16	Aš 2 (23) ♀ 3(+) Aš 3 (25) ♀ 5,3 Aš 3 (26) ♀ 4,5 Aš 4 (28) ♀ 9(+)  Aš 8 (32) ♀ 8	Aš 6 (p) ♀ 3,8 Aš 11 (q) ♀ 5,3 Aš 12 (r) ♂ 10 Aš 13 (s) ♂ 10 Aš 15 (t) ♀ 10 Aš 17 (u) ♀ 13
[Sd] (g) ♀ 16 (h)		Sd 12 (40) ♂ 20/40 Sd 13 (k) ♂ 20			

Figure 2 Slave prices from Abiešuh until Samsudītana

Slave prices (excluding SL.BI-fees) in shekels of silver; x(+) indicates that the figure is partly damaged, different readings of a broken figure are separated as x/y. Numbers between brackets refer to texts in the appendix; letters to the following remarks:

(a) YOS 13 248; (b) VAS 29 3; (c) YOS 13 5; (d) YOS 13 409; (e) old woman; (f) BM 80420 (see footnote 23 above); (g) VAS 22 19; (h) suckling child; probably under special circumstances, see footnote 19 above; (i) BM 12951, *munus-su-bir*; (j) suspiciously cheap, see footnote 12 above; (k) JNES 21 75b, *sag-ir su-bir<sup>ki</sup>*; (l) young girl; (m) the value of the same slave increased between two sale transactions; (n) TIM 7 45 (see footnote 41 above); (o) CT 48 47, a “splendid” slave woman (*sag-géme na-wi-ir-tim*), presumably from the North; (p) TIM 7 46 with TIM 7 47; (q) TIM 7 48 with TIM 7 50; (r) TIM 7 49; (s) BM 97250; (t) Van Lerberghe OB Texts (= OLA 21) 58, a female ox driver (*sag-géme ša-gu<sub>1</sub>*); (u) TCL 1 170.



a city or country, but without a general label. Prices in this third category follow prices of “northern” and “eastern” slaves in the reigns of Abiešuh-Ammiditana and Ammišaduqa, respectively. According to these data, “northern” slaves were the most expensive kind while Babylonian house-born slaves were somewhat cheaper. Slaves from Suḫûm, in contrast, were always the most affordable category; only when “eastern” supply had become available were slaves from Ešnunna and Elam sold for prices comparable to those for slaves from Suḫûm.

While the common reduction of prices can be safely explained with increased supply, the table also shows that demand did not always follow supply: Subarean slaves were still significantly more expensive than other categories in the early years of Ammišaduqa when slaves were bought cheaply.<sup>49</sup> “Northern” slaves, from Šubartum and Between-river, were evidently the most popular category of slaves. Thus it is of interest to note how the place of origin of these priced slaves changed over time: from the Habur basin and the upper course of Euphrates and Tigris in the reigns of Abiešuh and Ammiditana to the foothills of the Zagros east of the Tigris in the reign of Ammišaduqa. Not a single slave from Northern Mesopotamia is found in sale contracts from the reign of Ammišaduqa; they first reappear after the first decade of Samsuditana.

Thus the development of prices and the information about slave origins allow to draw the following conclusions: Import was limited during the reigns of Abiešuh and Ammiditana, when foreign slaves primarily came from Northern Mesopotamia and were sold by foreign traders or bought by Babylonian merchants abroad. Some trade, moreover, took place as a result of Babylonian military presence in the North.<sup>50</sup> The abrupt appearance of

slaves from Ešnunna and Elam in the early years of Ammišaduqa, some of them sold by the palace, must be ascribed to particular circumstances, but data to determine the nature of this situation is lacking. Probably it is an indication of another episode of military conflict between Babylon and Ešnunna.<sup>51</sup> The abrupt lack of supply from Northern Mesopotamia at the same time suggests developments in that region or elsewhere that effectively reduced the export of slaves. An alternative source for popular Subarean slaves was then found in the area at the foothills of the Zagros. After an interruption of about 30 years slaves from Northern Mesopotamia are again documented in the second decade of Samsuditana’s reign. The number of sale contracts from this period is limited, but the prominence of slave trade enterprises along the Euphrates in the second and third decade of his reign confirms that the northern markets for slaves were open again.

#### HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS

The question to be addressed in the framework of a study of synchronization of cultures in the period of the “Mesopotamian Dark Age” is whether the change of direction in slave trade can be used to draw conclusions about social conditions and the development of political structures in the slave supplying territories outside of Mesopotamia. In this context, the early history of the Mittani state is pertinent.<sup>52</sup> This important political entity can be well observed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C., but its formative and early stages are still obscure in the absence of pertinent historical sources. While some scholars assume the existence of the Mittani state in Northern Mesopotamia before the end of the Old Babylonian period,<sup>53</sup> others suppose the establishment of Mittani power first to have taken place after this event.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Based on the price in no. 31; the prices in nos. 30 and 37 are broken.

<sup>50</sup> See footnote 40 above.

<sup>51</sup> See footnote 41 above. Conflicts with Ešnunna are reported during the reigns of Samsuiluna (CHARPIN 1998) and Abiešuh (PIENTKA 1998: 263). Later, in the time of Samsuditana, relations with Ešnunna were apparently peaceful (PIENTKA 1998: 296 with VAS 29 66 [Sd 13]), though occasional hostility is mentioned (AbB 12 182 with PIENTKA 1998: 263–264). There is no evidence in the Old Babylonian sources that the lower Diyala region was ever the theatre of conflict between

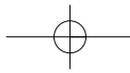
the Babylonian army and Kassites coming from the Diyala region (*pace* PIENTKA 1998: 262 with note 33).

<sup>52</sup> The term Mittani is anachronistic in reference to the Old Babylonian period, as it is first attested in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (KLINGER 1988: 28–29 and WILHELM 1993–97: 287–290), but will be used here as I argue that Old Babylonian Ḫanigalbat is the same state as Mittani of the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

<sup>53</sup> Thus *e.g.* ASTOUR 1972 and KLINGER 1988.

<sup>54</sup> Thus *e.g.* OATES, OATES and McDONALD 1997: 145 and SALVINI 1998: 310.





The best information is still to be found in the accounts of the military exploits of the Old Hittite kings who confronted the “Hurrian enemy” or the “enemy of the country of Ḫanigalbat” in the course of their expansion into Syria.<sup>55</sup> Their ruler is referred to as the “king of the Hurrian troops”,<sup>56</sup> a title that may be indicative of the ethnic and military character of the ruler’s legitimacy.<sup>57</sup>

Another source of information about Mittani’s power in its early existence is the statue inscription of Idrimi, ruler of Mukiš and Alalaḫ, who concluded a treaty with Parattarna, “king of the Hurrian troops”, and mentions the alliance of his forefathers with earlier Hurrian kings. Idrimi must be dated sometimes in the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C., but it is not clear how much time separates him from the fall of Aleppo. If we assume that this was a lengthy period of time, then his predecessors, who accepted Hurrian supremacy, would be dated to the period after Muṣili’s I conquest of Aleppo,<sup>58</sup> an event that took place shortly before his campaign against Babylon. Alternatively, Idrimi may have ruled directly after this event, thus dating his ancestors to the obscure period of undetermined length in Aleppo’s history from Hattušili’s campaign against Alalaḫ to the fall of Aleppo.<sup>59</sup> The question of the relative date of Idrimi’s reign is important for the historical role of Mittani, for its dominance over Aleppo either took place after the end of the Old Babylonian period, or it was contemporary with (part of) the reign of Samsuditana.

The rise of Mittani, or any other political structure in the area, was shaped by long-term trends that can to some extent be recognized with the help of earlier textual material. Recent studies have emphasized the relevance of data from Shemshara, Mari and Tell Leilan to understand later socio-political developments in Northern Mesopotamia. The type of inter-Zagros conflicts reinforced by Mesopotamian intervention and

leading to resettlement of mountain population groups in the plains that is so vividly illustrated by the Shemshara and Mari sources<sup>60</sup> may serve as an example for the outcome of the Zagros campaigns in Hammurabi’s last years.<sup>61</sup> There is extensive evidence for the presence of Zagros deportees in the Babylonian alluvium,<sup>62</sup> and it is among them that one should look for the kernel of the Kassite groups who manifested their military power in Samsuiluna’s eighth year.<sup>63</sup> Early in Samsuiluna’s third decade, the sources from Tell Leilan bear witness to the decisive role of large armies of mercenaries in resolving inter-state conflicts in Northern Mesopotamia.<sup>64</sup> This seems to be a relatively new phenomenon and may be explained in part as the manifestation of uprooted people from the Zagros and elsewhere.

With the destruction of Tell Leilan in Samsuiluna’s 22<sup>nd</sup> year, historical sources for Northern Mesopotamia become scarce. Babylon and Aleppo presumably continued to hold authority over their areas of influence. Babylon tried to control the Euphrates route and was sometimes able to extend its power up to Terqa, but the eastern extent of the Aleppine dominion remains unclear. Political conditions in the Habur basin are essentially undocumented, but the Babylonian slave sale records show that conditions facilitating slave export persisted throughout the reign of Abiešuh up to (at least) the early third decade of the reign of Ammiditana, suggesting that the state of political fragmentation marked by occasional social and political disruptions, that characterized the final years documented in the Tell Leilan sources, continued for a period of about 70 years. The disappearance of slave export in the following period would then suggest that conditions impeding such trade prevailed for the next 30 to 40 years. This might be taken as an indication that some kind of unified political structure

<sup>55</sup> References collected by WILHELM 1993–97: 292.

<sup>56</sup> In Hittite and Syrian sources, see WILHELM 1993–97: 292 and KÜHNE 1999: 208 with note 34.

<sup>57</sup> KÜHNE 1999: 209.

<sup>58</sup> Thus *e.g.* KÜHNE 1999: 211.

<sup>59</sup> Thus VAN SOLDT 2000. Mittanian influence on Aleppo in the time of Hattušili I is suggested by the Aleppo treaty, see KLINGER 1988, who interprets the mention of submission of Idrimi’s predecessors to the king of the Hurrians to refer to the same events as described in the Aleppo treaty.

<sup>60</sup> EIDEM and LÆSSØE 2001.

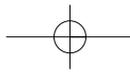
<sup>61</sup> The main source of information about these campaigns are Hammurabi’s year name formulae studied by STOL 1976: 33–42; some of the geographic names in a relevant *tamitum*-text (STOL 1976: 42) are quoted in FRAYNE 1997: 254 and 259.

<sup>62</sup> CHARPIN 1992: 213–217.

<sup>63</sup> See STOL 1976: 44–45, but note that the event commemorated in Samsuiluna’s 9<sup>th</sup> year name might have taken place in the preceding year, see DE SMET 1990: 4–6.

<sup>64</sup> EIDEM 1991: 120–131, EIDEM 1996, DERCKSEN and DONBAZ 1997–2000.





had taken form that effectively managed to impose social order in the region.

This power is occasionally mentioned: some attestations date to the reign of Ammišaduqa and are therefore contemporary with the low in slave export,<sup>65</sup> another to the reign of Samsuditana.<sup>66</sup> All mention “Ḫanigalbatean troops”, showing that the name was then commonly used to designate members of a specific ethnic group.<sup>67</sup> Its non-appearance in the rich ethnic terminology used in texts from Mari and elsewhere can safely be taken to indicate that it was a neologism, of unclear etymological meaning,<sup>68</sup> first introduced at an unknown point in time after the reign of Hammurabi. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C., this term designated the core area of the Mittani state in the Habur basin,<sup>69</sup> and it was presumably used in the very same sense already in the days of Ammišaduqa.

One should, however, bear in mind that this explanation might easily fail to take other factors into account. It is perhaps more than coin-

cidence that, during the time that sales of Northern Mesopotamian slaves are not documented, evidence for hostility against the Babylonian state is abundant. Reports on enemy threat against the territory of Sippir-Yahrurum are dated to Ammišaduqa’s 15<sup>th</sup> year,<sup>70</sup> and in his 18<sup>th</sup> year the city of Sippir-Amnānum was destroyed.<sup>71</sup> The chronological distribution of texts from the city of Dilbat suggests that one or more record keeping institutions in that city came to an abrupt and probably violent end later that year.<sup>72</sup> The abandonment of the fortress town of Ḫarradum on the Middle Euphrates in the second half of the year Aš 18 shows that Babylonian control of Suḫûm weakened at the same time.<sup>73</sup> It remains unclear who was responsible for all this, but there may be a link with the hostile troops of Samḫarû and Bimatû mentioned in the reports from three years before. Little is known of these groups, but the second is attested much earlier as the name of a Kassite military unit in Babylonian service.<sup>74</sup> The loca-

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in GELB 1968: 97: “An unpublished Old Babylonian text dated to Ammišaduqa (circa 1600 B.C.), the knowledge of which I owe to the kindness of Mr. Douglas Kennedy of the Centre National de Recherches de Paris, deals with the issue of beer to the *tu-ur-guma-an-ni ša éren ḫa-bi-in-gal-ba-ti-i* ‘the dragomans of the Ḫanigalbatian soldiers/workers’.” Gelb fails to point out where this tablet was kept and its present whereabouts are unknown to me (see also GRONEBERG 1980: 90 and CHARPIN 1997: 190). A personnel register, probably also from the reign of Ammišaduqa, mentions the person *ib-ba-tum éren ḫa-bi-in-ga-al-ba-at* (BM 96955 iii 9).

<sup>66</sup> CTN 4 63 i 35: [éren] *ḫa-ni-gal-ba-ti-i*, a Neo-Assyrian manuscript of a *tamitum* from the reign of Samsuditana, see CHARPIN 1997: 190.

<sup>67</sup> Its use in Old Babylonian texts suggests that the appearance of *lú-kúr kur ḫa-ni-kal-bat* in the Akkadian version of the “Deeds of Ḫattušili”, where the Hittite version has *LÚ-KÜR ŠA URU ḫur-ri*, is not necessarily the result of later revision, see ASTOUR 1992: 4 note 12. See HOUWINK TEN CATE 1983 for the argument that the prototype of these texts was written in Akkadian.

<sup>68</sup> ASTOUR 1972: 105 and KÜHNE 1999: 205 connect Ḫanigalbat with the name Ḫanû, but this seems doubtful in consideration of the form Ḫabingalbat attested during the reign of Ammišaduqa and in later sources (BRINKMAN 1964: 36–37 and NASHEF 1982: 117–118).

<sup>69</sup> For a definition see KÜHNE 1999: 205–206.

<sup>70</sup> References in PIENKA 1998: 260–262.

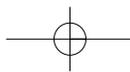
<sup>71</sup> Archaeologically well observed and exactly dated by the excavation of the house of Ur-Utu: the last dated

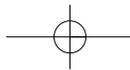
text was written on Aš 18-5-26 (TANRET 2001: 458) and botanical finds suggest that the house burned down in the summer season (GASCHE 1989: 105). The archives of Sippir-Amnānum residents excavated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and preserved in the British Museum and elsewhere all cease in this year or before. These sources not only allow to put the *terminus post quem* for the destruction of Sippir-Amnānum one week forward (BM 80978, Aš 18-6-4), but, more importantly, show that the violence that destroyed Ur-Utu’s house affected a large part of the city. Sippir-Amnānum is rarely mentioned thereafter (for example in CT 48 37 of Sd 1); although a later year name of Ammišaduqa (“17+d”) refers to repairs of the temples of Sippir-Yahrurum and Sippir-Amnānum, the latter city apparently did not return to its former importance.

<sup>72</sup> The organisations that generated the late Old Babylonian records customarily assigned to Dilbat remain to be described, but the prominence of ration lists and other texts with short-term value from the years Aš 17 and 18, in combination with the absence of documents from later years that unequivocally belong to the same archive, suggests that at least one of them was terminated sometimes in the second half of Aš 18. The area of Dilbat was already threatened by the activities of an unidentified enemy in the preceding year, see KOSHURNIKOV 1993: 176 and PIENKA 1998: 267.

<sup>73</sup> JOANNES 1992: 34–35. The *terminus post quem* for the desertion of Ḫarradum is Aš 18-6-20 (KD 31).

<sup>74</sup> VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 384–385; see also the remarks of DE GRAEF 1999a: 10–12. Note that BE 6/2 136 dates to Ae 3.





tion of the destroyed cities suggests that the direction of attack followed the Euphrates as far down as the area of Dilbat, and it might be relevant that somewhere upstream this river the famous “Kassite houses” were situated.<sup>75</sup>

These “Kassite houses” were the seat of a semi-independent Kassite polity located somewhere to the Northwest of the core area of the Babylonian state.<sup>76</sup> Its recognition allows for a consistent answer to a number of separate questions: it permits a plausible explanation for the presence of Kassite elements in an otherwise autonomous Hana culture;<sup>77</sup> it accounts for a military force able to inflict sudden destruction far

into the Babylonian heartland; it gives a satisfactory explanation for the later career of the name Samḫarû;<sup>78</sup> and, finally, it is consistent with the genealogy of later rulers of Suḫûm.<sup>79</sup> The Kassite rulers normally recognized the supremacy of Babylon, but could on occasion turn against it.<sup>80</sup> This is illustrated by the events of the reign of Ammišaduqa. The motive for this aggression is still unknown, and it cannot be excluded that the Kassites operated in alliance with some other power. Nonetheless, Ammišaduqa was able to ward off this invasion,<sup>81</sup> and continued to rule for three more years. Relations with the Kassites were again pacified in the early reign of Samsudi-

<sup>75</sup> This expression does not designate military camps located in the surrounding of major Babylonian cities and cannot be compared with fortified settlements in the countryside (thus PIENKA 1998: 258 with literature), but is used in a specific geographic sense. It is a place that can be reached from Babylon passing through Sippar (VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 392 no. 2), a place of departure for people with important information for the king (AbB 7 47) and the destination for trading missions (VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 391 no. 1). This last reference is revealing when compared with similar loans for other destinations (such as VAS 22 37 and VAS 29 66); its objective, getting bitumen, points to a destination near Hit on the Euphrates, see footnote 39 above. A similar, if not the same, institution are the “houses” in combination with the name of a leader; they designate both place (AbB 6 24) as well as relationship (BE 6/2 136) in accordance with the various meanings of the word “house”.

<sup>76</sup> Babylonian evidence agrees with the theory originally proposed by SMITH 1940: 17–25, largely ignored since the critical remarks of LANDSBERGER 1954: 66–67 but recently revived by PODANY 2002: 43–51, for the existence of a Kassite state at least from the reign of Abiesuh onwards (see the text published by VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 392 no. 2 and another quoted by VAN LERBERGHE 1995: 383 note 8); its precise location (north of Terqa, according to PODANY 2002: 50) remains to be identified.

<sup>77</sup> PODANY 2002: 50–51.

<sup>78</sup> The name Samḫarû has been linked with Egyptian *Sngr*, Šanḫara in Hittite and Amarna texts and, much later, Biblical Šin‘ār (ZADOK 1984). In Egypt, *Sngr* is used as the name of the Kassite kingdom of Babylon. It is mentioned for the first time in the annals of Tuthmosis III and then became a common element in geographical lists from the 18th and 19th dynasty (GARDINER 1947: I 209\*–212\*). In the geographical lists of Ramses II at Amarah West, *Sngr* (no. 4) appears together with Babylon, its capital city (*Bbr*, no. 89), the city of Uruk (*Irk*, no. 88) and perhaps even the Kassites (*Ksy*, no. 29) (KITCHEN 1996: 74–75 and 1999:

126–129). In the Amarna letters and Hittite texts, Šanḫara is used in the same sense as the name of the Kassite kingdom of Babylon (DEL MONTE and TISCHLER 1978: 344 and BELMONTE 2001: 263–264), but there is one famous passage in a Hittite ritual where Šanḫara appears alongside Aššur, Babylon, Egypt and many other countries (KUB 15 34 i 57: KUR URU *aš-šur* KUR URU KÁ-DINGIR-RA KUR URU *ša-an-ḫa-ra* KUR URU *mi-iš-ri*, see GARDINER 1947: I 212\* and II 323–324). This passage seems to reveal another tradition, where Šanḫara is distinguished from Babylon.

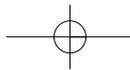
The prominence of this name outside of Mesopotamia implies that the Samḫarû must have played a far more important role than the few Babylonian attestations, all found in letters referring to their hostile activities in Ammišaduqa’s 15th year (AbB 1 2, 7 47 and 10 150), would suggest. This is best explained by assuming that the Kassite polity on or near the Middle Euphrates was (also) known by the name Samḫarû. After the Kassites had seized power in Babylon, the name also came to signify the Kassite kingdom in Babylon. This later meaning of the name seems in particular to have taken root in the Levant, and was adopted by the Egyptians, while the Kassite rulers themselves, and most other participants in the international correspondence in Akkadian language, preferred the name Karduniaš to refer to this kingdom. The tradition of KUB 15 34, that separates Šanḫara from Babylon, might be an anachronistic reflection of the situation in the late Old Babylonian period.

<sup>79</sup> Who traced their ancestry back to a “son” of Hammurabi with a Kassite name (RIMB 2 S.0.1002.1: 3–4; S.0.1002.2: 3–4 etc.).

<sup>80</sup> Military settlement at the northern fringes of the Babylonian state (DE GRAEF 2002) evidently served as a defence measure against Kassite and other aggression coming from the North.

<sup>81</sup> The question whether Ammišaduqa’s inscription from Nippur (RIME 4.3.10.1), dealing with the defeat of an unknown enemy, refers to this accomplishment merits further study.





tana, when strong Babylonian presence in Suḫûm<sup>82</sup> and Terqa<sup>83</sup> is once more documented. The role of the Kassites in the conflict between the Hittites and Babylon at the end of Samsuditana's reign remains to be established.<sup>84</sup>

Any explanation for the failing import of slaves from Northern Mesopotamia during the reign of Ammišaduqa must take at least these two political structures into account.<sup>85</sup> Kassite hostility presumably restricted Euphrates traffic, but this alone is insufficient to explain the trend, as the open character of the Mesopotamian landscape offered ample opportunity for mobile traders to operate over alternative routes. The absence of northern slaves can for that reason be interpreted as an indication for the presence of a strong power in Northern Mesopotamia. This allows us to propose that a unified Hurrian polity, of unknown dimensions<sup>86</sup> and known by the name of Ḫanigalbat, had come into existence in the Habur basin at least 50 years before the end of the Old Babylonian period. The later description of its ruler as the "king of the Hurrian troops" in Hittite texts and elsewhere indicates that outsiders noticed the importance of military power for the cohesion of this state, and its beginning was in all

probability linked with the class of mercenary forces that is attested in sources from Tell Leilan, written approximately 133 years before the end of the Old Babylonian period. Between these two moments, we must imagine a course of events that included the acquisition of civil power by their leaders, followed by a process of gradual political unification, but none of this is so far documented by contemporary texts.<sup>87</sup>

The subsequent resumption of northern slave trade, starting approximately 20 years before the fall of Babylon, was then the combined effect of two factors: in the first place, increased instability in Northern Mesopotamia, presumably caused by external pressure on the Mittani state; and, in the second place, the pacification of the Kassites and the re-establishment of Babylonian military presence as far north as Terqa. While the first can obviously be ascribed to Hittite expansion into Syria, it cannot be excluded that Babylonian activities in that area contributed to the same effect. Babylon and Hatti were obviously interested in controlling the very same territories, and examples of coalitions serving common interests,<sup>88</sup> but ending in one partner defeating the other are plentiful in Mesopotamian history. The history of the fall of Babylon still remains to be written.

<sup>82</sup> MOHAMMAD 2002.

<sup>83</sup> Texts from Terqa are dated with year names of Ammišaduqa and Samsuditana (ROUAULT 1992: 253–254). Identification of the pertinent year names is obviously vital for a better understanding of Ammišaduqa's conflict with the Kassites. Samsuditana's grip on the Euphrates route is confirmed by the prominence of Euphrates trading enterprises in his reign, see above with footnotes 38–39.

<sup>84</sup> The name [KU]R URU *ša-an-ḫa-ra* in KUB 26 74 i 10, dealing with Muršili's campaigns in Syria (DEL MONTE and TISCHLER 1978: 344 and KEMPINSKI 1983: 53), is not necessarily the name used for Babylon in a late manuscript, but might in fact refer to the Kassite polity. In other historical texts concerning the Hittite campaign against Babylon, its name invariably appears as (URU) KÁ-DINGIR-RA<sup>(ki)</sup> (DEL MONTE and TISCHLER 1978: 186 and KEMPINSKI 1983: 50, 53–54).

<sup>85</sup> Obviously, one must reckon with other larger political units that have so far left no traces in our record. The state of a ruler with the Amorite name Ya'usa that temporarily included Terqa, perhaps in the time of

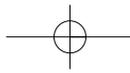
Abiešuh or Ammiditana (based on the prosopographic data given in ROUAULT 1992: 251–253, but see the remarks by PODANY 2002: 42–43), can serve as an example.

<sup>86</sup> Absence of reference to such a state in records from Tikunani, located in the area of Bismil (CHARPIN 2000), cannot be used to disprove the existence of a Habur-based Hurrian state (*pace* SALVINI 1998: 310).

<sup>87</sup> It still remains to be decided whether the Indo-European royal names and military terminology that can be observed from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards (KLINGER 1988: 27–29 and WILHELM 1993–97: 292–293) are original or secondary traits of the Ḫanigalbat/Mittani state.

<sup>88</sup> Hittite diplomatic contact with Babylon is revealed by a letter of a merchant from Babylon in the time of Samsuditana, who describes how the Hittites address him about their business deals in the "palace gate" (VAS 22 85 with KLENGEL 1979: 86–87). This indicates that the merchant did business with Hittite emissaries, who combined commerce with their diplomatic or military missions to the Babylonian court.



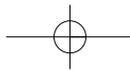


## APPENDIX

## Foreign slave sales in the later Old Babylonian period

1	Si 24	CT 48 60	I sag-ir lú-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> / <i>am-mu-wa</i> mu-ni
2	Si 27	BIN 2 80	I sag-géme uru <i>ši-mu-ru-um</i> <sup>ki</sup>
3	Si 28	BM 22513	I sag-ir <sup>d</sup> utu-[... mu-ni] / sag-ir <i>e-[la-am-tim]</i>
4	Ae h	TCL 1 147	I sag-géme <i>ma-am-ma</i> m[u-ni] / munus-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> <i>wa-ri-it-tum</i> / uru <i>qá-ṭa-ra</i> <sup>ki</sup>
5	[Ae?]	VAS 29 7	I sag-géme <i>wa-ri-[it]-tum</i> / uru <i>ša-ḥa-aḥ-ḥu-um</i> <sup>1</sup> / [I <sub>0</sub> ]-x-en-na-tum m[u-ni]
6	(ca. Ae)	VAS 9 146	I lú tur <i>ši-ni-bu</i> / uru <sup>ki</sup> <i>ša-ḥa-aḥ-ḥu</i> / <i>wa-ri-it-tum</i> x-še-tum
7	Ae m	CT 8 27a	I sag-géme <i>ì-lì-x</i> x x mu-ni / <i>qá-du</i> dumu-gaba-ša / šà <i>ma-at bi-ri-tim</i>
8	Ae B	AoF 11 100 no. 9	I sag-géme munus-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> x x / <sup>1</sup> <i>me-a-tum</i> mu-ni / <i>a-lum</i> AN-ba-pa <sup>ki</sup>
9	[Ae / Ad]	VAS 9 219	I sag-ir [... mu-ni] / uru <sup>2</sup> <i>bi-te-eš</i> -[...]
10	Ad 1	VAS 18 15	I sag-géme <i>al-lì-ḥa-ba-ar</i> mu-ni / šà <i>ma-at i-da-ma-ra-aš</i> / <i>bi-ri-it</i> id
11	Ad 1	VAS 29 6	I sag-ir su-bir <sub>4</sub> <i>ì-lì</i> -[o (o)] mu-ni / uru <sup>ki</sup> <i>mar-da-ma</i> <sup>rki1</sup>
12	Ad 2	CT 45 44	I [sag-gé]me <i>ku-te-e</i> mu-ni / [uru <sup>ki</sup> (o)] x-š <u>u</u> -u <sup>[l<sup>ki</sup>]</sup> [I sag-géme] <sup>d</sup> utu-[o mu]-ni / uru <sup>ki</sup> [o o] x x x [o]
13	Ad 2-3	BM 16495 BM 80359 BM 16946	I sag-géme <i>be-el-ti-la-ma-sí</i> I sag-géme <i>be-el-ti-la-ma-sí</i> / <i>wi-lì-id</i> é <i>ša su-ḥu-um</i> <sup>ki</sup> I <i>be-el-ti-la-ma-sí</i> / <i>i-lì-id</i> é <i>ša su-ḥu-um</i> <sup>ki</sup>
14	Ad 4	CT 33 41	I sag-géme <i>um-mi</i> - <sup>d</sup> <i>he-pé-et</i> mu-ni / munus-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> uru <i>ta-ad-ni</i>
15	Ad 4	CT 45 45	I munus-tur-r[a] / munus <i>ḥa-aḥ-ḥ[u-u]</i> m <sup>[ki]</sup>
16	Ad 7	YOS 13 39 VAS 7 50	I sag-géme <i>i-na-é-úl</i> -[maš]-x mu-ni / munus <i>ur-su</i> <sup>ki</sup> I sag-géme <i>i-na-é-ul-maš-ba-na-at</i> mu-ni / uru <i>úr-su-um</i> <sup>ki</sup>
17	Ad 13	VAS 16 207, YOS 13 253	I sag-géme <i>a-bi-du-ri</i> mu-ni I sag-géme <i>a-bi-du-ri</i> mu-ni / su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup>
18	Ad 20	VAS 7 53	I sag-géme <i>su-ul-gi</i> mu-ni / uru <i>ši-na-aḥ</i> <sup>ki</sup> <i>ma-at bi-ri-tim</i> <sup>ki</sup>
19	Ad 21	YOS 13 246	I sag-ir su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> <i>a-ga-ab-x</i> / uru <i>aš-la-ak-ka</i> <sup>ki</sup> <i>bi-ri-it</i> id
20	Ad 25	Di 1191	I sag-[...]AN mu-ni [...]x- <i>la-da</i> <sup>2ki</sup>
21	Ad 37	TCL 1 156	I sag-ir dingir- <i>ma-x</i> -[o mu-ni] / uru <sup>ki</sup> <i>ta-al-ḥu-ú</i> [ <i>bi-ri-it</i> id]
22	Ad 37	Di 1163	“esclave Marduk-rimanni” uru <sup>ki</sup> elam-ma
23	Aš 2	BM 97134	I sag-géme <sup>d</sup> <i>suen-na-da</i> mu-ni / uru <i>za-ri-lu-lu</i> <sup>ki</sup> èš-nun-na <sup>ki</sup>
24	Aš 2	Di 1956	I e-[...] mu <sup>2</sup> -[ni <sup>2</sup> ] / uru <sup>ki</sup> [...]a- <i>bi</i>
25	Aš 3	BM 92606	I sag-géme géme- <i>ku-bi</i> mu-ni / uru áš-nun-na <sup>ki</sup>
26	Aš 3	MEISSNER BAP 3	I sag-géme <sup>munus</sup> <i>na-ru-ub-tum</i> mu-ni / elam-ma uru-ša- <sup>d</sup> <i>suen-iš-me</i> <sup>ki</sup>
27	Aš 3	Di 1412	I sag-géme <i>um-mi</i> - <sup>id</sup> <i>buranun</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>wilid</i> é <i>ša x-x-ḥu</i> <sup>ki</sup>
28	Aš 4	Di 2074	“esclave Inbuša” <i>ša</i> elam-ma x x
29	Aš 4	BM 87243	I sag-géme <sup>d</sup> <i>iškur-du-um-qí</i> [mu-ni] / uru <sup>r</sup> <i>ka</i> <sup>1</sup> - <i>al-le-e</i> <sup>ki</sup>
30	Aš 6	YOS 13 35	I sag-géme <i>ta-ga-ša</i> mu-ni / uru <i>ar-ra-mu</i> <sup>ki</sup> / <i>ma-a-at</i> su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup>
31	Aš 6	YOS 13 89	I sag-géme <i>a-ba-šu-ša</i> mu-ni / uru <i>a-šu-uh</i> <sup>ki</sup> / I sag-géme <i>pa-ḥa-ia</i> mu-ni / uru <i>lu-ub-da</i> <sup>ki</sup> / <i>ma-a-at</i> su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup>
32	Aš 8	YOS 13 408	I sag-géme <i>be-el-ta-ni</i> mu-[ni] / uru <sup>ki</sup> áš-nun-na <sup>ki</sup>
33	[Aš 5-10]	YOS 13 199	[I sag-géme ...]-x-[... mu-ni] / [uru / šà <i>ma-at</i> ] áš-nun-na <sup>[ki]</sup> / [I] sag-g[éme <sup>d</sup> š]a <sup>1</sup> - <i>la</i> <sup>1</sup> - <i>um-mi</i> m[u-ni] / uru [ <i>ne</i> ]- <i>re-eb-tum</i> <sup>ki</sup> / šà <i>ma-at</i> áš-nun-na <sup>[ki]</sup> / [I sag]-géme x- <i>ḥu-um-mu-da-x</i> mu-[ni] / [(...)] uru <sup>2</sup> <i>áš-ku-z[u-um]</i> <sup>ki</sup>
34	Aš 10	CTMMA 1 54	I sag-géme <i>a-ḥa-ta-ni</i> mu-[ni] / uru <i>na-me-e su-ḥi</i> - <sup>r</sup> <i>im</i> <sup>ki1</sup>
35	Aš 11	YOS 13 382	I sag-géme <sup>munus</sup> <i>ši-nu-nu-tum</i> mu-ni / munus-su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> / uru <i>ar-ra-aḥ-ru</i> <sup>ki</sup>
36	Aš 16	RA 73 79	I sag-ir mi- <i>lì</i> - <sup>d</sup> <i>nu-mu</i> [š <sup>2</sup> - <i>da</i> <sup>2</sup> mu-n]i-im / uru <i>bàd-ma-an-ki-sa-ia</i> -[ <i>a</i> <sup>2</sup> ]- <i>ú</i> <sup>ki</sup>
37	Aš 17	BM 17212	I sag-géme su-bir <sub>4</sub> <sup>ki</sup> / <sup>munus</sup> <i>ši-du-ri</i> mu-ni / [ur]u <i>ka-ra-na-a</i> <sup>ki</sup>
38	[Aš?]	SZLECHTER TJA pl. 26	I sag-ir i-x-[...] / uru <sup>ki</sup> <i>ku-ud-la</i> -[...] / <i>ma-a-at</i> áš-nun-[na <sup>ki</sup> ]
39	Sd 11	JNES 21 75a	I sag-géme <i>ḥa-ši-ia</i> mu-ni / uru <i>ta-da-an-ne</i> <sup>ki</sup> / šà m[a-a]t <i>bi-ri-ti</i>
40	Sd 12	VAT 718	I sag-ir [...] / <i>bi-ri-it</i> id





### Remarks on the texts

3: The second line is indented, the next two lines contain the name of the seller (ir PN / ki PN). Restored with the help of TLB I 216, a legal settlement from the same year concerning the price of an Elamite slave woman (sag-géme elam-ma<sup>ki</sup>).

5: This reference is assigned to the reign of Abiešuh because of the adjective *wārittum*, which appears elsewhere in nos. 4 (Ae h) and 6, and the high price of the slave woman.

6: The reading of the last word of the third line is unclear.<sup>89</sup> This text was written outside of the territory of the Babylonian state, as it does not conform to Babylonian sale clauses. Its late Old Babylonian date, already suspected by HARRIS 1975: 339 note 51, is proven by the appearance of the same place name in our no. 5. This implies that the year name in this text is the second year of Ḫam[...],<sup>90</sup> a king of an unknown polity who ruled at the time of Abiešuh (cf. the adjective *wārittum* and the high price). This tablet was found in Sippir-Yahrurum and was presumably brought there as proof of title when this slave was sold to an inhabitant of that city.

7: Collation of line 3 in FINKELSTEIN 1962: 74 note 10.

9: For the date of this text see PIENKA 1998: 505 sub no. 611.

10: The name might also be read as *iz-zi-te-ḫa-ba-*

*ar*, see KLENGEL 1977: 63 with note 2 and DE GRAEF 1999b: 5 note 4.

13: Partial copy of BM 80359 in Figure 3. The information from three sale contracts concerning the same slave girl, Beltī-lamassī, is presented in the table below.

The earliest contract does not contain a statement about her origin, but she is labelled as a “house-born slave woman from Suḫûm” in the two later contracts. These three texts were kept by the last buyer of this slave, probably the *nadītum*-devotee of text C. A possible scenario to explain the composition of this file is as follows: The last buyer acquired the original sale contract for the acquisition of the slave by the seller (text A), a fictitious sale contract written for the benefit of the seller to serve as proof of the lawful background of the slave (text B), and the sale contract for the acquisition of the slave by the buyer (text C). Bēl-lītim-Marduk (= Bēlī-lītim) was probably the real seller in the final transaction, but might have preferred to remain disconnected with this fraudulent act by having his accomplices act as sellers.<sup>91</sup> See footnote 12 above.

16: Last sale contract and sale contract for an earlier transfer, see footnote 18 above.

17: Two contracts are available concerning this sale, one, VAS 16 207, without description of the origin of the slave, and another, YOS 13 253,

	Text A BM 16495 (Ad 2-9-15)	Text B BM 80359 (Ad 3-3-3)	Text C BM 16946 (Ad 3-3-[..])
object	1 sag-géme <i>be-el-ti-la-ma-si</i>	1 sag-géme <i>be-el-ti-la-ma-si</i> / <i>wi-li-id é ša su-ḫu-um<sup>ki</sup></i>	1 <i>be-e[l-ti-la-ma-si]</i> / <i>i-l[i-id é ša su-ḫu-um<sup>ki</sup></i>
seller	<i>ia-áš-ku-ri be-li-ša</i> (+ seal)	<i>i-din-<sup>d</sup>da-gan ù mu-ta-ra-mu be-li-ša</i> (+ seals)	<i>i-din-<sup>d</sup>da-gan ù mu-ta-ra-mu</i> / <i>dumu-[meš ...] be-li-ša</i> (+ seals)
intermediary	<i>i-din-nu lú na-ag-ga-ri</i> (no seal)	<i>ba-li-ṭa dumu mu-ti-ia-da-du</i> (+ seal)	<i>ba-li-ṭa dumu mu-ti-ia-da-du</i> (+ seal)
buyer	<i>be-li-li-tim dumu na-ka-rum</i>	<i>be-el-li-tim-<sup>d</sup>marduk dumu na-ka-rum</i>	[...] <i>lukur-<sup>d</sup>utu dumu-munus</i> [...]
price	13 gín + igi-6-gál SI.BI	13 gín + igi-4-gál SI.BI	13 gín + igi-4-gál SI.BI

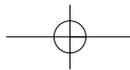
Three contracts concerning the same slave girl (appendix no. 13)

<sup>89</sup> CAD E 100a and CAD A/2 269a propose *e-li-[tum]*.

<sup>90</sup> VAS 9 146: 20–22: *mu ḫa-am-ti<sup>2</sup>(-) / x-e / mu-gi-bi-il*. This formula clearly imitates late Old Babylonian practice, where *mu-gibil<sub>(4)</sub>* year names are particularly prominent.

<sup>91</sup> I intend to publish these texts and discuss the underlying scenario in more detail elsewhere.





referring to the same slave, seller and buyer and dated some days later. The second contract identifies the slave as a foreigner and adds the name of an intermediary absent from the first sale contract. See footnote 12 above.

20: For Di 1191 see DE GRAEF 1999b: 3 and 5.

22: For Di 1163 see DE GRAEF 1999a: 17.

23: Partial copy of BM 97134 in Figure 3.

24: For Di 1956 see DE GRAEF 1999b: 3 and 6.

25: Partial copy of BM 92606 in Figure 3.

26: Partial copy of BM 92551 (= Meissner BAP 3) in Figure 3.

27: For Di 1412 see DE GRAEF 1999b: 3 and 6.

Probably to be read as *wilid é ša Suhû<sup>ki</sup>* (cf. no. 13).

28: For Di 2074 see DE GRAEF 1999b: 3 and 6.

29: Partial copy of BM 87243 in Figure 3.

33: For the date of the text see PIENKA 1998: 433 *sub* no. 266. Šala-ummī is attested as a slave name (AbB 1 27: 10, 16, 23; 28: 16).

37: Copy of BM 17212 in Figure 3.

38: The text can be approximately dated by means of the name of the scribe, who was active from Ad 23 until Sd 12, see PIENKA 1998: 342 *sub* no. 87.

The descriptions of the slaves can be sorted in the following groups:

“Between-river”:	Ašlakkā (19), māt Idamarāš (10), Šinaḥ (18), Tadanne (39), Talḥayû (21), without specification (7, 40).
Šubartum:	Anzupa <sup>?</sup> (8), Arraḥru (35), Arramu (30), Ašuḥ (31), Karanā (37), Lubda (31), Mardaman (11), Qaṭṭarā (4), Tadni (14), without specification (1, 17).
Elam:	Ālum-ša-Sîn-išme (26), “town in Elam” (22), without specification (3), unclear (28).
(Country of) Ešnunna:	Aškuzum (33), Ešnunna (25, 32, 33 <sup>?</sup> ), Kudla[...] (38), Nērebtum (33), Zarilulu (23).
Suḥûm:	“house-born slave of Suḥûm” (13, 27), “town in the pasture land of Suḥûm” (34).
City names only:	Dūr-Mankisayû (36), Ḥaḥḥum (15), Kallē (29), Šaḥaḥḥum (5, 6), Šimurru (2), Ursum (16), unclear (9, 12, 20, 24).

### Location of the toponyms

2. Šimurru was presumably situated on the Sirwan river, one of the source rivers of the Diyala (Frayne 1997).

4. Qaṭṭarā has been identified with Tell Rimah (CHARPIN and DURAND 1987 and EIDEM 1989).

5 and 6. The location of Šaḥaḥḥum, to be kept apart from Ḥaḥḥum (*pace* LEEMANS 1960: 73, 110–111 and GRONEBERG 1980: 85), is unknown.

8. *ālum AN-ba-pa<sup>ki</sup>* or, probably better, *ālum an-zu-pa<sup>ki</sup>* seems to be unattested elsewhere.<sup>92</sup> KLENGEL 1984: 99 read in line 3 *a-lum<sup>d</sup>ba-ū<sup>ki</sup>*, which is also unknown.

9. This example is problematic. HARRIS 1975: 340 assumes that line 2 gives the name of the slave (*iš-*

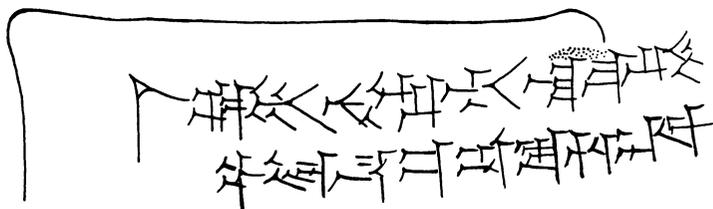
*bi-te-eš-[šu-ub]*). This is problematic because this name is not attested elsewhere (based on SCHWEMER 2001). Furthermore, hybrid names with Teššub are rare in all periods (SCHWEMER 2001: 474). The absence of a personal determinative suggests that this line originally contained a description of the slave and that his name was mentioned in the first line. If so, then the second line presumably contains a toponym which, however, seems to be unattested so far.

10. Northern Idamarāš (in contrast to the east Tigris land by the same name) designates the land and states at the foothills of the Ṭur-ʿAbdin (GUICHARD 2002: 142–143).

11. Mardaman cannot be identified with modern Mardin nor be located in northern Syria, but

<sup>92</sup> The element *anz-* is attested as an element of personal names from Nuzi (FINCKE 1993: 23). Compare perhaps the rare Hittite toponym Anzipa (DEL MONTE and TISCHLER 1978: 25 and DEL MONTE 1992: 8)?





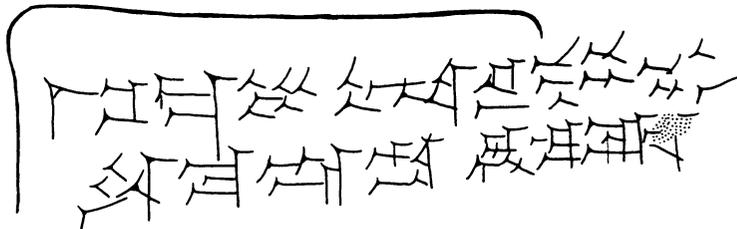
No. 13 BM 80359:1-2



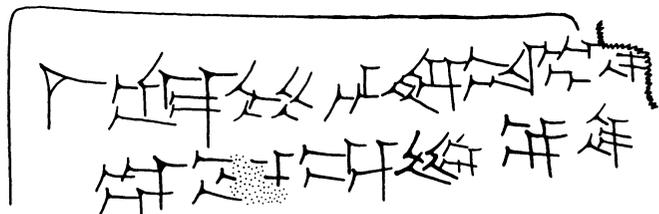
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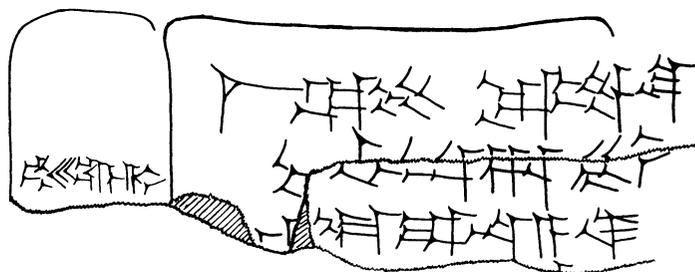
No. 25 BM 92606:1-2



No. 26 BM 92551:1-2  
(=Meissner BAP 3)

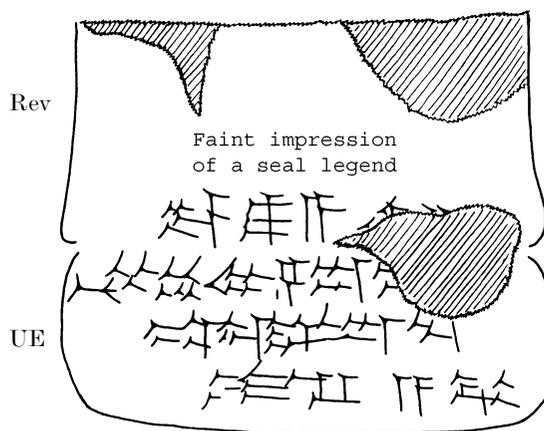


No. 29 BM 87143:1-2



[Rest broken]

No. 37 BM 17212  
(h x w x th = 2,8 x 4,6 x 2,6 cm)

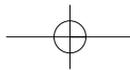


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should be sought in northeasterly Mesopotamia (DURAND 1988a: 294). In Ur III, Old Assyrian and Mari sources it is associated with Ḫaburā (later Ḫaburātum), which must have been located in its vicinity. The name of the latter city has been linked with the Little Habur, a tributary of the Tigris on its eastern side near the Iraqi-Syrian border. For this reason these cities are sometimes located on the left river bank (JOANNÈS and ZIEGLER 1995 and ZIEGLER 2002: 267), but their relations with polities west of the Tigris and their appearance in Old Assyrian texts concerning the westbound trade route (MICHEL 1993: 175) favours a location on the right bank of the Tigris. They were made up by a Hurrian speaking population (DURAND 1988a: 294).

Mardaman and Ḫaburā joined the uprising of Simanum against the alliance of the ruler of Simanum with the royal house of Ur, but king Šū-Sîn suppressed this rebellion and deported their population (RIME 3/2.1.4.1 iii 26-iv 46; 3/2.1.4.3 vi 8–18). Mardaman and Ḫaburātum again come into focus in the time of the Mari archive. Samsī-Addu managed late in his reign to incorporate them in his realm (DURAND 1990: 274–275). Later, their rulers maintained diplomatic contacts with Zimri-Lim (BIROT 1989 and KUPPER 1994). In this time the city of Mardaman again suffered defeat: rulers from the Sindjar region and the Turukkeans from across the Tigris took control of the city and deported its population to the extent that the city was deemed uninhabited (ARMT 26 128 and ARMT 28 156 with DURAND 1988a: 245, 294). Nevertheless, the city seems to have continued to exist, as its deity Šuwala of Mardaman appears in literary texts from Ḫattuša (HAAS 1994: 389).

14. This is the only attestation of the place name Tadni.<sup>93</sup> WILCKE 1975–76: 271 note 29 and MICHALOWSKI 1986: 170 argued that it is identical with Tadanne, the place of origin of a slave sold 65 years later (according to no. 39), but apart from the likeness of both names there is no indication that they can actually be linked.

15. According to LIVERANI 1988 the city of Ḫaḫḫum, an important station on the route from Aššur to Kaneš, is to be identified with the ruins

of Lidar Hüyük, ca. 10 km north of Samsat on the eastern bank of the Euphrates. He argues that the violent destruction of the Middle Bronze level 8 can be associated with the destruction of the town by Ḫattušili I. NASHEF 1991: 47 prefers a position west of the Euphrates.

16. Ursum, another important Syrian trading centre (KLENGEL 1989), is most likely to be found in the area of Gaziantep, cf. NASHEF 1991: 130 and DURAND 1998: 76.

18 and 19. The cities of Šinaḫ<sup>94</sup> and Ašlakkā can be fairly accurately located with the help of the sources from Mari. Šinaḫ is often mentioned together with Urkeš during the reign of Zimri-Lim and the cities were probably neighbours. The identification of Tell Mozan with ancient Urkeš allows to locate Šinaḫ in the same area, at the foothills of the Ṭur-ʿAbdin west of Qamišliye. Both cities were controlled by the kings of Ašnakkum, a city presumably situated to the south, somewhere near the centre of the Habur basin (GUICHARD 2002: 137–138). Ašlakkā was Ašnakkum’s permanent rival for local supremacy and cannot have been too far removed (DURAND 1997: 423). It was presumably located somewhere in the northwesterly part of the Habur basin, close to the mountain ranges in the North (JOANNÈS 1996: 345 and DURAND 2000: 462).

During the reign of Zimri-Lim, these polities found themselves under the control of Mari. While they usually acknowledged Mari’s supremacy, the city of Ašlakkā was several times objective of military action and at least once part of its population was deported to Mari (ZIEGLER 1999). Just as Urkeš and, presumably, Šinaḫ were centres of a Hurrian-speaking population, the onomastics of the deportees from Ašlakkā reveal that part of its population also bore Hurrian names (MARELLO 1994: 124–125).

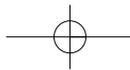
21. Talḫû appears as Talḫayum in Mari texts, the capital of Yapṭurum that was situated between the upper course of the Habur and the Tektek Dağ (DURAND 1988b: 112 and JOANNÈS 1996: 344 note 99, 346). Restoring *birit nārim* is based on the appearance of this general term in nos. 18 and 19, both located east of Talḫayûm.

<sup>93</sup> For the other reference cited in GRONEBERG 1980: 232 see MICHALOWSKI 1986.

<sup>94</sup> The dubious attestation for the “quay of Šinaḫ” in CT

4 26c: 7 (thus GRONEBERG 1980: 222) can be excluded with the help of its parallel CT 8 11a: 5.





23. Zarilulu can be identified with Tell ed-Dhiba'i on the basis of epigraphic finds made there (ABDULLAH 1967 and GRONEBERG 1980: 261).

26. This place name recurs in PBS 8/1 68 (Rīm-Sîn I year 30), a record of expenditure of a lamb for the purpose of extispicy concerning the "safety" of  $uru\text{-}^d\text{suen-}i\check{s}\text{-}me\text{-}rni^{ki}$  from the É-tùr-nam-en-na stable in Nippur. This might imply that it was a border town of Rīm-Sîn's state, presumably somewhere in eastern direction.

29. The reading of this name is clear, but the town of Kallē seems to be unknown elsewhere.

30. At least two places by the name of Arramu / Arame are attested in cuneiform records. *Ar-ramu* is mentioned in Ebla records and must be located in the vicinity of that city; *A-ra-me* is attested in a year name of the Old Akkadian king Narām-Sîn, in an Ur III record and perhaps in the Harmal geographical list (where the form *a-ra-mi-il<sup>ki</sup>* appears). Arame evidently lay east of the Tigris, and FRAYNE 1997: 263 situated it on the Diyala River near the point where the river breaks through the Jebel Hamrin.

FINKELSTEIN 1955: 2 (and STEINKELLER 1998: 94 note 67) proposed to link Arramu of no. 30 with this eastern toponym. ARCHI and BIGA 1982: 318 linked the Old Babylonian attestation for Arramu found in our no. 30 with Arramu in the Ebla sources. A third suggestion was made by JOANNÈS 1988: 245, who proposed a connection with the city of Aram(m)anum (*a-ra-ma-ni-ma<sup>ki</sup>*), located somewhere between the kingdom of Atamrum based in Andarig and Allaḫad, cities located south of the Sinjar, and the kingdom of Išme-Dagan based in Ekallātum on the Tigris (ZIEGLER 2002: 256–257).

Given that nos. 30 and 31 belong together (see above), the place of origin of the slaves sold in no. 31 makes a case that Arramu in no. 30 is to be located to the east of the Tigris. Hence Finkelstein was right in identifying it with the city of Arame on the Diyala, while the city of Aram(m)anum is best kept apart.

31. The position of Lubda is roughly known thanks to its role in political history. It is well attested in Nuzi records and seems to have been situated at or near the southern frontier of the

kingdom of Arrapha. Then it became subject to Babylonia, but was later disputed over between Assyrian and Babylonian rulers. Hence it was most likely situated in the area between the Lower Zab in the north and the Jebel Hamrin in the south, but its precise location remains unclear (NASHEF 1982: 179; FADHIL 1983: 105–126; FINCKE 1993: 166–168). The cities of Ašuh and Lubda occur as a pair in no. 31 and in Nuzi texts (FINKELSTEIN 1955: 1–2 and FADHIL 1983: 66, 108) and were probably located close to each other.

33. Nērebtum is certainly Ishchali (CHARPIN 1999: 179). The wall of Aškuzum was built by Sîn-abušū, a ruler who controlled several cities in the lower Diyala region, such as Šaduppûm (Tell Harmal) and Nērebtum (WU 1994: 47–51). Aškuzum should therefore be located in the same area.

35. Arraḫru is still unattested elsewhere (FINKELSTEIN 1955: 3).

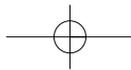
36. The city Dūr-Mankisayû is otherwise unknown. The meaning of the name ("fortress of the inhabitants of Mankisum") might imply that it lay in proximity to Mankisum, a city with a strategic role located east of the Tigris somewhere between Samarra and Baghdad (ZIEGLER 2002: 246–247), but this is far from certain.

37. Although past opinions differed (*e.g.* FADHIL 1983: 92–101), it is now clear that there were at least two towns by the name of Karanā: one closely connected with Qaṭṭarā (Tell Rimah) but whose precise location remains uncertain (JOANNÈS 1996: 351), the other situated somewhere east of the Tigris in the general area of Nuzi (FINCKE 1993: 132–133). The eastern Karanā is preferred here, since other Subareans sold during Ammišaduqa's reign come from the east Tigris region.

38. The geographic name as copied is otherwise unknown. WILCKE 1975–76: 271 considers an emendation  $uru^{ki} \check{s}a\text{'-}ad\text{'-}[la\text{-}a\check{s}^{ki}]$ .

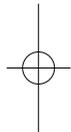
39. This toponym occurs only once. FINKELSTEIN 1962: 77–78 combines it with Old Assyrian Dadiania (and Hittite Tataniya?) that was presumably located in northern Syria (in the area of Zalpa, cf. NASHEF 1991: 33–34), but this is not necessarily correct. The label *birīt nārim* allows locating this city east of the Euphrates or in the Habur basin.

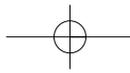




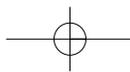
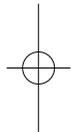
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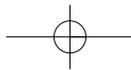
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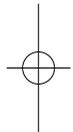


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## Abbreviations

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|--------------|--|---------------|--|
| <i>Afo</i>   | <i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>  | <i>NABU</i>   | <i>Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires</i>                             |
| <i>AOAT</i>  | <i>Alter Orient und Altes Testament</i>                                      | <i>OLA</i>    | <i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i>   |
| <i>AoF</i>   | <i>Allorientalische Forschungen</i>  | <i>OrAnt</i>  | <i>Oriens Antiquus</i>   |
| <i>ArOr</i>  | <i>Archiv Orientální</i>   | <i>PIHANS</i> | <i>Publications de l’Institut Historique-Archéologique Néerlandais de Stamboul</i> |
| <i>BiOr</i>  | <i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>  | <i>RA</i>     | <i>Revue d’Assyriologie et d’archéologie orientale</i>                             |
| <i>JCS</i>   | <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>  | <i>RGTC</i>   | <i>Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cuneiformes</i>                              |
| <i>JEOL</i>  | <i>Jaarbericht van het Voorazatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux</i> | <i>RLA</i>    | <i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie</i>              |
| <i>JESHO</i> | <i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>              | <i>SCCNH</i>  | <i>Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians</i>            |
| <i>JNES</i>  | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>                                       | <i>SMEA</i>   | <i>Studi Miceni ed Egeo-Anatolici</i>  |
| <i>LAPO</i>  | <i>Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient</i>                               | <i>WO</i>     | <i>Die Welt des Orients</i>  |
| <i>MARI</i>  | <i>Mari. Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires.</i>                      | <i>ZA</i>     | <i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie</i>              |
| <i>MHEM</i>  | <i>Mesopotamian History and Environment Series II Memoirs</i>                |               |  |

