xšnao𝛳rahe ahurahe mazdå
Detail from above the entrance of Tehran's fire temple, 1286š/1917–18. Photo by © Shervin Farridnejad

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Special Issue: Discussions in Assyriology

Edited by Magnus Widell & Parsa Daneshmand

Discussions in Assyriology

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Introduction

On January 16th this year, a group of scholars working on the history and languages of the Ancient Near East (ANE) convened virtually in a small and somewhat informal conference, which we after some initial hesitation decided to call "Discussions in Assyriology." This special issue of DABIR contains selected papers presented at the conference, which brought together some 40 students and scholars from around the world, mostly from Asia and Europe.[1]

Discussions in Assyriology represents a new initiative, aimed at the discussion and dissemination of ongoing research on the ANE in China and beyond. The modern study of Assyriology and the ANE had a relatively late start in China, and until the turn of the twenty-first century, almost all research in the field was centered around either the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC) at Northeast Normal University in Changchun, or the "up-and-comer" Department of Oriental Languages and Culture at Peking University, with its long and distinguished traditions in ancient Chinese studies.[2] Aside from

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1- Attendance to the conference was open to the public and free for all participants and speakers. Due to the different whereabouts of the speakers (see below), the event had to be scheduled from 06:00 a.m. to 13:00 p.m. (UTC), a time that unfortunately would have discouraged wider participation from colleagues and students residing in the Western Hemisphere.

2- See Zhou, Wu & Lin 1986; for the rapid development and growth of Assyriology in China over the last 20 years, see now Liu 2020: 286-287; and Wang, Piccin & Günther 2021: 191-198.

random (or planned) encounters during indispensable research trips to IHAC, which housed the country's only research library in Assyriology/Hittitology (and a Xerox machine, conveniently placed immediately next to the library's monograph section), the small community of ANE scholars in China would routinely converge, as a somewhat marginalized coterie at the large annual congress organized by the China Ancient World History Research Association, an organization that was established in 1979.

The situation has changed dramatically over the last 10-15 years, with many second- and third generation ANE scholars now holding permanent positions in universities across the country. Substantial investments by these universities in research infrastructure, typically with generous increases to library budgets, coupled with the growing importance of online resources in the field, have changed the academic landscape in the country.[3] In short, developments within both the field of ANE studies and higher education in China, have made it possible for Chinese scholars and students to move much farther afield from the traditional centers of Assyriology and related fields.

Discussions in Assyriology is intended to serve as a focused forum for this growing community of ANE scholars and students, and we particularly encourage papers highlighting prospective lines of inquiry, next to more finalized studies. More specifically, the conference aims to offer established scholars as well as graduate students in the fields of Assyriology, Sumerology and Hittitology an opportunity to present their ongoing research, and establish professional links within China and abroad. Although there is a pronounced international component to the conference, with several international contributors and English being the working language of the conference and the subsequent publication, an important aspect of Discussions in Assyriology is to provide a platform for scholars and students based in China or affiliated with Chinese institutions and/or research projects.

An important role of Discussions in Assyriology is also to support and help students and younger scholars at an early stage of their careers with the sound and timely publication of their contributions in peer-reviewed international journals. We firmly believe that Open Access (OA) contributes to the excellence of all scholarly work, and ensures its widest possible dissemination and impact, and we are delighted to present the first proceedings of Discussions in Assyriology in this special issue of the journal DABIR.[4] We would like to thank Professor Touraj Daryaee, editor-in-chief of DABIR, as well as executive editors Drs. Shervin Farridnejad and Judith A. Lerner, for all their support and encouragement to publish the proceedings in the journal. A final copy of the volume was proofread by Mss. Emily Craig and Julia Trim (both University of Liverpool), generously assisted by the Research Support Fund of the School of Histories, Languages and Culture at the University of Liverpool.

3- Liu 2020; for the impact of online resources on the field of Assyriology, see Englund 2015.

4- In accordance with the ethical principles and publication policy of *DABIR* (see https://sites.uci.edu/dabirjournal/ethics/; accessed on 2 June, 2021), the contributions in this Special Issue have been assessed using a double-blind peer-review process, and we would like to thank all our readers for their hard (and often unrewarding) work, and for helping us making this volume possible.

Discussions in Assyriology – Brief Retrospection

Not all the talks presented in the conference have been included in this volume, and several contributions published here differ rather significantly from their original format in our meeting. For these reasons, a very brief retrospection of the conference may be of some interest to the readers.

The first paper of the day was delivered by **Xianhua Wang**, who talked about ancient Near Eastern maps and cartography. Following a comprehensive overview of the extant Mesopotamian maps, Wang focused his talk on the cultural contexts of Mesopotamian map making, and different methodologies for interpreting and decoding these ancient maps and their Sumerian/Akkadian legends. Following Francesca Rochberg's recent study on Mesopotamian maps as an expression of terrestrial and celestial order,[5] Wang believes that the earliest Mesopotamian maps laid out architectural and topographical features or regions on a physical landscape, which would be either terrestrial or celestial in nature. According to Wang, the validity of this module can be observed in the well-known "Babylonian Map of the World" from 6th century BC ancient Sippar.[6]

Magnus Widell discussed the administrative and archival function of Ur III deliveries/receipts broken up in separate installments. Texts with such installments provide evidence in support of the hypothesis put forward by Piotr Steinkeller, that a large proportion of the Ur III texts were drawn up (or at least completed) *post factum*, at a time and (in all likelihood) location that differed from when/where the transactions they recorded would have taken place.[7] The evidence further suggests that such texts in many cases would have been written up to a week, or several weeks, after the transactions occurred. This observation has some implications for our understanding of the administrative and archival procedures of the period. It is possible to keep a clay tablet wet (and inscribable) over an extended period, simply by wrapping it in a moist linen cloth, and it is therefore possible that a single tablet documenting multiple installments could have been inscribed over a longer period. However, experiments have demonstrated that the necessary wrapping and re-wrapping of the tablet with the wet cloth (which requires regular re-dampening) will result in a gradual abrasion to the tablet's inscription, and it would not have been practical for the administration to keep tablets wet and inscribable for more than a few days.[8]

Xiaoli Ouyang's paper focused on the nature of votive gifts from women attested in the Ur III texts from ancient Umma. The majority of the votive gifts were presented to the city's patron deity Šara or the goddess Inanna. The votive gifts are often referenced in the texts as (divine) mu-ku$_x$ (DU) deliveries: mu-ku$_x$ (DU) + divine name, which may be understood as a truncated form of the full expression mu-ku$_x$ (DU) a-ru-a + divine name. The paper highlighted the fact that several votive gifts of this kind consisted of an object referred to as nam-nimgir-si and of children designated as dumu-kar-ra, and Ouyang's contribution to the present volume expands on this topic by offering a more detailed investigation of the dumu-kar-ra. Based on the Ur III records from Umma, Ouyang is able to demonstrate that these children "of the quay" (kar-ra) referred to foundlings – perhaps from the city docks – brought up within the city's temple organization.

The first session of the day was concluded with a paper by **Zhiyun Guo** on the seemingly very successful peace treaty (the "Eternal Treaty") between the Hittite King Hattusili III and Ramesses II, who ruled Egypt

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5- Rochberg 2012; see also Reddleman 2018.
6- Horowitz 1988; see further Rochberg 2012: 32-34.
7- Steinkeller 2004.
8- See Widell 2021.

for 66 years (1279-1213 BC). In her paper, Guo offered an important overview of the treaty, with a discussion of the extant evidence pertaining to her topic. Based on a thorough classification and analysis of the exchange of letters between the two kings, Guo argued that a more nuanced understanding of the treaty is necessary, and that future studies should incorporate a wider range of contemporary data.

A short break for coffee was followed by presentation entitled "*Ordo Verborum* and Nuances of *Verba Dicendi* in Narrative Frames of Akkadian Literary Texts" by **Michela Piccin**, focused on direct and indirect speech in Akkadian. The direct/indirect speech was either introduced by a *verbum dicendi*, such as *qabûm* or *zakārum* "to say," or by a fixed formula of saying, such as *piam/pâm epēšum* "to speak (up)." Piccin's paper offered a systematic study of the syntax and style of *verba dicendi* and saying formulae in Akkadian literary texts, with a particular focus on the mode of insertion of direct and indirect speech in the narratives of the Epic of Gilgameš and the Erra Epos. The quantitative and qualitative analyses of *verba dicendi* and specific formulae introducing direct/indirect speech offer new insights into the nuances of meaning, revealed by the frequency of use in the two texts. Piccin's contribution to the volume is intended as an introduction to her work on *verba dicendi*, and will be followed by a more comprehensive treatment of the subject, which will appear elsewhere.

The next paper by **Changyu Liu** focused on foreign policy in the Ur III period, and the state's (alleged) geopolitical expansion in the northeastern parts of the state, as well as the northwestern regions. Contemporary administrative texts, along with royal inscriptions and Ur III year formulae, offer an insight into the state's alternative strategies to establish economic and political dominance in these two areas, which included military operations and armed conflict, but also trade and diplomacy. The paper investigated the mostly peaceful expansion and development in the northwestern regions of the state, as opposed to the more aggressive policies adopted in the northeast, which can be interpreted either as a manifestation of geopolitical and territorial expansion in the region,[9] or as evidence of more targeted military campaigns pillaging and securing spoils of war from the region.[10] Liu's conference paper on military strategies in the northeast versus the northwest was presented in the context of a larger and ongoing project at Zhejiang Normal University on the Ur III military expansion, which is described in more detail in this volume, together with an outline of how the Ur III year formulae can (and cannot) be used in historical reconstructions.

In her paper "A Comparative Study between the Ur III Dynasty and Shang Dynasty," **Xueting Chao** offered an overview of the opportunities and advantages offered by comparative studies of the Shang Dynasty in early China and the Ur III state, and was able to highlight a number of political, religious and cultural similarities between the two states. Both the Ur III and the Shang Dynasty were territorial states, with elaborate bureaucratic and administrative systems and centralized economies. In particular, our understanding of the Ur III perceptions of kingship may benefit from analogies with the Shang Dynasty. The transfer of power from one ruler to the next followed similar rules in the two states, with patrilineal and fratrilineal royal succession being well documented. Another similarity worthy of note was the development and coordinated state promotion of divine kingship and royal worship in both the Ur III and the Shang Dynasty, a relatively rare manifestation of royal power in subsequent Mesopotamian and Chinese civilizations.

9- E.g. Steinkeller 1991.
10- E.g. Garfinkle 2021.

In the final presentation of the session, before a short break for repast and more general discussions, **Parsa Daneshmand** talked about the role of divination and the decision-making process in Mesopotamia. Daneshmand explored in detail how the ancient priests would ask questions of the divine world, analyze, and interpret the answers, and ultimately how divination would influence judicial, political and military state policy. The paper particularly emphasized how specific yes/no questions were formulated through the observation of organs of sacrificial animals, and then addressed to a divine assembly. The favorable/unfavorable verdict of the divine assembly could only be reached through an open debate and consensus, thus lending further support to Thorkild Jacobsen's famous "primitive democracy" in early Mesopotamia.[11]

Jacob Dahl opened the third and final session with a presentation entitled "When Things Change, and When They Don't: on Change in Cuneiform Signs During the First 1500 Years of Mesopotamian Cuneiform Tradition." In his paper, Dahl offered a critique of François Desset's recent (and renewed) attempt at linking the linear-Elamite script attested in a handful of inscriptions dated to the late Old Akkadian period, with the proto-Elamite script attested in some 1,600 tablets, or fragments of tablets, traditionally dated to the final three centuries of the fourth millennium BC.[12] In addition to the chronological challenges involved, the paper highlighted the many problems associated with interpretations of (superficial) graphic similarities as unambiguous evidence of genetic script dependency.

Jiarui Zhang's paper was concerned with parallels and intertextuality in Sumerian literary texts, with a particular focus on imagery and metaphors used in Sumerian incantations and cult lyric (i.e., songs with the ancient classifications: balaĝ, eršemma, eršaḫuga, and šu'ila), and the two city lamentations: The Lament of Ur (LU) and The Lament of Sumer and Ur (LSU). According to Zhang, previous research on intertextuality in ancient Mesopotamia has concentrated on Akkadian literature, with few studies focused on the Sumerian material. Using various specific examples of Sumerian imagery and metaphors, Zhang was able to demonstrate the importance of systematic study on intertextuality and parallel use of fixed expressions in Sumerian literary texts.

The final presentation of the day was by **Xiaobo Dong**, on the manufacturing of a kind of bronze weapon referred to as ^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar in the Ur III period. A few texts from the state's capital Ur (dated to Ibbi-Suen's 15th year) concerned with the ^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar offer important information on several aspects of the metallurgical technology of the Ur III state. The texts provide detailed data on the raw materials used in the weapons, and on the recycling of metals and the standardized tin to copper ratio in bronze of the period. Based on his analysis of the cuneiform texts and parallels to archaeological discoveries in the Royal Cemetery of Ur (ca. 2600 BC), Dong argued that the ^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar in the texts referred to a "standard bronze spearhead," which in all likelihood should be associated with the Ur III king and ritual/cultic activities of the state.

All papers were immediately followed by questions from the audience and/or shorter discussions on the various topics of the presentations.

11- Jacobsen 1943 and 1954.

12- François Desset has presented much of his research on this topic in his seminar "A New History of Writing on the Iranian Plateau," presented on December 14, 2020 in the Online Research Seminar Series "Early Urbanization in Iran: Development of the Urban Centers in the Iranian Plateau" hosted by the University of Padua. The seminar is currently (22 April, 2021) available at: https://youtu.be/801ZOUhN3t8. For references to previous research linking proto-Elamite with linear-Elamite, see Englund 2006-2008: 22.

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The Sumerian Expression a-ra₂ X-kam and the Use of Installments in the Ur III Administration

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Abstract

This short communication investigates the Sumerian expression a-ra₂ X-kam, which was used to denote ordinal numbers in the Ur III period, typically to rank in a sequential order deliveries/receipts within the state administration. The literal and the cognitive meanings of a-ra₂ X-kam remain unchallenged, and the article will focus on the practical application of the expression within the Ur III state bureaucracy, and its significance for our overall understanding of the administrative and archival procedures of the period. The use of sequentially ordered installments in the Ur III administration supports the hypothesis that many Ur III texts may have been written *post factum*, and suggests that such texts were produced anywhere from a few days up to several weeks after the economic transactions they document would have occurred.

Introduction

The Ur III period (conventionally dated from 2112-2004 BC according to the so-called Middle Chronology) is commonly referred to as one of antiquity's most well-documented administrative systems.[1] Scholars

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All references to cuneiform texts in this article are according to the abbreviations and *CDLI* P-numbers used by the *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative* (*CDLI*) at https://cdli.ucla.edu/, accessed on January 4, 2021.

have estimated the number of Ur III economic and administrative cuneiform tablets kept in various museums and private collections around the world to approximately 120,000, of which some 100,000 are now available to the scholarly community in some form.[2] Such numbers are certainly impressive, but the fact remains that only a fraction of these texts have been published in translation, and translated texts have not always been subjected to more serious forms of analysis or interpretation. The translation of the texts into a modern language (rather than their understanding) have often remained the focus in the rare (and laudable) cases where Ur III text editions have ventured beyond merely offering Sumerian transliterations and/or line drawings of the tablets.[3] The problem is well-known among students and scholars of the period, and Leo Oppenheim's lamentation of the regrettable state of Ur III text editions, published some 70 years ago in the preface to his ground-breaking study on the Ur III administration, remains depressingly befitting to this day:[4]

> As a matter of fact, the steadily and rapidly increasing number of published texts did everything but attract new scholars to this important group of documents; the highly valuable information which they contain remained buried in the usual type of impressive looking text-publications with copies and indexes (of personal, divine and geographical names) accompanied by very cautiously styled remarks as to the content of the individual tablets.

One explanation for this ongoing situation is no doubt the very large number of texts that the Ur III period has left behind. Out of sheer necessity, scholars have often (and perhaps correctly) focused on quantity rather than quality, when making new Ur III texts available to the academic community.[5] Another reason, which is less frequently acknowledged among Ur III scholars themselves is the highly complicated state of text transmission, and the fact that translating and analyzing Ur III administrative and economic texts remains a difficult and time consuming endeavor. The administrative and technical jargon encountered in the Ur III texts often appear overly convoluted, entirely superfluous, or even contradictory. As recently argued by Jacob Dahl, the highly specialized terminology used in the Ur III texts can often (only) be elucidated with the help of a broader understanding of the texts themselves, and the administration to which they belonged.[6] The prominent assyriologist Ignace Gelb taught us many years ago that an overall understanding of the texts can only be acquired when they are studied within their administrative and archival contexts.[7] Then again, our reconstructions of those administrative and archival contexts rely almost entirely on our understanding of the texts.[8] With this obvious dilemma of circularity in mind, it is important to emphasize that every single Ur III tablet, in and of itself, performed an administrative and/

2- The *Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts* (*BDTNS*) returns a total of 101,012 Ur III texts (http://bdtns.filol.csic.e, accessed on January 9, 2021), although as pointed out by Manuel Molina (2016: §2), approximately 1/3 of these texts have only been made available through their cataloguing data, or as scanned images of "unpublished, unassigned" tablets.

3- Some notable exceptions to this rule include Oppenheim 1948; Jones & Snyder 1961; Grégoire 1970; and Dahl 2020.

4- Oppenheim 1948: vii.

5- See further e.g. the discussion in Englund 2011: 231-232.

6- Dahl 2020:1; see also Dahl 2010.

7- Gelb 1967.

8- Other important sources of data on the Ur III society, such as material culture or ethnography, have only played a minor role in reconstructions of the Ur III administration and bureaucracy (Widell 2013: 56; see also Nissen 1988: 3-4).

or archival function within this very complicated system, and the technical expressions encountered in the individual records can in many cases offer important information on the nature of the state's overall bureaucratic procedures. One such technical expression encountered in the records that may have some implications on our understanding of the administrative and archival procedures of the state is a-ra$_2$ X-kam, which was used for ordinal numerals in the Ur III period.

Meaning and Occurrences of a-ra$_2$ X-kam

In the occurrences when Ur III tablets have been translated, and not just presented in Sumerian transliteration, the expression a-ra$_2$ X-kam is typically (and correctly) translated "the Xth time." The meaning of a-ra$_2$ (Akk. *arûm*) as "time" in the Ur III period is well known, and the expression is often used to identify the multiplier in Old Babylonian mathematical texts, similar to how the English "time" would be used in e.g. "3 times 4 equals 12."[9] The literal translation of the Ur III expression a-ra$_2$ X-kam, with -kam being the genitive and the enclitic copula //ak-am//, would be "it/this is of time X."[10]

This translation and understanding of the expression can easily be confirmed in a relatively large number of attestations in the Ur III administrative texts. According to the *Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts* (*BDTNS*), the expression a-ra$_2$ X-kam, used to rank in a sequential order some kind of delivery/receipt, is attested throughout the Ur III period on some 650 tablets. These tablets can be attributed to all cities in the state that has produced more significant numbers of texts, with approximately 85% of the attestations coming from Umma, Girsu and Puzriš-Dagan.[11]

Administrative Significance and Implications of the Use of a-ra$_2$ X-kam

While the literal and the cognitive meanings of a-ra$_2$ X-kam are perfectly clear, its precise function (and purpose) within the Ur III administrative system is less obvious. Historical studies of Ur III administrative texts have often focused on either prosopography or economics, and would typically involve the reconstruction of the various officials operating within the state's larger households, and the quantities of the different commodities and/or labor entering/leaving those institutions. For such studies, the expression a-ra$_2$ X-kam is of little relevance; the sum of the commodities, animals, or work days delivered/received in the different installments in tablets with the expression would conveniently be listed under the "total" (ŠU.NIGIN$_2$) at the end of the tablet (or as a numerical notation on the left edge of the tablet).[12] Since this "total," and from whom/where it came and to whom/where it went, would be sufficient for studies trying to reconstruct the economic and administrative activities of the institution/official to which the tablet belonged (and by whom it had been archived), any further consideration of the nature and significance of the expression a-ra$_2$ X-kam in the text would not serve any tangible purpose. Nevertheless, the very existence of the expression has implications for our understanding of the administrative and archival procedures of the state. A better appreciation of the administrative contexts in which the Ur III tablets were drawn up can help us address the question of the main function of writing in early Mesopotamia, as

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9- Friberg 1987-1990: 545-546; see also Robson 2007: 422, with numerous examples in Robson 2004; or, most recently, Gonçalves 2020: 104, with editions of AO 8900, AO 8901, and AO 8902.

10- See e.g. Jagersma 2010: 260.

11- *Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts* (*BDTNS*) at http://bdtns.filol.csic.es, accessed on January 6, 2021.

12- See e.g. the example below *Orient* 55 152 9 (*CDLI*: P273931), lines 3-7 on the reverse.

an instrument of fiscal control and accountability, or primarily driven by a need for economic planning and forecasting.[13]

The short and laconic text *Orient* 16, 80 114 from Girsu, currently kept in the Liverpool World Museum, may serve as an example of how texts can be interpreted in their administrative contexts, based on our overall interpretation of the historical and cultural contexts of the Ur III state.[14]

Orient 16 80 114 (*CDLI*: P124728)

Obverse

1.	5(diš) sila$_3$ kaš	5 sila$_3$ beer (= 5 liters),
2.	a-ra$_2$ 1(diš)-kam	the 1st time,
3.	ur-^{d}lamma	(for) Ur-Lamma,
4.	mar-tu	the Amorite,

Reverse

1.	nibru^{ki}-ta gen-na	who went from the city of Nippur (to the city of Girsu).
2.	iti amar-a-<a>-si	(In) the month of the amar-a-a-si festival. (= Girsu month 10)
3.	(blank line)	—————

The Amorite Ur-Lamma was in all likelihood a royal messenger within the Ur III state (lu$_2$-kin-gi$_4$-a lugal),[15] and it seems plausible that the five liters of beer listed in the text would have been offered to Ur-Lamma at his arrival in Girsu from the city of Nippur, as a one-time allocation for consumption "in the town" (ša$_3$ iri), as opposed to a provision "for the journey" (kaskal-še), which would be calculated based on the number of days that Ur-Lamma travelled.[16] The tablet would have been kept by the central administration of Girsu (who also wrote it), where it would have served as a simple (and temporary) record of the expenditure. At the end of the administrative year, all beer expenditures would be added together, and the sum would be subtracted from the expected amount of beer kept in the city's main storage facility (e$_2$-kišib$_3$-ba), which in turn would be the sum of any surplus stock from previous years, and all incoming beer deliveries from the city's various brewing establishments. A simple inventory of the large beer vats (^{dug}kur.KU.DU$_3$ and ^{dug}laḫtan$_x$) in the storage would then neatly reveal if any officials or administrators were helping themselves

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13- Mark Van De Mieroop (1997 and 1999-2000) has argued that the main purpose of writing in the Ur III period was administrative control and accountability, while Piotr Steinkeller (2004; also Woods 2015) remains the main proponent of the view that the Ur III texts were primarily written for economic prognostication and planning. For an excellent and balanced overview of the discussion, see now Garfinkle 2015.

14- The text belongs to the category of so-called messenger texts. For a thorough analysis of this group of texts in Girsu, and a reconstruction of the administrative procedures behind them, see now Notizia 2006 and 2009: 25-26.

15- See *NG* 2 33 (*CDLI*: P200594) or *ITT* 2 3810 (*CDLI*: P110981).

16- See Notizia 2006: 323-327; and 2009: 24-25. Sedentarized Amorites could hold a variety of professions in the Ur III period, but they are (perhaps not surprisingly) particularly well attested in the army and the messenger corps (see Buccellati 1966: 340-344; Wilcke 1969: 16; Limet 1972: 132; Lafont 2009: §4.25; Michalowski 2011: 107-110; Silver 2017: 285-286). The tradition of offering very respectable amounts of beer to arriving messengers and couriers is well known in early Babylonia (see e.g. Dalley 1984: 89, referring to the Old Babylonian document *OBTR* 18 [*CDLI*: P223854]; or Selz 2014: 270-271, referring to various beer [and bread] expenditures in connection to arriving/departing travelers in Old Akkadian texts from Umma; for beer provisions more generally, in the Ur III documentation, see Neumann 1994: 328-329).

to free beer at the expense of the city.[17]

The main problem with our understanding of *Orient* 16 80 114 – within the administrative apparatus of the Ur III state – is the fact that the text specifically points out that this was the "first time" (a-ra$_2$ 1(diš)-kam) Ur-Lamma received the provision of beer. Only two scenarios could reasonably prompt the scribe of the tablet to sequentially order Ur-Lamma's beer provisioning in this way:

1. The scribe knew, or anticipated, that Ur-Lamma would receive at least one additional beer provision in Girsu later in the month, and he therefore preemptively avoided any future confusion, specifying that this one was the first.
2. Ur-Lamma had already received (at least) one *additional* provision of beer in month 10, when *Orient* 16 80 114 was written, and the scribe therefore specified that the one in our text was the first, to distinguish it from the later one(s).

We can, with some confidence, dismiss the first scenario as rather far-fetched, and we have no reason to assume that the scribe of *Orient* 16 80 114 should possess the intimate knowledge of Ur-Lamma's different assignments and whereabouts required to predict his future return to the city. Certainly, simply adding a more precise date to the text would be a safer and more effective way of distinguishing this first beer provision from any possible provisions in the future.

This leaves us with the second scenario, with its obvious implication that a not insignificant amount of time must have elapsed between Ur-Lamma receiving his beer, and the drafting of *Orient* 16 80 114 recording the expenditure. This understanding of how a-ra$_2$ X-kam was used in the administration might find some support in the relatively frequent occurrences of deliveries/receipts broken up into ordinals within single administrative texts. In some cases, the different deliveries in such documents were intended for different purposes/destinations (e.g. *Orient* 16 99 149 [*CDLI*: P124751]), or the different batches of products or labor in the texts were received from different sources (e.g. *Nisaba* 33 546 [*CDLI*: P517721]). In such cases, it is certainly possible that the transactions should have occurred more or less simultaneously, and therefore entered together in the same documents. However, in other texts the enumerated deliveries/receipts appear to be identical (in terms of the transaction's contributor, recipient and ultimate purpose), and in those texts we have to assume that the ordinal numbers breaking up the transactions reflected a successive order of installments.[18] The reverse of the Umma text *AAICAB* 1/3 Bod S 234 (*CDLI*: P249141) offers an excellent example of how single transactions could be broken up into successive installments.

17- For the central storage facility (e$_2$-kišib-ba) in the Ur III period, see Widell 2018; for various Sumerian jars and storage vessels, see Waetzoldt 1971: 13-25.

18- Transactions broken up in installments are not unknown in early Mesopoamia; for advanced and partial payments in the Old Babylonian period, see e.g. De Graef 2016.

Curiously, texts such as *Orient* 16 85 127 (*CDLI*: P124736), reverse, Iines 7-9 and 11-14, indicate that chronologically separate installments in the Ur III period were retained as separate entries in the so-called balanced accounts produced at the end of the administrative years. Ur III administrative documents are not known for their verbosity or inclusion of redundant expressions, and I have no explanation for this seemingly meaningless waste of precious space in these accounts.

AAICAB 1/3 Bod S 234 (*CDLI*: P249141)

Obverse

1.	1(barig) še u$_4$ 1(diš)-še$_3$	1 barig barley, for 1 day (= 60 liters),
2.	1(barig) 1(ban$_2$)-ta u$_4$ 3(diš)-še$_3$	1 barig (and) 1 ban$_2$ (barley) each, for 3 days (= 210 liters),
3.	4(ban$_2$) u$_4$ 1(diš)-še$_3$	4 ban$_2$ (barley), for 1 day (= 40 liters),
4.	ur-^{d}ma-mi	(for) Ur-Mami.
5.	1(barig) še u$_4$ 1(diš)-še$_3$	1 barig barley, for 1 day (= 60 liters),
6.	1(barig) 2(ban$_2$)-ta u$_4$ 3(diš)-še$_3$	1 barig (and) 2 ban$_2$ (barley) each, for 3 days (= 240 liters),
7.	4(ban$_2$) u$_4$ 1(diš)-še$_3$	4 ban$_2$ (barley), for 1 day (= 40 liters),
8.	a-lu$_5$-lu$_5$	(for) Alulu.

Reverse

1.	3(barig) še a-ra$_2$ 1(diš)-kam	3 barig barley, the 1st time (= 180 liters),
2.	3(barig) a-ra$_2$ 2(diš)-kam	3 barig (barley), the 2nd time (= 180 liters),
3.	a-lu$_5$-lu$_5$	(for) Alulu.
4.	3(barig) a-ra$_2$ 1(diš)-kam	3 barig (barley), the 1st time (= 180 liters),
5.	2(barig) a-ra$_2$ 2(diš)-kam	2 barig (barley), the 2nd time (= 120 liters),
6.	ur-^{d}ma-mi	(for) Ur-Mami.
7.	e$_2$ šu-^{d}nisaba-ta	From the house of Šu-Nisaba.
8.	(blank line)	—————
9.	iti ezem-^{d}šul-gi	(In) the month of the divine Šulgi festival. (= Umma month 10)

Again, the precise nature of the text, and its administrative *Sitz im Leben* within the city of Umma, can be reconstructed based on our overall understanding of the organization and prosopography of the city. The two brothers Alulu and Ur-Mami were employed as animal fatteners in the important Šara temple, and are attested working together in this office from the later part of Šu-Suen 1 until (at least) the end of Ibbi-Suen 3.[19] In the text, they appear as the recipients of barley from the house of Šu-Nisaba, intended for the fattening of animals before their slaughtering and consumption, which typically would occur in different cult-related contexts.[20] We can only speculate as to why the house of Šu-Nisaba saw it necessary to provide these relatively modest amounts of barley in separate installments. However, we do know that the barley

19- See Stępień 1996: 108-112 and 179; Widell 2009: §§3.3.1-3.3.5. Note also the aforementioned text *Nisaba* 33 546 (*CDLI*: P517721) from Ibbi-Suen 3 (month 3), in which the pair received two separate installments of barley fodder for various sheep from the threshing floors (ki-su$_7$) of two different and well-known Umma fields (a-ša$_3$ ^{d}nin-ur$_4$-ra and a-ša$_3$ la$_2$-tur; see Pettinato 1967: 53-57 and 137-139).

20- The scribe's cavalier attitude as to the accuracy of his calculations in the text is noteworthy, with the house of Šu-Nisaba providing Ur-Mami with 10 liters less than he would need for his animals, and Alulu with 20 liters in excess of the requirements of his animals. As interesting as such scribal "errors" may be, this topic lies beyond the scope of the present study, and will not be treated here.

was intended to be used (as supplemental fodder) over a period of five days (obverse, lines 1-3 and 5-7). It is clear that breaking up the delivery from the house of Šu-Nisaba into two (more or less) equal consignments separated by 2-3 days, would not have had an adverse impact on the animal fatteners' overall work, and may have brought about some logistical advantages in respect to both local transportation and storage within the organization of Alulu and Ur-Mami.[21]

One thing is certain: texts with deliveries or receipts made in installments could only have been drawn up *after* the fulfillment of their final installments, supporting the hypothesis put forward by Piotr Steinkeller, that many Ur III primary documents were written *post factum*, and in locations different from where their transactions would have occurred.[22] In a short article published in 2004, I argued that Ur III officials operating away from the administrative centers of the state (in this case the capital Ur), occasionally can be attested in the archives of those centers using different seals (and with alternative writings of their names) in otherwise identical and contemporary receipts.[23] A reasonable explanation for this peculiar phenomenon is that these officials sealed and authorized their receipts *in absentia*, by means of dedicated proxy administrator(s). An established system of remote accounting, with multiple seals distributed among representatives or subordinates acting on behalf of a stationary official, should not be confused with the occasional and more ad hoc arrangements involving substitute sealing, whereby a subordinate (or colleague/family member) would seal a receipt of his superior (or colleague/family member), using his own seal.[24] Rather, such a system of remote administration would resonate well with Steinkeller's understanding of the state's administrative procedures (also published in 2004), although the *post factum* drafting of the tablets in his model could – at least in these particular cases – equally well be *pre factum*.

The question is not if these transactions occurred together with the drafting of the tablets documenting them (they clearly did not),[25] but rather by what means, and for how long a time, would the ancient administrators be expected to keep track of the details of these transactions (real or not), before they were finally written down? How much time would (typically) elapse between the first and the last installment in texts such as *AAICAB* 1/3 Bod S 234 (*CDLI*: P249141)? The above examples certainly indicate that the various installments documented in these texts would have occurred within the timeframe of a single month.[26] In

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21- Other texts, in which the animal fatteners of the Šara temple are recorded to have received barley fodder in separate installments, include *Nisaba* 33 546 (*CDLI*: P517721) and *STU* 17 (*CDLI*: P130443).

22- Steinkeller 2004; see also Widell 2021.

23- Widell 2004.

24- E.g. Garfinkle 2020: 75-76; see further Widell 2021, with additional references.

25- In fact, we may with some confidence contend that in many cases there would not have been any physical transaction at all accompanying these records. For example, in my 2004 article I discuss a small group of texts in which the scribe *Idi-Suen* is receiving – from the granary in Ur – relatively modest amounts of barley, for the maintenance of various workers in the land of Subu (ma-da su-bu). However, we have no reason to expect that barley would ever be transferred from the central granary in Ur to the countryside, where it was originally cultivated. *Idi-Suen* was himself responsible for very substantial amounts of barley stored in Subu (Widell 2004: 289), and these "transfers" from the central granary in the capital should in all likelihood simply be understood as the official records of barley withdrawals made by *Idi-Suen* from the local granary in Subu, which ultimately operated under the authority of the central granary in the capital (see already Jones & Snyder 1961: 318; and, more recently, Johnson 2017: 182).

26- For a discussion on how detailed information on past matters might have been stored/remembered within the administration, awaiting the drafting of the final records of the transactions/events, see Steinkeller 2004; Widell 2009 and, most recently, Widell 2021. For administrative aids and "Instrumente der Gedächtniserweiterung" from the fourth- and early third millennium BC, see now Sauer & Sürenhagen 2016.

fact, no Ur III texts with this type of sequential installments clearly demonstrate that these transactions would extend over multiple months. Even transactions consisting of larger numbers of installments appear to have been completed within a single month, suggesting that individual installments could be very frequent occurrences, perhaps even daily.[27] On the other hand, the time period between the different beer provisions in *Orient* 16 80 114 could hardly have been less than 5-6 days, to allow sufficient time for Ur-Lamma's rest and departure from Girsu, and his subsequent return to the city with a new message (and a new beer allocation).[28]

Atu's bala Contribution of Ghee in Installments

The recently published text *Orient* 55 152 9 (*CDLI*: P273931) might shed some further light on the administrative nature of the installments in the Ur III period.

Orient 55 152 9 (*CDLI*: P273931)

Obverse

1.	1(ban$_2$) 3(diš) sila$_3$ i$_3$-nun	1 ban$_2$ (and) 3 sila$_3$ ghee (= 13 liters),
2.	kišib$_3$ didli	(from) various sealed documents.
3.	1(ban$_2$) 2(diš) 1/2 sila$_3$ i$_3$-nun	1 ban$_2$ (and) 2 1/2 sila$_3$ ghee (= 12 1/2 liters),
4.	ša$_3$-bi 1(diš)-kam	within (the bala obligation), it is the 1st (installment).
5.	1(ban$_2$) 4(diš) sila$_3$ i$_3$-nun	1 ban$_2$ (and) 4 sila$_3$ ghee (= 14 liters),
6.	ša$_3$-bi 2(diš)-kam	within (the bala obligation), it is the 2nd (installment).
7.	1(ban$_2$) 8(diš) 1/2 sila$_3$ i$_3$-<nun>	1 ban$_2$ (and) 8 1/2 sila$_3$ ghee (= 18 1/2 liters),
8.	⌜ša$_3$-bi 3(diš)-kam⌝	within (the bala obligation), it is the 3rd (installment).

Reverse

1.	BI-A bala-a	??? of the bala obligation.
2.	(blank line)	—————
3.	⌜ŠU+NIGIN$_2$⌝ 5(ban$_2$) 8 sila$_3$ i$_3$-nun	Total: 5 ban$_2$ (and) 8 sila$_3$ ghee (= 58 liters).
4.	⌜ki⌝ a-⌜tu⌝-ta	From Atu,
5.	lu$_2$-⌜^{d}nin-šubur⌝	Lu-Ninšubur
6.	šu ba-ti!	received,
7.	⌜ša$_3$⌝ bala-a	within the bala obligation.
8.	mu en eridu^{ki} / ⌜ba⌝-hun	The year (when) the en-priestess (of the god Enki) in the city of Eridu was installed. (= Amar-Suen 8)

27- E.g. the Puzriš-Dagan text *JCS* 14 112 16 (*CDLI*: P111928), in which 12 oxen and 7 cows were transferred to the (royal) kitchen, or "commissariat" (e$_2$-muḫaldim), using eleven separate installments in the 12th month of year (iti še-sag$_{11}$-ku$_5$), or the Umma text *SAT* 3 1725 (*CDLI*: P144925), in which 23,185 liters of barley was disbursed as rations from the great threshing floor of the field Lamaḫ (ki-su$_7$ gu-la a-ša$_3$ la$_2$-maḫ), using ten separate installments in the city's 7th month (iti min-eš$_3$).

28- Note *SAT* 1 106 (*CDLI*: P131215), showing that messengers could also be provided with provisions on a daily basis.

The official Atu (reverse, line 4) was the chief livestock administrator in Umma (šuš$_3$), and one of his many responsibilities in this capacity involved overseeing the production of the dairy cows in the important Šara temple. In Amar-Suen 8, when the text was written, the temple would have kept some 250-350 cows, herded by 10-15 individual dairy farmers.[29]

Lines 3-7 on the reverse neatly summarizes the text: Atu is delivering 58 liters of ghee, or clarified butter oil, to the official Lu-Ninšubur, as a part of Umma's rotational commitment to the crown, referred to as the bala obligation.[30] The consignment of ghee in the text is broken up into four separate installments. The first two lines of the text, registering 13 liters of ghee assembled from various individual deliveries (kišib$_3$ didli) from Atu's dairy farmers, is likely listing the fourth and final installment, after which the tablet could have been produced. The earlier three installments are listed on the obverse in lines 3-4 (1st installment of 12.5 liters), lines 5-6 (2nd installment of 14 liters), and lines 7-8 (3rd installment of 18.5 liters).[31]

Why did Atu – one of Umma's most powerful and influential officials at the time – need to break up this relatively modest transfer of ghee into four installments, ranging from 12.5 to 18.5 liters? In my original edition of the text, I suggested that the answer might be found in the perishable nature of raw milk in the hot climate of southern Mesopotamia, and the rather limited production capacity of the dairy cows under Atu's supervision:[32]

> The dairy farmers [under Atu's supervision] would be responsible for the churning of cultured butter from the fermented cream, and for making dry cheese from the fermented butter milk. In order to avoid the development of rancidity the accumulated butter, the farmers would have to turn it into ghee every 3-5 days. They would immediately transfer the finished ghee – together with the dry cheese – to their foreman Atu.
>
> Atu would consolidate all incoming deliveries from his dairy farmers, and without further delay authorize the required transfers of the received dairy products to the different offices within the state administration.

The reality is that it would take Atu's 10-15 dairy farmers and their combined 250-350 cows some 2-3 weeks to produce the milk (or sour cream) required for the 58 liters of ghee appropriated for Umma's bala obligation. Atu was the chief livestock administrator in Umma, and in this capacity he would manage a number of complicated supply chains within the city, some of which would involve perishable commodities. He would have to collect a variety of milk products from his dairy farmers on a regular basis, before any

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29- For a more thorough analysis of this text, see Widell 2020: 132-137; for the Umma dairy accounts in general, see Englund 1995 and 2003: §§9-10.

30- For the liquid form of i$_3$-nun as a type of clarified butter oil, see McCormick 2012: 100-101; for a comprehensive overview of the bala obligation in the Ur III period, see Sharlach 2004. Umma's bala obligation in Amar-Suen 8 occurred in the 8th month of the year (Sharlach 2004: 325).

31- I have previously suggested that single tablets, recording multiple transactions that must have occurred at separate times, in some cases may have been kept wet (and thus inscribable) over extended periods of time, by keeping them wrapped in a moist linen or woolen cloth (see Widell 2021). However, such an explanation appears less plausible for *Orient* 55 152 9 (*CDLI*: P273931), considering the sequence of the four installments (4th > 1st > 2nd > 3rd), by which the last installment appears as the first entry on the tablet.

32- Widell 2020: 136-137.

microbial spoilage would occur. Ghee would have been produced by the dairy farmers in batches every couple days throughout the year, and delivered to Atu on a rolling basis. Rather than waiting 2-3 weeks to collect the 58 liters of ghee, the text suggests that Atu would simply authorize a transfer of his stock to Lu-Ninšubur every 3-5 days. Each installment would count towards the total of 58 liters, and when the full amount finally had been transferred, the receipt would be produced, with all the individual installments duly noted. The administrative decision to break up the delivery into a series of installments would not have had any impact on Umma's bala contribution of ghee, but would in all likelihood have brought about some logistical benefits to Atu's own organization in the city.

Conclusions

This paper has demonstrated that the Ur III administrators were capable of storing – in some format – detailed information for several days, or even weeks, before it was permanently documented in the archival records of the state. The practice is evident from the widespread use of sequentially ranked installments, expressed in the administrative texts with the formula a-ra$_2$ X-kam. Transactions broken up in installments are attested from all Ur III sites that have produced more significant numbers of tablets, and the practice can be observed throughout the period.

The evidence suggests that the period of time between the installments typically would have been rather short, ranging from a few days up to perhaps a week. However, as the transactions described in single tablets often would involve as many as 3-4 separate installments (sometimes more), the complete process documented in the tablets, from first to last installment, would in some cases have continued for much longer periods, extending up to several weeks in time.

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Foundlings Raised in the Temple? The Meaning of dumu kar-ra in Ur III Umma

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21

Abstract

Dozens of temple records from Ur III Umma attest to the Sumerian expression dumu kar-ra. Previous literature interprets it as referring to children born out of wedlock, based on its connection to the term géme kar-kid/kìd ("prostitutes"). An examination of the records shows that dumu kar-ra never appears in the same context as prostitutes. Instead, it appeared among the votive gifts donated to gods by married women and professional men. The gender, age, or name of a dumu kar-ra is never specified in any case. The clues lead to the possibility that the dumu kar-ra could have been young foundlings that people picked up in the quay area and later brought to the temple for long-term care. The temple raised the foundlings with the sponsorship of the Umma government.

Introduction

The Sumerian term dumu kar-ra appears in the Umma corpus from the Ur III period (c. 2112-2004 BCE), without any specification of name, age, gender, patronymic, or matronymic.[1] It has seen sporadic discussion

in previous literature. Bertrand Lafont reckoned with the ambiguities about this term and, based on its association with géme kar-kid/kìd (presumably "prostitute"),[2] suggested that it may refer to bastards – children born out of wedlock and dedicated by their mothers to the temple.[3] Walther Sallaberger proposed a more neutral meaning of dumu kar-ra as "children taken away by the temple from the respective women".[4] This article will examine the textual sources of this term and reach a more refined understanding of its connotation within the broader socio-economic background of the Ur III period.

dumu kar-ra as Votive Gifts

mu-DU **Šara**

The online databases *Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts* (hereafter: *BDTNS*) and *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative* (hereafter: *CDLI*) turned up thirty-two texts that mention dumu kar-ra.[5] The texts are divided into two groups according to the context. Group A (summarized in Appendix: Table A) consists of lists (annual, multi-year, or unspecified timewise) that itemize the votive gifts donated to Šara, the patron god of the Umma province, or his various local avatars, such as Šara in the town of KI.AN (^{d}Šára KI.AN^{ki}), Šara in the district of Apisal (^{d}Šára A-pi$_4$-sal$_4$^{ki}), and Šara of Anzubbar (^{d}Šára-^{an}Ánzu^{mušen}-bábbar).

The catchphrase, mu-DU ^{d}Šára, suggests an interpretation of this type of list. The term mu-DU alone appears in Ur III documentation as a general term for deliveries to an economic entity. Votive gifts for gods are termed a-ru-a, which would include inanimate offerings (e.g., foodstuff, utensils, textiles, furniture, and jewelry), as well as livestock, and workers.[6] Evidence from the neighboring province of Girsu-Lagash indicates that the expression, mu-DU plus a divine name, "deliveries for god so-and-so," may reflect an abbreviated form of mu-DU a-ru-a plus a divine name, "deliveries of votive gifts for god so-and-so."[7] In

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2- The proposal of Miguel Civil (1976) is followed here. Pascal Attinger (2005: 232) suggested the alternative reading of kar-kè (AK)/ke$_4$ (KID). Noteworthy studies of prostitutes in ancient Mesopotamia include Assante 1998, Cooper 2006 (with extensive bibliography) and 2016, and Roth 2006. All but Cooper 2016 conduct a systematic and diachronic overview of cuneiform sources pertaining to the terms (Sumerian géme kar-kid/kìd, Akkadian *harimtu*). Jerrold Cooper and Martha Roth take women thus designated as prostitutes, while Julia Assante interprets them as single women with independent economic means, of whom the prostitutes made just one category. Bertrand Lafont (2016: 150) echoed Assante's viewpoint. In a recent book, Marten Stol (2016: 417-418) leaves it open whether or not Assante's conclusion holds. On the separate but related topic of the alleged temple/sacred prostitution, Assante (2009) argued against the existence of it after examining the elements of the cult of Inanna/Ishtar. In yet another article published several years earlier, Assante (2003) dissects the intellectual trends in the 19th and 20th century that gave rise to the construction of female sex workers, temple prostitutes, and sacred marriage (between the king and a priestess playing the role of the goddess Inanna/Ishtar) in ancient Mesopotamia. Cooper (2013: 56) believes that "there probably was real live sex in or in close proximity to the temple, the temple certainly profited from as yet murky sexual activities outside the temple, and the divine inhabitants of the temple had active and beneficial sex lives."

3- Lafont 1992: 101, n. 12.

4- In his words, "diese dumu kar-ra als dem Tempel von den jeweiligen Frauen weggenommene Kinder zu deuten," see Sallaberger 1994: 543. Balke (2008: 345-346) follows Sallaberger's explanation of dumu kar-ra.

5- See http://bdtns.filol.csic.es and https://cdli.ucla.edu/, accessed on March 15, 2021.

6- Braun-Holzinger 1991: 1. For inanimate offerings, see Mayer & Sallaberger 2003: 94.

7- For instance, the text *Amherst* 53 (*CDLI*: P100891; SH48/ii) lists 6 heads of cattle as mu-DU a-ru-a ^{d}Nin-mar^{ki}-ka. In the balanced account *RA* 66 21 (*CDLI*: P127983; SH45/ix) studied in Gelb 1972, seven temples dealt with 39 workers, 57 heads of livestock, and 5 milling stones. The colophon (rev. vi: 1-5) reads: níg-kas$_7$-ak / a-ru-a dingir-re-ne / Sag-ub$_5$^{ki}-ta / Ki-nu-nir^{ki}-šè / gìr An-ne-ba-du$_7$ dub-sar a-ru-a, "a balanced account concerning the votive gifts for the gods, conveyed from Sagub to Kinunir by Anne-badu, the scribe (in charge) of votive gifts." The a-ru-a dingir-re-ne here may well be an abbreviation of mu-DU a-ru-a dingir-re-ne.

Umma records, the term a-ru-a connotes a yet more specific meaning and refers to the labor force donated to a temple instead of to the votive offerings in general.[8]

Alongside those simple lists in Group A, two balanced accounts concerning votive gifts also occur.[9] Such balanced accounts present a structure of three lists in a row, which include a list of revenue, a list of expenditures, and a third list with the balance of the account.

Donors: Gender and Profession

The term dumu kar-ra is always associated with the number one when it is specified as a votive gift from a donor. Thus, each donor – regardless of gender, status, or profession – offered one dumu kar-ra at a time. The two balanced accounts, of which one records four and the other thirty-six dumu kar-ra,[10] may represent a total of some sort, as no name of any donor comes thereafter in the accounts.

The texts do not provide information concerning the professions of the majority of the donors. They do attest, however, to the following titles: Ur-Šara the herald,[11] two shepherds Kugani[12] and Lugal-massu,[13] Dayaga the soldier,[14] Šage the overseer of sixty,[15] and an anonymous *egizi*-priestess (egi-zi) of the goddess Ninurra, divine consort of Šara.[16]

Although Bertrand Lafont and Walther Sallaberger observed that donations of dumu kar-ra came from women, the evidence shows that men made donations of dumu kar-ra as well, and that no preference along the gender line for this particular type of votive gift occurs. Nevertheless, several phenomena do stand out. First, the texts present the female donors as married and identified as "wife of so-and-so" (Sumerian: dam PN) except for the *egizi*-priestess mentioned above. Second, the texts attest to female donors as a separate subgroup to the exclusion of a male counterpart. Thus, the female donors are not mixed with male donors in the records. For instance, in *YOS* 4 212 (*CDLI*: P142276; SS6/xii), eight married women donated one dumu kar-ra each, as follows: four women donated in month x, three in month xi, and one in month xii. The text *UTI* 3 2285 (*CDLI*: P140304; SS3/xiii) mentions four married women, each of whom dedicated one dumu kar-ra. In other cases, two female donors appear side by side in one text.[17] Male donors of dumu kar-ra appeared separately.[18] Such a practice in recording the donations could hint at a physical segregation in space between male and female worshipers in the confines of a temple. This issue would of course require further investigation, but this study will not pursue it here.

8- For example, *BIN* 5 1 (*CDLI*: P106435; SH48/v) lists a great variety of votive gifts to the god Šara and spells out only Nin-hamati, a worker donated by Gudea's wife as a-ru-a (rev. 6-7).
9- *BCT* 2 143 (*CDLI*: P105384; SH48) and *RA* 86 97 (*CDLI*: P128068; AS7).
10- *BCT* 2 143 (*CDLI*: P105384; SH48) and *RA* 86 97 (*CDLI*: P128068; AS7).
11- *Nebraska* 64 (*CDLI*: P121749; SH48/xiii).
12- *Nebraska* 64 (*CDLI*: P121749; SH48/xiii).
13- *MVN* 14 278 (*CDLI*: P117958; AS8/x).
14- *Nebraska* 64 (*CDLI*: P121749; SH48/xiii).
15- *BPOA* 1 892 (*CDLI*: P339548; AS8/ix).
16- *YOS* 04 267 (*CDLI*: P142331; AS7/vii).
17- *SAT* 3 1831 = P145031 (SS7/i) & *Santag* 6 334 (*CDLI*: P211472; IS1/x)
18- E.g., *BPOA* 1 892 (*CDLI*: P339548; AS8/ix) – 2 male donors, *BPOA* 1 0470 (*CDLI*: P339128; SS4/ix) – 2 males, *UTI* 5 3468 (*CDLI*: P141486; SS5/v) – 2 males.

Value of 1 dumu kar-ra = 1 sheep + 1 garment

The value of 1 dumu kar-ra, as Walther Sallaberger noted, equals that of 1 sheep/goat plus 1 garment (udu/máš-bi 1 túg-bi 1).[19] A balanced account always converts the value of the dumu kar-ra,[20] but a simple list of votive gifts can also do so.

The conversion of dumu kar-ra in a balanced account sets it apart because such accounts do not convert the value of other types of labor force in the same context. The balanced account, *RA* 86 97 (*CDLI*: P128068),[21] concerns votive gifts for the god Šara in Apisal. Its revenue in the current year features thirty-six dumu kar-ra, whose value equaled thirty-six sheep and thirty-six garments.[22] The same account includes a total of ten workers in the revenue (obv. v: 7-10): šu-nígin 4 géme 3 bán / šu-nígin 1 dumu-˹munus˺ / šu-nígin 3 dumu-˹munus˺ / šu-nígin 2 dumu-˹níta˺, "in total 4 females at 30 liters (of grain per month), in total 1 girl (= underage female), in total 3 girls, in total 2 boys." Later in the expenditure section, the account includes a withdrawal of all but one boy[23] (rev. ii: 7-12), but nowhere does it convert their value.

The reason for converting the value of dumu kar-ra may have to do with their young age (even younger than a dumu-níta or dumu-munus), at which they could not provide any meaningful input of labor in an economic activity. Unlike other kinds of adult or child workers, they could not move around physically to perform the tasks set up by the Umma administration and had to remain on the premises of a temple. Therefore, in order to liquidate their potential into something exchangeable, a temple administrator would convert their value into that of the common products, sheep and garments, which temples often received as offerings. This proposal may also explain the expression – 1 udu 1 túg dumu kar-ra, "1 sheep and 1 garment in lieu of 1 dumu kar-ra," – to which a number of withdrawal texts (ì-dab$_5$) have attested.[24]

The small value of a dumu kar-ra may reflect its incapability to work at all. A certain type of garment (túgsag-uš-bar) may equal the value of 2/3 of a shekel according to a text from Girsu-Lagash.[25] The value of one sheep may range from 1/3[26] to 1/2 a shekel.[27] Thus one sheep plus one garment could equal somewhere

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19- Sallaberger 1994: 543.

20- *BCT* 2 143 (*CDLI*: P105384; SH48) and *RA* 86 97 (*CDLI*: P128068; AS7)

21- Bertrand Lafont 1992 provides a critical edition of this account.

22- obv. ii: 31-34: 36 dumu kar-ra / udu bar-gál-bi 12 / udu bar su-ga-bi 20+˹4˺ / túg-bi 30+˹6˺, "36 dumu kar-ra, its (equivalency in) unshorn sheep is 12, its (equivalency in) shorn sheep is 24, its (equivalency in) garments is 36." For notes on collation, see Table A in Appendix.

23- Note that the notations associated with boy workers changes from DIŠ dumu-níta (obv. v: 10) to AŠ dumu-níta 2(bán) in rev. ii: 11. Thus we know that such boy workers could receive 20 liters of grain per month.

24- E.g., *YOS* 4 267 (*CDLI*: P142331; AS7/vii) & *MVN* 16 908 (*CDLI*: P118956; AS8/iii). Vulliet (2019: 241-242, 306) understands 1 udu 1 túg dumu kar-ra in those two texts as the sheep and garment for dumu kar-ra, which is not correct. In *Santag* 6 192 (*CDLI*: P212233; AS8/vii), the conversion seems to have been made upon the receipt of a dumu kar-ra. This may also be the case in *AnOr* 1 243 (*CDLI*: P101234; SS5).

25- *MVN* 18 668 (*CDLI*: P120029; AS1): 1 túgsag-uš-bar / kù-bi *KWU*161 (2/3 gín). This is the only record the author found in *BDTNS* that provides the silver equivalency of a garment. The fraction of 2/3 and the metrological unit gín are integrated in one sign as *KWU*161 (NINDA x [ŠE+HAL]). Such integrated writing appears more popular in texts from Girsu-Lagash and Ur. Sporadic examples from Umma include *Nisaba* 32 84 (*CDLI*: P323680; SH47): obv. 1: 2 *KWU*161 kù-babbar / máš nu-gá-gá; *BPOA* 6 1184 (*CDLI*: P292376; no date): rev. ii: 3-4: *KWU*161 kù-babbar gá-la / Níg-ul.

26- The balanced account of the merchant Lu-Haya *SNAT* 504 (*CDLI*: P130264; SS6) rev. 17: 18 udu bar-gál kù-bi 6 gín, "18 unshorn sheep, its silver (equivalency) is 6 shekels."

27- The balanced account of a group of merchants *TCL* 5 6037 (*CDLI*: P131751; SS6) rev. iii: 18-19: 42 udu-níta bar-gál / kù-bi 1/3 ma-na 1 gín, "42 unshorn rams, its silver (equivalency) is 21 shekels."

between 1 and 1 1/6 shekel of silver. One may compare this equivalency with the price of slaves attested in the Ur III sale documents. There, the price of a male slave would fall between 2 and 17 shekels, and that of a female between 1/2 shekel to 12.[28] Thus, the silver equivalency of a dumu kar-ra appears to have been lower than the price of any male slave and that of all but one or two female slaves ever attested.

Provisions for dumu kar-ra

Recycling of Unfit Garments

The second group of texts (Table B), presents the dumu kar-ra as associated with garments in the following formula: *x* number of garments as túg dumu kar-ra, "garments of dumu kar-ra". This group of texts seems to have considered these garments as too small, too old, or too damaged by moths and thus recycled by the textile industry in Umma.

All but three of the texts in this group represent receipts of Ikalla,[29] identified as a scribe in one text and known elsewhere as the scribe "in charge of linens."[30] He withdrew hundreds of liters of alkaline plants and hundreds of minas of gypsum from the procurements by the Umma merchants, one may assume, for the processing of wool, sheepskin, and linen in the textile industry in his charge.[31] The balanced account, *BM* 110313 (*CDLI*: P376162; AS9), which reckons more than 10,000 pieces of textiles as his remainder (lá-NI) and overdraft (diri) from the first to the eleventh month of the year, epitomizes the leading role of Ikalla in this industry.[32] Most of the varieties of the textiles attested in Umma appear in this account. The tablet bears the impression of his seal, "Ikalla, the scribe, son of Lusaga," and that same seal was impressed on two dumu kar-ra tablets.[33]

The modest number of "garments of dumu kar-ra" in a single receipt may range from as few as just one piece[34] to as many as thirty-one pieces.[35] These garments include the following types:

^{túg}bar-dul$_5$[36] tur zú-uh (1x = one attestation): small, moth-eaten coat

^{túg}šà-ga-dù[37] gen[38] (1x): kilt of poor-quality

^{túg}šà-ga-dù sumun (2x): old kilt

^{túg}uš-bar (4x): *ušbar*-garment

^{túg}uš-bar a-gi$_4$-um (2x): a type of *ušbar*-garment

^{túg}uš-bar sumun (1x): old *ušbar*-garment

^{túg}uš-bar tur (8x): small *ušbar*-garment

28- Steinkeller 1989: 135-137.

29- *SAT* 2 542 (*CDLI*: P143742; SH47), *BPOA* 7 2492 (*CDLI*: P390962; AS4), and *Santag* 6 197 (*CDLI*: P212237; AS8), all dealt with below.

30- Ouyang 2013: 129.

31- Ouyang 2013: 129.

32- Pomponio 2010: 189-192. Note that the name of I-kal-la is misread as Lu-kal-la in *BDTNS* and *CDLI*, accessed on March 3, 2021.

33- *CST* 604 (*CDLI*: P108120; IS1/ix) and *USC* 6596 (*CDLI*: P235408; IS2/ix).

34- *CST* 604 (*CDLI*: P108120; IS1/ix)

35- *Santag* 6 230 (*CDLI*: P211739; SS1)

36- It refers to a coat or long cloak made of wool or linen (Waetzoldt 2010: 207, with previous literature).

37- Akkadian šakattû; Hartmut Waetzoldt (2010: 204) explains it as a kind of loincloth, skirt, or kilt.

38- The attribute gen designates the lowest quality of a product. Those of better qualities are described as: 4-kam-ús, "of the fourth-class," 3-kam-ús, "of the third-class," ús, "following (the royal quality)," and lugal, "of royal quality" (Pomponio 2010: 192).

^{túg}uš-bar tur sumun (1x): small, old *ušbar*-garment

^{túg}uš-bar tur zú-uh (3x): small, moth-eaten *ušbar*-garment

^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh (4x): moth-eaten *ušbar*-garment

The most frequent type of garment, called ^{túg}uš-bar tur, "small *ušbar*-garment," and ^{túg}uš-bar typify ordinary clothes in Umma.[39] Considering the young age of a dumu kar-ra, one could understand the "small garments" as those that had become too small for growing children. Two other types follow in frequency: ^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh, "moth-eaten *ušbar*-garments," and ^{túg}uš-bar tur zú-uh, "small, moth-eaten *ušbar*-garments." Both types indicated garments no longer suitable for a dumu kar-ra to wear.

Could the submission to Ikalla of all these small and damaged garments represent some kind of recycling practice?[40] If so, such a transaction could illustrate that the Umma bureaucracy exercised meticulous control over the provisions that it provided to the temples.

Involvement of Temple Administrators

Concerning the individuals who handed the unfit garments to the "scribe of linen" Ikalla, one sees familiar names such as Lugal-azida (known elsewhere as the anointing priest of Šara in KI.AN), Šakuge (*išib*-priest of Šara's temple in Apisal), and Lugal-nir (scribe in charge of Šara's temple in the city of Umma).[41] One Lugal(a)ni-sa, who served the god Šara of Anzubabbar, could be the same as an anointing priest (gudu$_4$) by the same name.[42] The involvement of priests and temple administrators may imply that they took the responsibility for the care of the dumu kar-ra and were held accountable for the provisions allotted for this purpose.

Among the three records that do not mention Ikalla, the text *BPOA* 7 2492 (*CDLI*: P390962; AS4) presents a similar receipt: Ur-Šara, the scribe (instead of Ikalla above) received 1 small "garment of dumu kar-ra" from Lugal-azida, the anointing priest residing in the temple of Šara in KI.AN. Lugal-azida also took charge of a balanced account on wool, namely, *SAT* 2 542 (*CDLI*: P143742; ŠH47). In the expending part, the incumbent governor withdrew six small, old garments; one small, moth-eaten *bardul*-garment; and one old šagadu-garment. The text *Santag* 6 197 (*CDLI*: P212237; AS8), a multi-year list of balance concerning various kinds of goods, records forty-three "garments of dumu kar-ra" from Šakuge, the *išib*-priest of Šara's temple in Apisal, and two from Lugal-anisa, the *gudu*$_4$-priest serving Šara of Anzubabbar. The receipts of garments from both priests date to the year of AS6. Moreover, the forty-three garments handed in by Šakuge as túg dumu kar-ra does not differ far from the number of dumu kar-ra (thirty-six) that Šakuge conveyed as votive gifts of Šara in Apisal a year later in AS7.

39- In the balanced account *BM* 110313 discussed above, ^{túg}uš-bar accounts for the largest quantity of lá-NI and diri of textiles (Pomponio 2010: 191).

40- So far the author has not been able to identify any evidence of recycled textiles in the Ur III period, but there is a possible attestation of recycled silver in Ur III Umma. The text *JRL* 546 (*CDLI*: P108062; IS2/xii) records 1 2/3 shekels of scrap silver taken from a statue (obv. 2: alan-ta gá-ra) to be reapplied to another statue (obv. 7: alan-na gá-gá-dè) by the silversmith Ur-Šulpa'e.

41- See Ouyang 2020 for their identification.

42- *SNAT* 401 (*CDLI*: P130161; AS8): obv. 13: 4 1/3 gín 7 še ki lugal-ni-sa$_6$ gudu$_4$-ta. The date of this text falls between AS7 and AS9, the dates of the two records in which Lugal(a)ni-sa turned in the garments to Ikalla.

Who were the dumu kar-ra?

Examination of the evidence, therefore, does not support the idea that dumu kar-ra, literally "child of the quay," refers to children of prostitutes donated to the temple. The term for prostitutes, géme kar-kid/kìd, never appears in the same context as dumu kar-ra. Previous scholars have assumed the connection of dumu kar-ra to prostitution on the basis of the semantic element -kar, which means "quay" and occurs in both phrases. In Umma, a prostitute's child is rather referred to as dumu (PN) géme-kar-kìd.[43]

No evidence indicates a blood relationship between the dumu kar-ra and their donors. In the texts, the names or appellations of the donors follow the dumu kar-ra (in the format of dumu kar-ra PN). The female donors always appear as anonymous married women, identified by their husbands' names only, while the male donors appear identified by name and sometimes by profession as well. At one time, perhaps the wife of Umma's previous governor also donated a dumu kar-ra.[44]

One may further compare the dumu kar-ra in question with a prostitute's son donated as an oblate in a Neo-Assyrian text, namely, *SAA* 12: No. 92 (K382). Two uncles raised their nephew, born to their sister a prostitute, and offered him to the temple of Ninurta in the capital city of Calah.[45] In that case, the mother indeed had worked as a prostitute (*ina ha-rim-ti-šá*) and gave birth to the boy (*ša ina ha-rim-ti-šá tu-šab-šú-ni*). Unlike the dumu kar-ra, the boy's name (BÀD-*ma-ki-*^{d}15) and genealogy are well documented.

The dumu kar-ra may thus refer to foundlings that people picked up from the quay area and later brought to a temple where the government took care of them. The temple may have functioned as an orphanage in the Umma province. If the mother of a dumu kar-ra had to abandon her child for some reason, the quay would make a suitable location, where the traffic of boats and people[46] ensured the child of a good chance of rescue and adoption.

The proposal that a dumu kar-ra was but a foundling, likely an infant or toddler at most, would explain why the texts never mention its name,[47] age, or genealogy, because nobody knew for certain. Their gender did not matter either from the viewpoint of the administration, since they could not work anyhow. Gender started to matter later when the administration had to decide which kind of chore they would assign to the orphans and how much provisions they would allot them.

Texts from Iri-sagrig and Girsu[48] attest to a similar group of abandoned people referred to as ní-e tag$_4$-a, "left-to-self" (i.e., "waifs"), which possibly denotes "children unsupported by their parents." All but seven of

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43- As in *Santag* 6 384 (*CDLI*: P212276; no date) obv. ii: 10′: 1(AŠ) Lú-^{d}Inanna dumu Géme-lugal géme-kar-⌈kíd⌉.

44- *UTI* 3 2285 (*CDLI*: P140304; SS3/xiii) rev. i: 10 mentions a dumu kar-ra from the wife of Ur-Lisi. Considering the rarity of this name, it probably refers to the namesake governor of Umma (in office SH33-AS8).

45- As many as seventeen witnesses testified to this donation, including priests of the major deities (Ninurta, Nabu, Ishtar and Adad) and officials from the palace. For the most recent edition, see Kataja and Whiting 1995: 116-117, with previous literature; discussion also in Stol 2016: 411.

46- For sources documenting the boat traffic at the quay in Umma, kar (Umma^{ki}), see Steinkeller 2001: 49-56.

47- According to Martha Roth (2006: 33), the lack of somebody's genealogy in legal or economic records indicates the slave status of the parents on the one hand, and the ambiguities of the father's identity on the other hand: "[A]lthough the persons identified in our legal and economic documents only by matronymics (rather than only by patronymics) or without any reference to genealogy are generally assumed to be the children of slaves, there is no reason to exclude the possibility that they are the children of prostitutes or other women, slave or free, who were unable (or unwilling) to identify the father."

48- See Heimpel 2010. This term is attested only twice in Umma: see *OrSP* 47-49 382 (*CDLI*: P125272; AS8/vi): rev. ii 10: Ab-ba-ge-na dumu / Ur-nigar dumu Da-a-a / ní-e tag$_4$-a; and *Nisaba* 31-2 56 (*CDLI*: P376978; SS6/xiii), where three males with two generations of genealogy are summarized as ní-e tag$_4$-a-me-éš.

the 288 waifs attested were male. Unlike the dumu kar-ra, some members of this group received allotments of barley at twenty or forty liters per month, which demonstrates their working capabilities. Moreover, 56% of the waifs are often identified by the father's name, and just 19% by the mother's name. In the latter case, the majority of the mothers worked as prostitutes.[49]

Concerning the male or female donors of dumu kar-ra, they or their family members (in the case of female) could have picked up such a foundling from the quay area and taken home for a short period of foster care before dedicating it to the temple as a votive gift. Such an act would testify to their charity and piety, and thus make the dumu kar-ra an honorable gift for the gods. This scenario may also explain the significant presence of female donors associated with the dumu kar-ra. These married women would have assumed responsibility of caring for the foundlings at home and personally transferred them to a temple.

Once the temple had settled the foundlings, the top administrator of the temple would have begun to take charge. The evidence attests only to the fact that the administrator handed over to the textile industry the unfit or damaged garments of the dumu kar-ra for recycling. One could hypothesize, nonetheless, that the Umma government also distributed foodstuff to the temples for them to feed the children. Unlike garments, foodstuff, consumed once and for all, required no subsequent procedure for tracking. One may infer from the recycling of the small, old, or moth-eaten garments that the dumu kar-ra received proper care in the temples. Inadvertently, the documentation of the recycling practice discloses the pervasive control that the Umma government wielded over the economic transactions going on in the provincial domain.

The Mesopotamian temples functioned as a socio-economic institute more than just a place for worshipping gods.[50] They provided a range of social services that included the care of the poor, the weak, and other marginalized groups. This micro-study of the dumu kar-ra in Ur III Umma allows a rare glimpse into the philanthropic work that the temple conducted with the sponsorship of the provincial government.

49- Heimpel 2010.

50- This may find indication in the chapter titles of the recent book by Dominique Charpin (2017): the Mesopotamian temples as the centers of cure, as banks, tribunals, and prisons, as bureaus of weights and measures, as schools, libraries, and archival rooms, as houses of pleasure, and as places of burials, artisanship, and food-processing.

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Table A: dumu kar-ra attested as votive gifts (18 texts in total)

Text / *CDLI*	Date	Summary	Remarks
BCT 2 143 / P105384	SH48	4 **dumu kar-ra** as part of revenue, = 4 goats + 4 garments (máš-bi 4-àm túg-bi 4-àm)	In a balanced account on votive gifts for god Šara in KI.AN, in the charge of Dada
Nebraska 64 / P121749	SH48/xiii	1 **dumu kar-ra** from Ur-Šara, a herald (nimgir), 1 from Lugal-sisa 1 from Kugani, a shepherd 1 from Arad-hula, for goddess Ninhursag 1 from [...] 1 from [...] 1 (**dumu kar-ra** šu-nir) from Dayaga, a soldier (àga-ús) 1 from Lugal-zimu	List of votive gifts for god Šara
OrSP 47-49 328 / P125218	AS2/xiii	1 dumu kar-ra from [...] 1 from Ur-[...] 1 from Ur-tur 1 from Akalla, son of Ur-Eanna	List of votive gifts for god Šara-du$_6$ & goddess Nintinugga,[51] conveyed (gìr[52]) by Šakuge
RA 86 97 / P128068	AS7	obv. ii: 31-32 36 **dumu kar-ra** as part of revenue, = 12 unshorn sheep + 24[53] shorn sheep + 36 garments	In a balanced account on votive gifts for god Šara in Apisal; conveyed by Šakuge
YOS 4 267 / P142331	AS7/vii	1 udu 1 túg **dumu-kar-ra** from wife of Lu-dingra, son of Arad-hula; 1 udu 1 túg from the *egizi*-priestess of goddess Ninurra; 1 udu 1 túg from [...] Biduga	List of votive gifts for god Šara, withdrawn (ì-dab$_5$) by a lù-mah
MVN 16 908 / P118956	AS8/iii	1 udu 1 túg **dumu-kar-ra** from wife of Lugal-itida; 1 udu 1 túg from wife of Ayabbani	List of votive gifts for god Šara, withdrawn (ì-dab$_5$) by a lù-mah
Santag 6 192 / P212233	AS8/vii	1 udu 1 túg **dumu-kar-ra** from wife of Zuluhu	List of votive gifts for god Šara

51- Written as ^{d}Nin-tin-ug$_5$-ga, one name of the healing goddess; other names include Gula, Nin-Isina, and Nin-karrak (see Edzard 2001: 506).

52- Read mistakenly as kišib in *BDTNS*, accessed on February 2, 2021. Photo collation by the author confirms the reading of gìr as in C*DLI*.

53- Read as 21, i.e., 2(U) 1(DIŠ), in *BDTNS* and *CDLI*, both accessed by February 2, 2021. Photo collation shows two DIŠ signs one on top of the other, which indicates a broken number of 4 (written as four DIŠ signs in two rows, with two on top of the other two).

BPOA 1 892 / P339548	AS8/ix	1 **dumu kar-ra** from Šage, overseer of sixty; 1 **dumu kar-ra** from Ur-dununna; = 2 udu + 2 túg	List of votive gifts for god Šara;
MVN 14 278 / P117958	AS8/x	1 **dumu kar-ra** from Lugal-massu, shepherd; = 1 udu + 1 túg	List of votive gifts for god Šara
UTI 3 2285 / P140304	SS3/xiii	Obv. i: 1: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Galgalla (month v) Obv. ii: 22: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Lu-ibgal (month xi) Obv. ii: 24: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Lugal-gigire (month xi) Rev. i: 10: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Ur-Lisi (month xiii, presumably the governor); = 1 unshorn sheep + 3 shorn sheep + 4 garments	Annual list of votive gifts for god Šara in KI.AN;
BPOA 1 470 / P339128	SS4/ix	1 **dumu kar-ra** from Ur-Engaldudu 1 **dumu kar-ra** from Lu-duga, son of Mansum; = 2 sheep + 2 garments	List of votive gifts for god Šara;
AnOr 1 243 / P101234	SS5	Obv. i: 14-ii: 7: 1 udu 1 túg **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Ur-gipar Ibid., from wife of Aya-[…] Ibid., from wife of Ayakalla Ibid., from wife of […] Ibid., from wife of […] Ibid., from wife of Ur-[…] Ibid., from wife of Lugal-ezem Ibid., from wife of Abba-gena Ibid., from wife of Ikalla Ibid., from wife of Giri[54]	List of votive gifts for god (name broken)
UTI 5 3468 / P141486	SS5/v	End of Obv. & start of Rev.: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from Ur-dununna 1 **dumu kar-ra** from Emahe; = 2 sheep + 2 garments	List of votive gifts for god (name broken)

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54- The line of Obv. ii: 7 is missing from *CDLI*, accessed on February 3, 2021.

YOS 4 212 / P142276	SS6/xii	Obv. i: 4-11: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Duga-zida Ibid., from wife of Handu Ibid., from wife of Ayakalla Ibid., from wife of Lu-ibgal All in month x; Obv. ii: 8-13: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Bigati Ibid., from wife of Zaya Ibid., from wife of Lu-Inanna Presumably in month xi Rev. i: 5′: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from Api-[...] In month xii	Annual list of votive gifts for god ᵈŠara-ᵃⁿÁnzuᵐᵘšᵉⁿ-bábbar
SAT 3 1831 / P145031	SS7/i	1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Puzur-abba 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Manana	List of votive gifts for god ᵈŠara-ᵃⁿÁnzuᵐᵘšᵉⁿ-bábbar
Umma 40 / P139549	SS9/ii	1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Lugal-emahe	List of votive gifts for god Šara in KI.AN
Santag 6 334 / P211472	IS1/x	1 **dumu kar-<ra>** from wife of Nur-Iškur 1 **dumu kar-<ra>** from wife of Lugal-gigire	List of votive gifts for god Šara in KI.AN
YOS 4 246 / P142310	year lost month xii	Obv. iii: 1 **dumu kar-ra** from wife of Lugal-emahe, month ix; = 1 shorn sheep + 1 garment	Annual list of votive gifts for god (name lost)

Table B: Recycled "garments of dumu kar-ra" (14 texts)

Text / *CDLI*	Date	Summary	Remarks
SAT 2 542 / P143742	SH47	6[55] ᵗᵘᵍuš-bar tur sumun + 1 ᵗᵘᵍbar-dul₅ tur zú-uh + 1 ᵗᵘᵍšà-ga-dù sumun, all as túg **dumu kar-ra**	Withdrawn by governor, in a balanced account on wool of Lugal-azida, anointing priest of god Šara in KI.AN
BPOA 7 2492 / P390962	AS4	1 garment (ᵗᵘᵍuš-bar tur) as túg **dumu-kar-ra** ᵈŠara KI.AN	Received by Ur-Šara the scribe, from Lugal-azida the anointing priest; seal impression Ur-Šara / dub-sar / dumu Lugal-ušur
BIN 5 18 / P106452	AS7	1 garment (ᵗᵘᵍuš-bar tur) as túg **dumu-kar-ra** ᵈŠára-ᵃⁿÁnzuᵐᵘšᵉⁿ-bábbar	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-nisa

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55- Following the correction of *CDLI*; number read as 5 in *BDTNS*, both accessed by February 3, 2021.

56- Read mistakenly as Lú-kal-la in *BDTNS*, accessed on February 2, 2021.

Santag 6 197 / P212237	AS8	Rev. iv: 28 garments (^{túg}uš-bar) + 15 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur zú-uh), from Šakuge, as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára A-pi$_4$-sal$_4$^{ki}; 2 garments (^{túg}uš-bar sumun & ^{túg}šà-ga-dù gen) from Lugal-anisa, as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára-^{an}Ánzu^{mušen}-bábbar; all dated to AS 6	Multi-year list of balance (lá-NI & diri) concerning various kinds of goods
MVN 14 282 / P117962	AS9	1 garment ^{túg}uš-bar tur as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára-^{an}Ánzu^{mušen}-bábbar	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-anisa
MVN 16 667 / P118715	AS9	19 garments (^{túg}uš-bar) + 10 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur zú-uh); all as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára A-pi$_4$-sal$_4$^{ki}	Received by Ikalla[56] from Šakuge
BPOA 1 1000 / P339655	AS9	1 garment (^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh) + 2 garments (^{túg}uš-bar a-gi$_4$-um) + 5 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur); all as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára KI.AN^{ki}	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-azida
BIN 5 17 / P106451	SS1	1 garment (^{túg}uš-bar) as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára A-pi$_4$-sal$_4$^{ki}	Received by Ikalla[56] from Šakuge
UTI 5 3261 / P141280	SS1	3 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur) + 2 garments (^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh), all conveyed by Lugal-anisa; 1 garment (^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh) + 2 garments (^{túg}uš-bar a-gi$_4$-um), all conveyed by Lu-kalla; all as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára-^{an}Ánzu^{mušen}-bábbar	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-anisa
Santag 6 230 / P211739	SS1	10 garments (^{túg}uš-bar) + 15 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur) + 6 garments (^{túg}uš-bar zú-uh); all as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára Umma^{ki}	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-nir
Nisaba 9 108 / P208977	SS1	5 garments (^{túg}uš-bar tur) as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára KI.AN^{ki}	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-azida
Nebraska 28 / P121713	SS2	1 garment (^{túg}uš-bar) + 1 garment (^{túg}uš-bar tur-ka), both as túg **dumu kar-ra** ^{d}Šára-^{an}Ánzu^{mušen}-bábbar	Received by Ikalla[56] from Lugal-anisa
CST 604 / P108120	IS1/ix	1 túg **dumu kar-ra**	Received by Ikalla from Lu-Šara; seal impression: Ikalla, dub-sar, dumu Lu-saga
USC 6596 / P235408	IS2/ix	1 túg uš-bar [túg] dumu kar-ra A-da-làl	Received by Ikalla from Lu-Šara; seal impression: Ikalla, dub-sar, dumu Lu-saga

How Well Did the "Eternal Treaty" Function? An Appraisal by the Correspondence Between Hattusili III and Ramesses II

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Abstract

This essay aims to verify that the "Eternal Treaty" was enforced after its conclusion by the Hittite King Hattusili III and the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramesses II. Through the classification, interpretation, and analysis of their letters, combined with historical facts, we can verify whether the treaty accomplished its purpose. The "Eternal Treaty" provided a diplomatic framework for Hatti and Egypt, and as a result, this article demonstrates that almost all of the diplomatic affairs between these two states were based on its clauses.

Introduction

According to Mario Liverani, the ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550-1200 BCE) provides a privileged case study in international relations.[1] The, then, Great Powers, viz. Assyria and Babylon in

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Mesopotamia and Mitanni and Hatti in Northern Syria and Anatolia, as well as Egypt in North Africa, were rather evenly distributed in and around this region. Therefore, the region was in its balance-of-power period, and so diplomatic activities became more frequent. An abundance of archival materials, including treaties, royal correspondence, and administrative documents that were excavated in Amarna, Hattusa, and Syria provide us with a quantity of information for studying international relationships among the Near Eastern nations at that time.

Among these finds, the "Eternal Treaty" of 1259 BCE, which is the earliest known pact between two equal great powers (namely Hatti and Egypt), has drawn much attention,[2] especially since the successive publications of both of its surviving versions: one translation into Egyptian, and the formal version in Akkadian. About 15 years before the treaty (ca. 1274 BCE), the Hittite Empire and the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt clashed with each other at Kadesh over who would have dominion over Syria. Both sides had been suffering from the considerable tensions in this area for some time, but the approval of a treaty for "brotherhood" initiated by the Hittite King Hattusili III ended the "cold war" between them.

Generally, the motives behind the "Eternal Treaty" have been understood according to one or two of its items and supplemented with some circumstantial evidence. For example, Michael Rowton has argued that the threat from Assyria pushed Hattusili into an alliance with Ramesses, while Anthony Spalinger proposed that concern for the legitimacy of his own kingship was the cause of Hattusili's initiative.[3] More recently, a reconciliation between these two opinions has become more widely accepted.[4] However, this treaty's effects should not be interpreted using such a method, according to which any assertion by cross-checking against the peaceful situation in Syria thereafter must be regarded as a sort of *argumentum ex silentio*. Indeed, after the treaty, the Hittites were occupied by the rebels in Anatolia, and the Pharaoh concentrated on his defense against the Libyan invader and his vast building program, while the Assyrians were suffering a setback during their struggles with Kassite Babylonia.[5] In consideration of these historical factors, perhaps the peace in Syria should not be deemed the direct consequence of the treaty. Fortunately, the royal correspondence between Hattusili and Ramesses was published by Elmar Edel in 1994, allowing for scrutiny of the "Eternal Treaty's" effects. This essay will appraise its performance by comparison of the historical record with the relevant royal correspondence.

For convenience, the general information about the "Eternal Treaty" and the related royal correspondence is briefly introduced here. First, a version of the treaty in Akkadian, the Near Eastern *lingua franca* during the Late Bronze Age,[6] was inscribed on a silver tablet and delivered by Hattusili III's envoys and messengers to Ramesses II. Then the treaty was translated into Hieroglyphs by Egyptian scribes and carved on the seventh pylon of Karnak Temple, as well as at Ramesseum.[7] However, the Akkadian version from Hattusa

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2- For a bibliography of the critical works on this treaty, see Kitchen & Lawrence 2012: 573; for an up-to-date list of references on the Egyptian version, see *KIU* 32.

3- Rowton 1959; Spalinger 1981: 357-358

4- E.g. Bryce 2005: 276-277; Allam 2011.

5- Bryce 2005: 291-293; van Dijk 2003: 290-291; Jakob 2017: 121.

6- As a rule, diplomatic partners within Anatolia received treaties in Hittite, while those in Syria and beyond were dealt with in Akkadian (see Beckman 1999: 2).

7- There are two originals in Egyptian: (1) at Karnak on a wall extending south of the great hypostyle; (2) at the Ramesseum (see Breasted 1962: 163). Note that the copies of the Hittite version in Akkadian have been excavated at Boğazköy since 1906. Both versions compared side by side can be found in Langdon-Gardiner 1920.

was not a copy of the one sent to Egypt, but rather what Ramesses sent back to Hattusili.[8] Nonetheless, the provisions in both versions may be reduced to six points:

1. The two countries united in "peace and brotherhood."
2. Neither would ever invade the other's lands.
3. They promised each other military assistance.
4. Pharaoh recognized the legitimacy of Hattusili III's succession to the throne.
5. Rules for the extradition of fugitives were established.
6. There was a blessing on keeping these provisions, and a curse on breaking them.

As for the letters (including the copies, drafts, and duplications) which were found at the Hittite capital, Hattusa, during the reign of Hattusili III, we note that the ones from Egypt are much more numerous than those from other countries like Assyria or Babylon. Many clay tablets of correspondence between Ramesses II and Hattusili III (and with his Great Queen Puduhepa) have been excavated, and they continue even into the late reign of Hattusili III or the early one of Tudhaliya IV.[9] From these letters, we learn that after the treaty was concluded, almost all of the diplomatic affairs between the two countries centered on it. These letters strongly confirm the relevance of the "Eternal Treaty," and the historical records show that almost every point was enforced at some time.

As with the other diplomatic texts, these letters were written in Akkadian by the local scribes, but not drafted directly in Akkadian. Normally, a scribe wrote down what the king/queen dictated to him in their mother tongue, and then prepared a draft in formal language according to his record. With the king/queen's approval, the draft with corrections would be written up in Akkadian as an official version, which was the version delivered to the diplomatic counterpart by messengers. Having reached the addressee, the letter would be translated one more time into the local language and read to the foreign counterpart. And the answers would be handled in the same procedure, and finally, an Akkadian version was sent as a final reply.[10] This kind of diplomatic letters most often followed a formal template, viz., when having replied to the sender's requests, the addressee had to quote the former's words firstly, hence today's readers could find out the crucial parts of what the sender expressed even without the original letter.

8- Spalinger 1981: 299. Beside the priority of Ramesses II in the formula of the treaty parties in the Akkadian version, the deviations of the grammar in this version also show an influence from Egyptian language, e.g., *amur* PN *ana epēši ṭēma* (Edel 1997: §3), "Behold, Ramese … will accomplish the plan", unknown in Babylonian Akkadian but similar to so-called Future III in Egyptian, which could be taken as evidence for the Egyptian authorship of our Akkadian version and provide further support to what Spalinger argued 30 years ago. For a useful summary of the general features of the Akkadian by Egyptians and further references, see Müller 2015.

9- Several letters have been dated to Tudhaliya IV's early reign because of the lacking addressee, for example, *KUB* 3.67 (*CTH* 163). At this time, Puduhepa was still active in diplomatic affairs even though her husband had already died.

10- Bryce 2003: 56. The influences of Egyptian on the deviations of grammar in Ramesses II's letters found at Hattusa provide good examples for this procedure, see Müller 2015.

'Good peace and brotherhood between us'

At the beginning of the treaty, the two great kings stated their intentions of ceasing hostilities and becoming friendly to enjoy peace and brotherhood:[11]

> Riamašeš-māi-amana, great king, king of Egypt, he has made the treaty upon the tablet of silver, with Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, his brother, from this day, for establishing good peace and good brotherhood between us forever. And [he is] the brother of me and peaceful with me; [I am] the brother of him and peaceful with him, forever and ever.

The treaty declared that Hatti and Egypt would end their cold war, with the two kings calling each other "brother"; their royal families also began to exchange greeting letters. Ramesses II even invited Hattusili III to meet at the Delta to show his good will.[12]

The treaty's emphasis on "brotherhood" was mentioned constantly in the correspondence between the two kings, the word (ŠEŠ-*ut-ta*) derived from the Sumerian ŠEŠ (*aḫu* in Akkadian). In the Late Bronze Age of the Near East, whether a king could be recognized as a "brother" by other powerful kings was a requirement for belonging to what is now called the "Great Power Club."[13] In this period, Egypt, Hatti, Mitanni, Assyria, and Babylon became the successive overlords, so in their correspondence, their kings called each other "my brother" (ŠEŠ-*ia*); sometimes, however, if the economy or military power of a kingdom was not acknowledged by the others, then a king using the address "brother" to another king would displease them. In one example, when Assyrian King Adad-nirari I wrote to Mursili III (Urhi-Teshub), he called the Hittite king "my brother" without permission from his fellow kings, and received nothing but humiliation.[14]

The great kings calling each other "brother" demonstrated intimate relations; in some instances, it even implied a concept of ethics as a metaphor for an intimate relationship between two kings as if they had blood ties. Thus, when Urhi-Teshub protested that the Assyrian king had called him "brother," he asked: "For what reason should I write to you about brotherhood? ... Were you and I born from one mother?" Hattusili also wrote to Ramesses harshly: "You and I do not have brotherhood? Or were we not born from one mother? Did we [not] live in one land?" Ramesses replied to his royal brother: "We were watching the brotherhood like we were the brother of one father and one mother," to ease his fellow king's anxiety.[15]

Such "brotherhood" relations could also expand into kings' families. For instance, Ramesses called Hattusili's wife, Puduhepa, the "Great Queen of Hatti, my sister" (SAL.LUGAL KUR *Ḫatti* ^SAL^*aḫāti-ia*); one of Ramesses's wives, Nefertari (^SAL^*Na-ap-te-ra* in Akkadian), also called her "my sister."[16] Furthermore, when Šutaḫapšap, an Egyptian prince, wrote to Hattusili, he called him "my father,"[17] putting Hattusili in a

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11- All transcriptions of 'Eternal Treaty' follow the edition of Edel 1997: 2-12. Exemplar A: *KBo* I 7 + *KUB* III 121 + *KBo* XXVIII 115 (see Edel 1997: 9-10; §14-17).

12- In *KBo* 28.1 (*CTH* 161), Ramesses said to Hattusili: 'The Sun God and the Storm God and my gods and the gods of my Brother will cause my brother see his brother; and may my brother carry out this good suggestion to come and see me. We may see each other face to face at the place where the king sits enthroned. So, I shall go into Canaan, to meet my brother and see his face, and receive him into the midst of my land!' (Edel 1994: 22, no. 4, obv. 19'-24').

13- Liverani 2000:15-27.

14- *KUB* XXVIII 102 (*CTH* 171). Cf. the translation by Beckman 1999: 146-147.

15- *KUB* 3.42 + *KBo* 28.19 (*CTH* 163), obv. 20'-22' (Edel 1994: 86).

16- *KBo* 1.29 + *KBo* 9.43 (*CTH* 167.1).

17- *KUB* 3.70 (*CTH* 169).

position of equality with his real father. Here we should note that these titles seem to be based on ethical family relations, but in fact, in a letter that the mother of Ramesses, Tūja (or Mut-Tūja), wrote to Puduhepa, she introduced herself as the "Mother of the King of Egypt," but she called the queen of Hatti the "Great Queen of Hatti, my sister,"[18] implying the same status as her son. These examples illustrate what was not so much an ethical relationship between actual family members, but rather that the status of "Great Queen" made them acquire titles equal to them, such as "sister." These titles seem very intimate, but in fact, these people were strictly bound by their status in their courts and by national power behind them.

Delivering gifts with letters was additionally an important correspondence practice. During the Amarna period, the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I, sent Pharaoh Huriya a letter and gifts to show his friendly intentions.[19] In the time of Hattusili's reign, there was likewise much gift exchanging that was dominated by gold, silver, crafts, jewelry, garments, slaves, livestock, etc.[20] Most of the gifts between Egypt and Hatti were gold, silver, and crafts made from them. To the other foreign kings, gold was the favorite gift from Egypt, so asking for gold in a letter or sending a daughter in marriage in exchange for gold, were common, as shown in the Amarna Letters.

In general, there existed not only gifts on important occasions like weddings or ceremonies, but also "greeting gifts" (*šūbelta ana šulmān*) as part of regular communication between the two kingdoms. A large amount of luxury goods, including gold, silver, garments, jewelry, and medicines, was sent to the Hittite court by Ramesses. Greeting gifts were always attached to a list, with the name of messenger, sent to the addressee. There were formal lists to help the receiver check the items, and were always written at end of the letter: "I have sent (to you) gifts for PN for greeting, in the hand of PN, and you should know: the List" (*ultebila(-ak-ki) šubelta ana* PN *ana šulma-ni-ki ina* ŠU-*ti* PN *ù atti lū tidê*).

Not only the kings but also the royal families sent the letters with greeting gifts to each other. The Egyptian prince Šutaḫapšap once wrote a letter to Hattusili calling him "my father" and expressing his respect and gratitude, and he included a gift list at the end of the letter, all of which was delivered by a messenger named Parihnawa (*Pa-ri-iḫ-na-a-ua*);[21] items presented were a golden drinking vessel, fabrics, and some crafts.[22] Tūja and Nefertari also greeted their "sister" Puduhepa in this way. On most occasions, these letters were only for greeting since royal families had no right to engage in diplomatic affairs.

In the ancient Near East, the doctors of Babylon[23] and Egypt were quite famous. During Ramesses II's reign, there were three occasions when Hattusili and Puduhepa requested an Egyptian doctor. Besides himself, Hattusili even wrote such letters for his sister and his nephew, Kurunta.

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18- *KBo* 28.50 (*CTH* 168).

19- This Egyptian king could be either Amenophis IV, Tutankhamun, or Smenkhkare (see Moran 1992: 114-115; *EA* 42).

20- In Bryce's opinion (2003: 94), 'gift' is a misnomer, gift-exchange amounted to an elite form of trading between royal courts, it is an honorable way for a king to acquire precious goods.

21- Probably identified with Pa-rekh-an in Egyptian, the treasurer and great intendant of Memphis during the reign of Ramesses II. He was one of the main messengers between Egypt and Hatti (see Singer 2006: 29).

22- *KUB* 3.70 (*CTH* 169) (Edel 1994:34-36).

23- *KBo* 1.10 + *KUB* 3.72 (*CTH* 172), rev. 34-44, Hattusili mentioned Babylon had once sent a doctor to Hatti during Muwatalli II' reign (see Hagenbuchner 1989:285-286).

In one of his letters, Hattusili III described himself as sickly during his childhood, suffering from inflammation of the feet and eye disease.[24] In *KUB* 3.51, Ramesses II wrote to Hattusili III that a messenger named Pirihnawa had been dispatched to the Amurru kingdom accompanied by a chariot officer, and that he would hand some eye medicines to the ruler of Amurru, Benteshina, when he arrived, then take the medicines to the king of Hatti. From Hattusili's reply (*KBo* 28.24), we learn that the Egyptian medicines proved highly effective, with Hattusili asking for more medicines from Pharaoh.[25] Sometimes, Egyptian eye medicines also served as greeting gifts, for example, "five kukubu vessels, filled with fine eye medicines" (*KBo* 28.5(+)6) or "20 baskets, filled with fine eye-medicines" (*KBo* 28.4).[26]

Concerned not only about himself, Hattusili also wrote to his royal brother asking for a doctor for his elder sister Massanauzzi (Matanazi in Akkadian) to help her conceive a descendant--she may have been infertile. Massanauzzi was not only his royal sister; she held a more important status as the Queen of Seha River Land, wife of the vessel ruler Masturi. After this western vassal kingdom had rebelled under its former king Manapa-Tarhunda during Mursili II's reign, Hattusili was eager to beget a successor born from Hatti royal blood. In his reply, somehow Ramesses knew of his "sister's" actual situation: "Behold, my brother's sister Matanazi, I, your brother, had already known: is she fifty or sixty years old? See, a woman of fifty or sixty years could get a medicine for pregnancy from no one."[27] Nevertheless, Ramesses still dispatched a doctor and a priest (^{LÚ}a-*ši-pu*) to her. This therapy apparently failed, for lacking a successor, the throne was usurped by a man called Tarhunaradu who was finally suppressed by the Hittites.[28]

Kurunta was one of Hattusili's nephews; like Urhi-Teshub, he was also the son of the secondary wife of Muwatalli. After Urhi-Teshub succeeded to the throne, he was sent to Hakpis, growing up with his uncle like one of his sons. Perhaps for this reason, when Hattusili rebelled against Urhi-Teshub he stood with his uncle unhesitatingly. After the rebellion, Kurunta was appointed as the ruler of Tarhuntassa, which was one of the most important Hittite vassals.[29] In two letters, Ramesses responded to Kurunta's request with two doctors at first, soon arranging another doctor and a scribe to replace them.[30] Fortunately, the second doctor cured Kurunta, but it was probably not good for Hatti since when he became well again Kurunta raised a rebellion against Hattusili.

From the above events, we learn that requesting doctors was a higher diplomatic practice than we had preconceived. Among kings, only if another person's disease threatened his dominance would he make such a request to another king. Doctors in the ancient Near East were precious, so they were always dispatched with scribes, priests, and even some guards. If the doctor were lost or died in foreign lands, this might cause some diplomatic conflict. For example, in one well-known letter which Hattusili wrote to the Babylonian king Kadashman-Enlil II he provided an explanation to appease his anger when his doctor did not return.[31]

24- Then Ištar, my mistress, sent to Mursili, my father, in a dream the Muwatalli, my brother (with the words): "For Hattušili the years are (only) short, he will not live (long). So hand him over to me, he shall be my priest and he will (stay) alive." (Otten 1981: 5).

25- See Edel 1994: 18, 80.

26- See Edel 1994: 114, 122.

27- *KBo* 28.30 (*CTH* 163), obv. 16-21 + rev. 1-4 (Edel 1994: 178). According to Bryce' speculation (2003: 115), Massanauzzi at least fifty-five years old, or even more.

28- *KUB* 23.13 (*CTH* 211.4) (see Beckman, Bryce & Cline 2001: 154-157).

29- Ünal 1974: 218.

30- *KUB* 3.67 and *KUB* 3.66 + W.24 (Edel 1994: 170, 172).

31- *CTH* 172 (= *KBo* 1.10 + *KUB* 3.72) (Hagenbuchner 1989, 292-293).

Royal marriages in the Late Bronze Age were an important means of reinforcing political and military alliances between kingdoms, and princesses were its tool.[32] Almost every great king had one or several foreign princesses living in his royal palace. Some of them became first-class wife, even ascending to the queen's throne, like the daughter of Burnaburiash II, princess of Babylon; after her marriage with Suppiluliuma I, she obtained the title of "Tawanana," the highest title for Hatti's queen. However, more princesses became concubines and disappeared from extant records. Some of these marriages were done only for exchanging materials like gold; for Hittite kings, a daughter could serve her nation in a foreign harem; sending a daughter to a royal brother was a kind of guarantee after a treaty was concluded. By contrast, the Egyptian royal family never gave any daughter to foreign kings; rather, they married a foreign princess mainly as a kind of bond between the allied foreign kings and themselves, but with a propaganda consideration of flaunting their well-accepted greatness even by foreign kings,[33] for these foreign royal daughters never became Egyptian queens. Generally, these princesses had a different status in an Egyptian harem, depending on their fathers or brothers, their dowries, and the national power behind them. Ramesses once promised to Hattusili that his daughter would have a higher rank than other foreign princesses, which is what Hattusili and Puduhepa desired. One long draft of a letter which Puduhepa wrote to Ramesses expresses concern about this: "My brother, whom should I equal with the daughter of heaven and earth? Should I equal her with the daughter of Babylon? Zulabi, or Assyria? I could not equal her with them, because she stood much higher than them!"[34]

After Puduhepa became the queen of Hatti, she devoted herself to raising the royal children. The king's sons were in heavy demand for military and administrative careers, but princesses, particularly from the highest-ranking mothers, were from their birth potential marriage alliance material.[35] After the "Eternal Treaty" was concluded, a royal marriage was soon scheduled, with the eldest and highest-ranking daughter sent to Egypt. Hattusili and Puduhepa were eager to have a little Egyptian prince with Hittite blood, and Ramesses desired one more Asian concubine in his palace. Both wanted this wedding to be a success; however, the troops of the bride were repeatedly delayed, making Ramesses very anxious. He wrote to Puduhepa: "My sister, you promised to give me your daughter. That is what you wrote. But you have withheld her. Now I am angry with that. Why did you not give her to me?"[36] From the reply, we learn that the reason was that É KUR ^{URU}ḪAT-TI (House of Hatti) was burnt down in Urhi-Teshub's reign, so Hattusili and Puduhepa had to delay the wedding date to raise the dowry. For their daughter's status in the Egyptian

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32- See Bryce 2003: 100.

33- Thanks to one of the anonymous reviewers, the author could clarify her usage of crude terms such as propaganda and flaunting. The author strongly shares in the argument of William Kelly Simpson, which stresses the communication between Egyptian sculpture as well as image and their viewer and deems the term propaganda a better expression of this feature, see Simpson 1982, 270 f. In our case, there are two examples worth mentioning. One is the scarab of Amehotep III for publishing the news of his marriage with Gilukhepa, a Mitanni princess, mentioned yet by Simpson and the reviewer her/himself. The other is the inscription about the marriage of Ramesses II with a Hittite princess, only known by her Egyptian name, "Maat-Hor-neferure". Copies of this inscription were found at three different sites with straight-line distances more than 200 km between each two of them, namely Karnak, Elephantine, and Abu Simbel, which shows us how solemnly the Pharaoh treated the diplomatic marriage as one of his accomplishments and how broadly he intended to exhibit it. Both of them should be taken as good supports to the propaganda consideration behind the Pharaohs' diplomatic marriage with foreign princesses.

34- *CTH* 176 (= *KUB* 21.38), obv. 12'-14' (Edel 1994: 216).

35- Bryce 2003: 108.

36- *CTH* 176 (= *KUB* 21.38), obv. 7'-8' (Edel 1994: 216).

court, they sent a large dowry, including "booty of Kaskan, horses, cattle, goats."[37] Ramesses's marriage stele also recorded the dowry which the Hatti princess brought.[38] The troops carrying the dowry and the princess were dispatched by Nerikkail,[39] reached the border of the two kingdoms, were handed to the Canaanite governors, and finally entered Egypt.[40]

The fate of this princess is difficult to discern, for after she married Ramesses (1245 BCE) and entered the palace which he had built for her, she soon disappeared from the records. Several years later, another of Hatti's daughters was sent to Ramesses as a bride, further consolidating the alliance of the two great kingdoms.

Mutual non-aggression and military assistance

The conclusion of the "Eternal Treaty" ended Egypt's and Hatti's hostile relations. In the treaty, they promised never to invade each other:[41]

> Riamašeš-māi-amana, great king, king of Egypt, shall not be hostile to Hatti to take anything.
> And Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, shall not be hostile to Egypt to take anything.

After the Battle of Kadesh, Ramesses divided his sovereignty over the Canaanite area. He wrote a letter ordering the local governors to take care of the bride's troops, and invited Hattusili to meet in Canaan. Thereafter, Egypt and Hatti ruled Syria together and abided by the "military assistance" clause of the treaty, threatening the ascent of Assyria.[42]

Besides, both the kings promised this to each other: "If another enemy comes to Hatti / Egypt, and Hattusili / Ramesses, great king, king of Hatti / Egypt, should send me a letter that says: 'Come to me to help me against him.'"[43] Once one king suffered from a foreign enemy ([LÚ]KÚR) or rebellion, the other would dispatch troops and chariots to help his brother. Such mutual defense clauses were common in the treaties of the ancient Near East. In general, they existed not only between overlord and vassal, but also as we see here, they might request military aid from each other. In the letter which Hattusili III wrote to the Babylonian king Kadashman-Enlil II before the "Eternal Treaty" was drawn up, he mentioned to this young king that his father had a promise with Hatti: "The king of Egypt has become my enemy … if your troops go into Egypt, then I will go with you."[44]

However, we should note that in the days after the treaty was concluded, in all the military actions it is hard to find each other's troops mentioned; even in the letters between the two kings, no word on this point can be found. Given this absence, it is quite difficult to claim that the "Eternal Treaty" was one of

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37- *CTH* 160 (= *KUB* 3.24 + 3.59) rev. 8'-9' (Edel 1994: 140).

38- See Breasted 1962: 415-424.

39- *KUB* 3.40 obv.(?) 5' (Edel 1994: 146).

40- *KUB* 3.57 (*CTH* 159.1.B) (Edel 1994: 144).

41- Edel 1997: 7, §4.

42- The ever-present threat of Assyria has been as one of Hattusili's chief incentives for concluding a peace with Ramesses; an alliance between Hatti and Egypt would help safeguard the interests of both in Syria against the increasingly ambitious and belligerent upstart power across the Euphrates (Bryce 2005: 275).

43- Edel 1997: 7-8, §6-9.

44- *KUB* 3.42 + *KBo* 28.19 (*CTH* 163), obv. 7-10 (see Hagenbuchner 1989: 281).

mutual military assistance. References to the military are confined to threats, especially from Assyria. Yet even though this treaty brought peace and friendship for the two countries, it didn't establish intimate relations, for Urhi-Teshub still created friction between them, and this was what concerned Hattusili most.

Pharaoh accepted the legitimacy of the throne of Hattusili and his descendants, and extradited Urhi-Tehub
Extradition items were very frequent in this treaty, and both sides set the rules for three different fugitives (LÚ.GAL, LÚ *ša lā idī* and *kabtu* (LÚ)).[45] The only fugitive who concerned Hattusili was the former king, Urhi-Teshub. After being driven away from his throne, Urhi-Teshub asked for help from Babylon and Assyria, and finally escaped to Egypt. As a usurper, the legitimacy of Hattusili's throne was the most important thing to him. The Assyrian king wrote a letter to Ramesses calling Hattusili a "substitute king,"[46] and Hattusili also wrote to Adad-narari I asking why he had not sent any gifts for his ceremony.[47] Before the "Eternal Treaty" was concluded, Hattusili complained that Ramesses treated him like a servant.[48] To solve this problem, he added the words below to the treaty:[49]

> Behold! The son of Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, may be treated as the king of Hatti, in the place of Hattusili, his father, after many years of [the reign] of Hattusili, King of Hatti. And if the citizens of Hatti committed sin against him, then Riamašeš-māi-amana should send his troops and chariots to help him.

When Urhi-Teshub escaped to Egypt, he may have met Ramesses and told him about the Hatti royal family.[50] In all the correspondence between these two great kings, Urhi-Teshub was the most frequently discussed topic. Ramesses replied impatiently: "Behold, about this matter, I have heard much from what you sent, but it was not worthwhile to listen." He insisted that Urhi-Teshub had already escaped from Egypt "like a bird" and could not be found anywhere.[51] He even went so far as to suggest where Hattusili should look for him, and Hattusili took strong exception to this.[52] When all of these suggestions had proven useless, Hattusili was left with no clue about the whereabouts of his nephew; and Uhri-Teshub had simply disappeared.

Had Ramesses cheated on his royal brother? Some scholars have suggested that Urhi-Teshub may have fled Egypt when the treaty was drawn up, but he may also have stayed at the Egyptian court until the wedding.[53] In one letter (*KUB* 3.62), Ramesses mentioned that someone who supported Urhi-Teshub had written to him claiming that Urhi-Teshub was the real king of Hatti and threatening Pharaoh not to hurt him, otherwise they must exact revenge.[54] If Ramesses' words are believable, Urhi-Teshub may have

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45- Edel 1997: 8-11, §11-20.

46- *KBo* 8.14 (*CTH* 163), obv. 10 (Edel 1994: 24).

47- *KBo* 1.14 (*CTH* 173), rev. 4-10. Cf. the translation by Beckman 1999: 149.

48- *KBo* 28.3 (*CTH* 155), obv. 5-9 (Edel 1994: 50).

49- Edel 1997: 8, §10.

50- Bryce 2005: 280.

51- *KBo* 1.15 + 1.19(+)1.22 (*CTH* 156.A), rev. 20-21 and 22-25 (Edel 1994: 62).

52- Bryce 2005: 281.

53- *KUB* 21.38 (*CTH* 176), obv.11'-12'. Puduhepa once wrote to Ramesses in one Hittites draft: "Since Urhi-Teshub is there, ask him whether it is like that or not!," when they discussed wedding affairs (see Edel 1994: 216).

54- *KUB* 3.62 (*CTH* 163.2) (Edel 1994: 78).

escaped to the vassal kingdom which had supported him, or to someplace south of Anatolia.

Ramesses emphasized his oath in his letters: "Certainly you are the great king of the lands of Hatti. The Sun God has granted to you and the Storm God has granted to you the seat in the Land of Hatti, in the place of the father of your father."[55] He may have known where Hatti's former king was, but he chose to keep it a secret while appearing to stand on his brother's side.

Conclusions

The publication of the correspondence between the Hittite royal couple and Ramesses II provides an opportunity to appreciate how the "Eternal Treaty" was implemented. The main finding is that the treaty's provisions and the issues discussed in this correspondence were almost parallel to each other.

In the treaty, the legitimacy of Hattusili's kingship was treated seriously, as well as his descendants' succession. The former was implicitly confirmed by his "brotherhood" with Ramesses, and the latter was explicitly expressed. Accordingly, in the correspondence, the whereabouts of Hattusili's dethroned predecessor, his nephew Urhi-Teshub, was often queried, and these queries were addressed by Ramesses. Indeed, the numerous letters in Dossier D assembled by Elmar Edel leave a deep impression on their readers by showing that Hattusili's legitimacy was the priority in the relationship between the two superpowers. Hence, after Hattusili's death Ramesses continued writing letters to his widow, Puduhepa, and to his successor, Tudhaliya IV, so their friendship continued. In this sense, the related promise in the treaty was performed accurately.

As for the other issues in the correspondence, such as the exchange of gifts, the royal marriage, the appeals for medicine, etc., they were at the core of the kings' "brotherhood" in the treaty, which either promoted or reflected them. Since its implementation, the "Eternal Treaty" became the framework for all of the diplomatic interactions between Hatti and Egypt, at least during the reign of Ramesses II. On an ideological level, even the Pharaoh, who frequently mentioned on the silver tablet as well as in his letters their "cordial" brotherhood deposited before the feet of divine witnesses, was completely convinced that the treaty formed the basis of his alliance with the Hittite monarch. This consensus made their treaty function.

However, it is noteworthy that as for the treaty's provision for mutual military assistance, which was a significant part of it, neither requested any from the other in their correspondence, nor was it ever affected. Whether those military provisions were aimed at the defense of a particular region, viz. Syria, or at the obstruction of certain enemies, viz. Assyria remains an open question for further studies. In brief, the influence of the "Eternal Treaty" on the relations between these great powers can only be appraised fairly when other material than circumstantial evidence has appeared.

55- *KUB* 3.22 + *KBo* 28.3 (*CTH* 155), obv. 13'-15' (Edel 1994: 54).

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Verba Dicendi in Akkadian

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Abstract

Verba dicendi are among the most widespread lexemes in Indo-European cultures, reflecting the oral matrix of the milieu. Until now, it is not clear if the ancient Near Eastern cultures also had a predilection for these lexemes. To understand the importance and function of *verba dicendi*, they have to be studied in a wide range of texts of different types and from different periods. The focus of this analysis is to monitor the diachrony and synchrony of lexical and semantic nuances, as well as syntactic variations, along with quantitative analyses. The article is intended as a precursor to a more detailed study on *verba dicendi*, which will offer a linear treatment of the topic, and discuss collocations and other related lexemes in relation to direct speech.

Status Quaestionis

Verba dicendi are mainly attested in literary texts, and this is also the case in cuneiform languages.[1] This

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abundance likely indicated the oral substrate.[2] The "conventional formulae" (i.e. "X opened his mouth and spoke/said a word to Y") in introducing direct speech were first studied by Franz Sonnek in 1940. Sonnek limited his study to examples in the epic texts that would not presuppose any concrete situation. In other words, only expressions conveying a meaning "to say, speak, answer," etc. but not "to shout, lament," etc.[3]

In his monograph from 1974, Karl Hecker took Sonnek's research further, especially in Chapter 6 'Epische Formeln,' where he focused on the style in the epic formulae.[4]

Rather than limiting her study to the "conventional formulae," Marianna E. Vogelzang focused her attention on patterns demonstrating "the setting of the subsequent direct discourse." According to her, "the connection in which the speech receives its meaning will depend on the manner in which the poet provides the subsequent spoken words with his covering commentary, on the manner in which the speech will be embedded."[5]

In this paper, this cannot be done in an exhaustive way, as there is not sufficient secondary literature for a precise reconstruction. Thus, preliminary indications will be given here on the *verba dicendi* to which further analyses can be linked in subsequent phases.

The Origin of *Verba Dicendi*

Verba dicendi frequently originate from roots that refer to mental processes, such as "to plan, reason, judge, think," etc. For example, **men-* "think" > Hittite *memahhi* "I speak," and "come later to be used for oral expression of these processes."[6]

Range of Akkadian Verbs of Saying

There are formulaic expressions involving verbs + the word *pû* "mouth" or "to speak." The most widespread expression of this type is *pâ epēšu*, literally "to do the mouth."[7] Others include: *pâ abālu, amû, ina pî aṣû, dabābu, hâdu, qabû, amāta, qurrubu, rigma nadû, ina šapti šakānu, šasû, têlu, zakāru.*[8]

Verba dicendi are not only used to introduce direct speech, but also to indicate (i) a perception, usually signaled by "to see" or "to hear," and (ii) a reaction, be it emotive, mental, or physical.[9] They have several different nuances, including the aspectual nuance of "to speak" rather than "to say,"[10] *zakāru*, with the nuances of "to pray, vow, declare,"[11] and *dabābu* (Š) "to persuade."[12] Due to their frequent occurrences, they are especially valid in tracking changes in lexicon, semantics, and syntax.

2- See e.g. Rose 2013: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-448X_eagll_SIM_00000545, accessed on July 11, 2021.

3- Sonnek 1940: 225.

4- Hecker 1974: 174-181.

5- Vogelzang 1990: 50.

6- Buck 1915: 137.

7- CAD E, 215-216.

8- For a longer list, see Cohen 2011: 195.

9- See Vogelzang 1990: 51.

10- In Greek *eírō* "to say" is cognate with Hittite *wer(i)ye* "to call, summon."

11- CAD Z, 16-22. In Greek *eúkhomai* "to pray, vow, declare" cf. Linear B middle e-u-ke-to = *eúkhetoi*. See Hooker 1980, 53. In Greek *aráomai* also belongs to the semantic domain of "to pray, wish, curse." It is cognate with Hittite *ariya* "pray," Vedic *āryati* "praises." For a full list, see Owen and Goodspeed 1969: 4-22.

12- CAD D, 6.

Range of Structures Introducing Direct Speech

By monitoring the use of *verba dicendi* and saying formulae – and then analyzing the mode of insertion of direct and indirect speech in the narrative – I have noticed that they could be placed before direct speech, within direct speech, or indeed *following* direct speech. Furthermore, based on the analyses performed, I have deduced that direct speech can begin abruptly, i.e. without an introductory formula. In such cases, the *verbum dicendi* is merely implied. All in all, the following four structures can be identified:

1.   *verbum dicendi* placed before direct speech
2.   *verbum dicendi* placed within direct speech
3.   *verbum dicendi* placed after direct speech
4.   *verbum dicendi* implied

Illustration and Examples of *Verba Dicendi* Structure

   Structure 1

   Tab I, 275 (Gilgameš):[13]

   275. [d]GIŠ-*gím-maš ana šá-ši-ma izakkar*(MU)[ár] *ana ummi*(AMA)-*šú*
   275. Gilgameš said to her, to his mother.

   Tab VI, 87-88 (Gilgameš):[14]

   87. d*a-num pa-a-šú īpuš*(DÙ)uš-*ma iqabbi*(DAG$_4$.GA)
   88. *i-zak-ka-ra a-na ru-bu-ti* d*iš$_8$-tár*

   87. Anu opened his mouth to speak,
   88. saying to the lady Ištar.

   Tab I, 9 (Erra):[15]

   9. *i-qab-bi-ma a-na ka-šá lu-ṣi-ma a-na ṣēri*
   9. It says to you: "I want to go out on the (battle)-field!"

   Tab I, 33 (Erra)[16]

   33. *i-qab-bi ana šá-né-e kīma* d*Girri ku-bu-um-ma hu-muṭ kīma* [*n*]*ab-li*
   33. He said to the second one: "Burn like fire, blaze like [f]lame!"

13- George 2003: 554-555.
14- George 2003: 624-625.
15- Cagni 1969: 58.
16- Cagni 1969: 60.

Structure 2

Tab I, 46 (Gilgameš):[17]

46. *ù ki-i* [d]GIŠ-*gím-maš i-qab-bu-ú a-na-ku-ma šarru*(LUGAL)
46. And can say like Gilgameš, "It is I am the king?"

Tab V, 52-53 (Erra):[18]

52. *rubû šá ta-nit-ti qar-ra-du-ti-ia i-dub-bu-bu ma-hi-ra a-a ir-ši*
53. [lú]*nāru šá i-ṣar-ra-hu ul i-mat ina šip-ṭi*

52. The prince who sings the praise(s) of my heroism is unrivalled.
53. The singer who exalts (him) will not die in the destruction.

Structure 3

Tab XII, 100-101 (Gilgameš):[19]

100. [*be-lum ù'-a*] *iq-bi-ma* [*i-na e*]*p-ri it-ta-pal-si-ih*
101. [d GIŠ-*gím-maš ù'-a*] *iq-bi-ma* [*i-na ep-r*]*i it-ta-pal-si-ih*

100. "[Woe!]" Said [the lord,] and threw himself prostrate [in the] dust.
101. "[Woe!]" Said [Gilgameš,] and threw himself prostrate [in the dust].

Tab IV, 16 (Erra):[20]

16. *šá im-gúr-*d*en-líl uṣ-ṣa elī-šú tum-mid-ma u-ù'-a lìb-bi i-qab-bi*
16. Against (the wall) Imgur-Enlil, you shot the arrow: "Woe! My heart" it exclaims.

Tab IV, 36 (Erra)[21]

36. *bēlu rabû* d*Marduk i-mur-ma ù'-a iq-ta-bi lìb-ba-šú iṣ-ṣa-bat*
36. The great lord Marduk saw and exclaimed: "Woe!" His heart was touched.

17- George 2003: 540-541.
18- Cagni 1969: 128.
19- George 2003: 732-733.
20- Cagni 1969: 106.
21- Cagni 1969: 108.

Structure 4

Tab II, 38-40 (Gilgameš):[22]

38. ^lúrē'û(SIPA)-*ú-tú pu-uh-hu-rat eli*(UGU)-*šú*
39. *ina ṭè-mi-šu-nu-ma ina ra-ma-ni-šú-ma*
40. *eṭlu*(GURUŠ) *a-na* ^mdGIŠ-*gím-maš ki-i ma-šil la-a-n*[*u*]

38. The band of shepherds was gathered around him,
39. of their own will and by himself:
40. "This fellow – how similar to Gilgameš he is in buil[d]…"

Tab IV, 40-42 (Gilgameš):[23]

40. ⌈*i*⌉-*li-ma* ^dGIŠ-*gím-maš ina muh*-[*hi šá-di-i*]
41. [*m*]*aṣhat*(ZÌ.MAD.GÁ)-*su ut-te-qa-a* [*ana hur-sa-a-ni*]
42. [*š*]*adû*(KUR)^ú *bi-i-la šu-ut-t*[*a a-mat damiqti? lu-mur*]

40. Gilgameš went up to the top [of the mountain],
41. He made his offering of *maṣhatu* flour [to the hill].
42. "O mountain, bring me a dream, [let me see a message of good fortune!]"

Tab I, 8 (Erra):[24]

8. *ana* ^dSibitti *qar-rad la šá-na-an na-an-di-qa kak*-⌈*ke*⌉-*ku-un*
8. To Sibitti, peerless heroes: "Put on you your weapons!"

Tab I, 18 (Erra)[25]

18. *ana* ^dSibitti *qar-rad la šá-na-an a-na šub-te-ku-nu* ⌈*tu*⌉-*ra-ma*
18. To Sibitti, peerless heroes: "Go back to your places!"

Concluding Remarks

In order to track changes in lexicon, semantics, and syntax, a study might be carried out on a wide range of texts, and be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, so that the results obtained can be compared. Particularly in the case of texts of which there are several versions, it will be possible to study the phenomenon in a broader context. This will facilitate an understanding of the "evolution" of these texts, from the more archaic to the later stages of textual transmission.

22- George 2003: 560-561.
23- George 2003: 590-591.
24- Cagni 1969: 58.
25- Cagni 1969: 60.

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Eastward Warfare and Westward Peace: On the "One-Sided" Foreign Policy of Ur III Dynasty (2112–2004 BC)

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Abstract

The conference presentation that prompted the writing of this short communication formed a part of a new project entitled "A Study of the Foreign Relations of Ur III Mesopotamia," which will study a wide range of textual data from the late third millennium BC to investigate the nature of Ur III foreign policy. After a general introduction to the project, the article offers a preliminary survey of Ur III year formulae as an accurate and reliable source of information on Ur III military and geopolitical state policy, demonstrating a distinct military emphasis on the eastern and northeastern regions of the state.

Introduction

The project "A Study of the Foreign Relations of Ur III Mesopotamia" investigates the relationship between the Ur III state and its neighbors from four directions: the East (e.g. Zabshali, Shimashki, Huhnuri, Pashime, Anshan, Marhashi), the West (e.g. Mari, Ebla, Gubla), the South and the Gulf (e.g. Dilmun, Magan, Meluhha), and the North (e.g. Simanum, Mardaman, Nineveh, Ashur, Urbilum, Simurrum, Karahar).[1] A

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particular focus is to explain why the rulers of the Third Dynasty of Ur appear to have practiced a rather "one-sided" foreign policy, with a military emphasis on the eastern and northeastern parts of the state, and a more peaceful approach to the western regions. In order to explain this foreign policy, discussions within the project take into account both geopolitical and economic factors as catalysts for political and military decisions within the Ur III state.

The Third Dynasty of Ur, spanning 109 years (according to the available year formulae) and consisting of the reigns of five kings (Ur-Namma, Šulgi, Amar-Suen, Šu-Suen, and Ibbi-Suen), was a highly centralized bureaucratic state, and is considered to be one of the best documented periods in the entire history of the ancient Near East.[2] The nature of Ur III foreign relations remains an important topic of discussion in Assyriological studies, which tend to focus on four separate but highly interrelated aspects: foreign wars, foreign trade, foreign marriage policies, and foreign diplomacy.

The primary textual evidence on foreign relations in the Ur III period consist of royal inscriptions, literary texts, year formulae, and administrative texts, including the so-called messenger texts. Of these, the administrative texts are by far the most important. Tens of thousands of administrative texts have survived from the period, offering numerous references to toponyms, particularly from the frontier areas to the north, northeast, and northwest of the state,[3] and a number of important studies have been concerned with the state's mostly military relationship to its eastern/northeastern neighbors.[4]

In addition to these geographical areas, a significant amount of previous scholarship has been devoted to the relationship between the Third Dynasty of Ur and the states in the regions northwest of the state, such as the lands surrounding the major urban centers Mari and Ebla.[5] Finally, several studies of Ur III foreign relations and state governance in general should be mentioned, such as Tonia Sharlach's work on the relationship between Ur III diplomacy and religious policy, or Steven Garfinkle's recent discussion of the correlation between domestic and foreign policy in the Ur III period.[6]

Year Formulae

As an example of how contemporary textual evidence can enhance our understanding of diplomacy and foreign relations, we may turn to the Ur III year formulae. These records are concerned with specific political or religious events, such as wars, diplomatic marriages, erections of buildings/institutions, and office inductions. Based on references to conflicts in the year formulae, it would seem that the Ur III rulers frequently led military campaigns to the east of the state. Specific northeastern cities mentioned in the

2- For the general introduction to the Ur III Dynasty, see Sallaberger 1999; Stepien 2009; and Steinkeller 2021. For a recent discussion of the vast numbers of cuneiform texts from the period, see Widell 2022, in this volume.

3- See e.g. Owen 1997; and Edzard and Farber 1974. Bibliographic information on studies of Ur III administrative texts and culture is available for the periods 1882-1990 (Sigrist & Gomi 1991), 1990-1997 (Sallaberger 1999), 1997-2014 (Garcia-Ventura 2015), and 2015-2020 (Liu, Forthcoming). The two online databases, the *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative* (*CDLI*) at https://cdli.ucla.edu/ and the *Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts* (*BDTNS*) at http://bdtns.filol.csic.es, remain indispensable for any scholarly work on the Ur III period.

4- Frayne 2008 (the Zagros), Marhashi (Steinkeller 1982 and 2012), Shimashki (Steinkeller 2014), Duduli (Goetze 1953; Notizia 2010), Šimanum (Michalowski 1975), Assur (Michalowski 2009), Simurrum (Hallo 1978), and Kimash (Potts 2010).

5- E.g. Owen 1992; Michalowski 2005 (Mari); and Owen and Veenker 1987 (Ebla).

6- Sharlach 2005; Garfinkle 2013. Note also the recent studies on III military matters and the Ur III army by Sebastian Fink (2016) and Daniel Patterson (2018).

year formulae include Der (SH11; SH21), Karakar (SH24; SH31; SH33; SH45), Simurum (SH25; SH26; SH32; SH44; SH45; IS3), Zabshali (SS7), Kimash (SH46; SH48), Hurti (SH46; SH48), Harshi (SH27; SH48), Shashrum (SH42; AS6), Urbilum (SH45; AS2), Simanum (SS3), and Lulubum (SH44; SH45), while southeastern cities include Susa (IS14), Huhnuri (AS7; IS9), Adamdun (IS14), and Anshan (SH34).[7] Such long enumerations of eastern cities stand in stark contrast to the infrequent attestations of western toponyms in the year formula, and reflects the state's overall foreign policy (Eastward-Warfare & Westward-Peace; EW&WP). Of course, the military achievements recorded in the year names could be overstated, or possibly even entirely fictional. As argued by Magnus Widell some 20 years ago, the year formulae played an important role within the state's propaganda effort, and frequent proclamations of repeated destructions of cities do not prove, or even imply, that the cities in question were in fact incorporated into the Ur III state.[8] Nevertheless, all concerted propaganda efforts are likely to reflect official state policy; in fact, this would be particularly true for exaggerated or entirely untrue statements and declarations by the state. Therefore, the year formulae of the Ur III state can offer important information on the nature of the Ur III state's "one-sided" foreign policy in Upper Mesopotamia.

Conclusions

A wide range of textual sources are available to study Ur III foreign policy and the state's military relationship to its eastern/northeastern neighbors, including literary texts, royal inscriptions, and administrative texts. One of the more frequently used sources of information on Ur III political history are the state's year formulae, which have survived on the tens of thousands of administrative texts from the period. It has been argued that the Ur III year formulae should be understood as royal inscriptions (or perhaps even as a literary sub-genre), and these records formed a part of the state's propaganda effort.[9] These concerns and objections are no-doubt correct, and specific details in the year formulae, such as the individual destruction of a particular city, can only be adopted as historical facts when they are corroborated in alternative and less biased sources. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that royal propaganda reflected actual ambitions, and references to military campaigns in the Ur III year formulae therefore offer reliable evidence of the Ur III rulers' overall military aspirations in the eastern and northeastern regions of the state, and their relatively peaceful approach to the western regions.

These initial findings on Ur III foreign policy based on year formulae will be recorded in a comprehensive database, which will form the basis for more far-reaching conclusions related to the foreign policy of the Third Dynasty of Ur.

7- For an important discussion of the practical difficulties surrounding the linking of events in year formulae to absolute dates in historical reconstructions, see Dahl 2010; with further references. For the general lack of traditional "historical texts" for the early Mesopotamia history, see Sallaberger 2002. As noted a long time ago by Marc Cooper (1987: 177, n. 4), and recently reiterated by Marcos Such-Gutiérrez (2020: 10-11), any event – including a military campaign – described in an Ur III year formula must have taken place in the year prior to the year to which the formula referred.

8- Widell 2002; see also Limet 2007; and Such-Gutiérrez 2020.

9- Widell 2002: 101-102; see also Radner 2005: 112; and Such-Gutiérrez 2020: 13.

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Royal Titles in Ur III Mesopotamia and China in the Shang Dynasty

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Abstract

This article examines historical transformations of the royal titles employed by kings of Ur III Mesopotamia and the Shang dynasty China. More specifically, it attends to the diverse ways in which royal titles were produced during the development of kingship and early state formation. The article engages mainly with royal titulary in the Ur III dynasty – "mighty man/king, king of Ur, king of Sumer and Akkad/king of the four quarters," as well as "god of his land" after the self-deification of the king – and three separate royal titles of the Shang dynasty: "king" (王), "I, the one man" (余一人) and "common ruler of all under heaven" (天下共主). Using comparative approach, the article argues that the royal titulary of Ur III reflects particular historical circumstances and the traits of the king, while royal titles in Shang highlight the supremacy, uniqueness as well as loneliness of kingship.

Introduction

The Ur III dynasty and Shang dynasty have been selected as representative civilizations of ancient Mesopotamia and early China during Bronze Age.[1] Although separated chronologically by more than

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half a millennium, both of the dynasties were territorial-political states; furthermore, they share several similarities in terms of political organization and culture. The Ur III dynasty ruled for 108 years and saw five kings. It was the last Sumerian dynasty that came to preeminent power in Mesopotamia towards the very end of the third millennium BC (ca. 2112-2004 BC), and extended geographically from the ancient coastline of the Persian Gulf eastwards into modern-day Iran, and northwards towards the edge of north-eastern Syria and northern Iraq. The Shang dynasty is the first historical dynasty in early China that ruled the mid and lower Yellow River valley in the second half of the second millennium BC (ca. 1600-1046 BC). Both dynasties are well documented. The Ur III state is well-known for having produced an extreme number of administrative and economic documents,[2] and the capital of late Shang, the Anyang site, has produced tens of thousands of so-called oracle inscriptions. These texts were characterized as divinations and offer critical insights into political, economic, social, and religious issues of the state.[3]

The comparative study between the Ur III and the Shang dynasty is feasible and has the potential to enhance our understanding of both societies. Comparative studies have many benefits: they not only distinguish common historical features among different cultures but also identify variables that were critical for historical outcomes. They also assess the nature of a given phenomenon in the broader context of structurally similar entities.[4] Most comparative studies between ancient Mesopotamia and China done by Assyriologists are case studies with specific focus and are typically not restricted to a particular dynasty or historical period.[5] Some anthropologists have also conducted comparative studies of ancient civilizations, including early China and Mesopotamia. However, such studies typically focus on more than four, sometimes as many as seven ancient civilizations, to find commonalities in the development of different civilizations within a wider chronological and geographical framework, preventing a more in-depth study of the Chinese and Mesopotamian culture.[6] As comparative systematic study of the Ur III and Shang dynasty has the potential to yield important results in a number of areas, I would like to offer this short communication as a point of departure.

Royal Titles in Ur III Dynasty

In ancient Mesopotamia, titles were first used to identify the office of kingship and then formed an essential appurtenance of it, changing accordingly with the development of early state and royal power. According to William Hallo, in ancient Mesopotamia, a royal title could take the form of any noun or nominal phrase other than the personal name or the patronymic to identify the ruler. It usually came after the royal name, appeared in a full form, limited to fixed numbers, and incorporated with a geographical name. The royal title was better attested in royal or seal inscriptions than in purely literary works (royal hymns for example) and had certain heritability within and between dynasties. The sum of all those titles of a given ruler

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2- See Widell 2022, in this volume.

3- Keightley 1999: 235-237.

4- For the benefits and prospects of comparative study of ancient Civilizations and China's potential comparative advantages, see Scheidel 2005.

5- See e.g. Wu & Qu (1997) offering a comparison of sacrifices in ancient Mesopotamia and China; or Gong (2017), who has compared the Sumerian "Me" with the Chinese philosophical concept "Dao." See also Steinkeller (2017: 15-24) who compared historical sources in Southern Babylonia with sources in Egypt, Mesoamerica, and Ancient China.

6- See e.g. Maisels 1999, Trigger 2003.

amounted to the so-called "royal titular."[7]

At the beginning of the dynasty, the only title attributed to Ur-Nammu was "king of Ur" (lugal-urim$_5^{ki}$-ma), which coincided with a general limitation of royal power and control. It is suggested by Hallo that this title may have originally been as intimately linked with the city of Ur and favored by Sumerian rulers when they acquired supreme political power.[8] As a result, this title, due to its links to royal origins of the Ur III dynasty and old Sumerian traditions, formed an essential and invariable part of Ur III titulary from Ur-Nammu onwards.

With the preliminary consolidation of the dynasty, Ur-Nammu revived the title "mighty man" (nitaḫ-kalag-ga) which was first introduced by the Old Akkadian (ca. 2334-2113 BC) king Naram-Sin and created for him a brand-new title "king of Sumer and Akkad" (lugal-ki-en-gi-ki-uri). The title "king of Sumer and Akkad" was attested for the first time during the second half of Ur-Nammu's reign, signalising his attempt to shape the national spirit and declare his unquestioned power over the whole of Babylonia. On the other hand, as pointed out by Piotr Steinkeller, the duality of this title may be viewed as a kind of official acknowledgment of the political and cultural separation of Babylonia, given that the actual scope of control during the reign of Ur-Nammu was very limited.[9] Also, Ur-Nammu adopted the title "lord of Uruk" (en-unug^{ki}) as it appears in few inscriptions, but it was abandoned after him.[10]

When Šulgi ascended the throne after his father, he took over the three royal titles used by Ur-Nammu. During the first half of his reign, he made effort to consolidate the regime, while during the second half, simultaneously with his self-deification, he began a more aggressive policy of expansion, which may have been reflected by the change of the royal title.[11] The addition of the divine determinative (the "dingir" sign) preceding the king's name indicated the apotheosis of Šulgi and was in consistent use thereafter. The title "god of his land" (dingir-kalam-ma-na) or "god of the land" (dingir-kalam-ma) was introduced by Šulgi and continued to be used by his successors. This title is a variant of the "king of his land" (lugal-kalam-ma-na) title employed by the previous kings, and it is usually found in royal hymns and, less often in royal inscriptions (except for seal inscription during the reign of Ibbi-Sin's). The reason behind this divergence may lie in the different nature of the two genres, as royal inscriptions are classified as visual texts and the determinative was usually sufficient for the reader to recognize the king's divine nature. Royal hymns, on the other hand, are auditory material, therefore the silent grammatical element natural of the determinative requires the title "god of his land" to be added, to let the audience realize the king's new divine status.

Around the 28th year of Šulgi's rule, the title "king of Sumer and Akkad" was exchanged for "king of the four quarters" (lugal-an-ub-da-limmu$_2$-ba) and the original title never reappeared in any inscriptions or date formulas again. This new Sumerian title was the equivalent of the Akkadian royal title (*šar kibrātim arba'im*), which was introduced by Naram-Sin, who also assumed a divine status during his lifetime.

7- Hallo 1957: 2; 130-132.

8- Hallo 1957: 12; 16; 18.

9- Steinkeller 2017: 152.

10- According to Douglas Frayne (1997: 35), the two inscriptions with Ur-Nammu holding this title (RIME 3/2.01.01.12 and RIME 3/2.01.01.46), should in all likelihood be dated to the time shortly after the incorporation of Uruk into the realm of the Ur III state.

11- For an overview of divine kingship in ancient Mesopotamia, see Brisch 2013.

Through the creation of this new title, Naram-Sin employed the idea of kingship to gain control over not only previous city-states in southern Babylonia, but also the barbarians in distant and disobedient countries.[12] The practice of extending royal rule from a previously limited region to all lands was reintroduced by Šulgi and followed by all his successors. Among other titles, "king of the four quarters" seems to be the one that embodied the authority of the king and royal ideology best, and thus has spurred wide attention and discussion. As pointed out by Tohru Maeda, the adoption of this royal title corresponded with the development stage of the early state. According to Maeda, the Akkadian dynasty was in the formative phase of the territorial state, and the Ur III dynasty was in the phase of establishment.[13] In terms of political boundaries, the territory of Ur III consisted of the core, the peripheral area and the vassal states.[14] It has also been suggested that this title related to the ruler's universal ambitions to expand his rule beyond conceptual or topographical geographical boundaries, probably in the sense of ruling the divine spheres as well (i.e., heaven, sun, stars, etc.). Hence the divine kings of ancient Mesopotamia preferred this title.[15] Additionally, royal titles, as argued by Steinkeller, are not just rhetorical devices confined to a text, but can be actualized through some kind of cultic rituals a royal statue with the name "king of the four quarters" in Amar-Suen's reign may indicate the existence of a specific ritual to symbolize the king's rule over the entire world.[16]

Although a framework of royal titulary was set by Šulgi, three subtle changes were made by his successors: Amar-Suen and Ibbi-Suen. Firstly, Amar-Suen exchanged the first title "mighty man" for "mighty king" (lugal-kalag-ga) in the last third of his rule and he was considered to be the first king holding this title.[17] Secondly, under Amar-Suen, the title "god of his land" developed into two elaborated forms: "true god of his land" (dingir-zi-kalam-ma-na) and "true god, Utu of his land" (dingir-zi-$^{\rm d}$utu kalam-ma-na).[18] The reason behind this change could have been the king's attempt to distance himself from the mortal nature of a man. The word "man" (nitaḫ) indicates the mortal element of his life while "king" (lugal) might be somewhat more ambiguous, as the gods were often addressed as kings. Thirdly, as already demonstrated by Rudolf Mayr and David Owen, Ibbi-Suen was the only Ur III king who added the title "god of his land" to the inscription on his so-called Royal Gift Seal, the designation of a subgroup that had been presented personally by the king to his favored subordinates.[19] Considering that Ibbi-Suen was the last king and his authority had diminished greatly, the reason behind this decision may have been to emphasize his divine identity and to deter potential rebels within the state.

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12- Maeda 1984: 80.

13- Maeda 2015: 6.

14- For more discussions in detail, see Steinkeller 1991.

15- Michalowski 2010.

16- Steinkeller 2017: 135-136.

17- Hallo 1957: 69. Before Amar-Suen, there are two exceptions of Šulgi's usage of this title in seal inscriptions, which can be found in *SANTAG* 7, 175 (*CDLI*: P218250) and *NATN* 47 (*CDLI*: P120744). But the content of the two tablets is not entirely credible: for the former, the king's name was incomplete; the official Šulgi-ili in the second tablet was attested from ŠS 6-IS 2, not the official of Šulgi, and the king's name was also fragmentary. Therefore, according to the materials we have so far, Amar-Suen was the first to hold the title of "mighty king."

18- Steinkeller 2017: 152.

19- Mayr & Owen 2004: 146.

Royal Titles in Shang Dynasty

The designations of the Shang king as they appear in the oracle inscriptions can be roughly divided into three categories: the first are the temple names employed by living kings to confer with their deceased ancestors; the second are the appellations of kinship, such as Father Yi (父乙) and Brother Xin (兄辛); the third are the original names of Shang kings during their lifetime. The first two are well attested in oracles and later texts, but only five personal names of living Shang kings are known to us so far.[20] According to David Keightley, the temple name of the king was composed of "heavenly stems" (天干) which have religious significance and structure the ancestral cult, and the royal ancestors received offerings on the day of their temple name.[21]

In the oracle bone inscriptions, the Shang king is frequently referred to in the third person, along the lines of: "the king said," "the divination of the king," etc. The appellation exclusive to supreme Shang rulers is "king" (王), which is also confirmed by the "Annals of Yin (Shang)" in the *Historical Records* (史记•殷本纪) and other classical texts produced by later generations. From the glyphic point of view, the Chinese character "王" originated in the shape of the battle axe, implying kingship derived from the power and force of the military command.[22]

Apart from a direct designation of the king, the royal title "common ruler of all under heaven" (天下共主) is well attested in oracle inscriptions. Rather than centralized, Shang was a unified dynastic state, with the state structure composing of the inner domains (内服) or the kingdom itself and the outer domains (外服) or the minor states. Therefore, from the perspective of political territory, the term "all under heaven" in Shang state denominated the outer territories of vassal states, kingdom and its inner domains and the court bureaucracy.[23] On the other hand, from a cosmological point of view, the term "under heaven" (天下) in antiquity China was an epistemological phrase to describe the world as a territorial-cum-celestial totality, with the image of a square earth under a round heaven. Later historiographic tradition attributes the introduction of the title "common ruler of all under heaven" to Xia Kings, who documented, for the first time, the great unity "under heaven." During Shang's reign, the cosmography of "under heaven" was built around the Central Shang (中商) or the Great Settlement of Shang (大商邑) and imagined both the kingdom and Shang kings as the centers of the world.[24] Though the spheres of control of Shang kings were restricted to the lower Yellow River valley, they nevertheless claimed to universal domination (just like "king of the four quarters" in Ur III), and thus the supremacy of kingship became a cosmic force to maintain effective rule over outer domains.

The Shang kings also referred to themselves as "I, the one man" (余一人) in up to thirty-six oracle inscriptions. Traditionally, Chinese scholars tend to view this title as a reflection of Shang kings' supremacy,

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20- Chao 1986.

21- The Shang combined a series of ten "heavenly stems" with another series of twelve "earthly branches" (地支) to name their days, which made up a repeating six-week cycle of sixty days, with each week of ten days. The sexagenary cycle of calendar with astrological implications was used later for the marking of hours, months and years as well. For more on time and calendar in Shang dynasty, see Keightley 1999: 249-251.

22- See Wang Z. 2018: 13-15 with references. For other suggestions towards the etymological origins of 王, see Ching 1997: 14-15.

23- Wang Zhenzhong (2013 and 2018) has defined the structure of the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasty) as different development stages of the "composite state."

24- Wang M. 2012: 340-342.

overweening and autocracy, overlooking all his subjects with arrogance.[25] More recently, scholars have reconsidered references to this title in their contexts and proposed different arguments. Grammatically, this self-assumed title is simply the first person singular pronoun "I" followed by an apposition applying to males of any rank (人).[26] In terms of function, this title was used on four specific occasions: first, under the premise of "fault" or anomalies, and inquiry made through divination asking whether this would bring disaster to "I, the one man" (up to 27 examples); Second, when offering sacrifices to ancestors, an inquiry through divination was made to ask if there were any concerns and faults on the side of "I, the one man" (3 examples); Third, in specific events (mostly foreign conquests), divination was conducted to discover the relationship between others and "I, the one man" (5 examples); Fourth, when "I, the one man" and the diviner divined separately but the results were different, divination was conducted on whose result should not be adopted (only one example). In all cases, the title was used to ask for divine help through divination when the king was in trouble (anomalies implied bad governance) or challenged.[27] In the face of supernatural forces, Shang kings were more likely to show humility, piety, and concern than arrogance. Therefore, this title was more likely to highlight the king's loneliness and difficulty wielding royal power and responsibility, and in the meantime serve to reinforce the notion of the king as the sole mediator between Heaven and earth.[28]

Royal title in the Shang dynasty did not seem to transform with the change of king and development of kingship. During early Shang, royal power was restricted by theocracy (represented by the diviner (贞人) group coming from notable lineages), and the clan power, while by late Shang, theocracy and clan power were integrated into the strengthened kingship.[29] The designation "king" and the title "common ruler of all under heaven" showed no sign of diachronic change. It has been suggested that "the one man" was used in early Shang and developed into the appositive structure "I, the one man" in late Shang.[30] But the existing materials cannot support this suggestion as "I, the one man" also appeared in early oracle inscriptions, and the difference between the two titles lies in the fact that the former describe how others addressed the king and the latter was the king's self-reference.

Finally, the concept and expression worth noting are that of "the four quarters" (四方) in Shang, though it was not used in royal title directly. In Shang oracle inscriptions, the term 方 primarily referred to a concept within political geography, which designated "others," namely alien polities, sometimes hostile or unknown others, as opposed to "us," the Shang state. Thus, this term was also translated by Keightley as "side, border, country or region," indicating a periphery defining the political center of Shang.[31] When combined with the number "four," it took the form of "the four quarters" acquiring a cosmological meaning which embodied political domains as well as spiritual lands. It also functioned as a primary structure for political and ritual action, through which the Shang kings could monopolize the communication with supernatural powers: it took place through sacrificial rites with the assistance of the king's ancestors' spirits

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25- See e.g. Hu 1957 and 1981.

26- Wheatley 1971: 52.

27- For detailed discussion of all these references and cases, see Ning 2018.

28- Ning 2018: 175-177. Similar opinions can also be found in Ching 1997: 15; Li 2003: 84.

29- Chao 1984.

30- See Hu 1957 and 1981.

31- Keightley 1999: 269; see also Song 2011: 5-9.

and the diviners.[32] That is to say, the Shang world was defined in three dimensions by "the four quarters": the political and geographical center defined by the boundary marker, as well as "the ritual-cosmological center of the royal ancestral lines defined by the lineage of the others."[33]

Conclusions

The royal title is of great historical significance and can well reflect the dynastic and even individual traits of particular kings, since it is considered the most condensed expression of royal ideology in a given historical and cultural circumstance. Royal titles in Ur III reflected the consolidation, expansion, stability and decline of the dynasty, as well as the phenomenon of self-deification of Šulgi and his three successors.[34] Though the formation of titulary was relatively fixed, with the first title referring to the royal origin, the second stressing the king's personal quality and the third implying the king's domain area, all Ur III kings were willing and able to make changes to their titles, even if those changes remained subtle.

Royal titles adopted by Shang kings were quite different. In different periods of the dynasty and the reign of particular kings, royal titles remained the same. Three titles were used separately with different connotations. The title "king" was used to record the king's behavior, inquiry or command directly, while the "common ruler of all under heaven" resembles in some respects the Ur III title "king of the four quarters," both titles pointing towards the universal domain. "I, the one man," the most special title of the Shang rulers used in very specific cases, was the king's form of self-address when he communicated with the supernatural powers to seek divine support or help. The title hints at the role of the Shang king as alone being responsible for the state, and his inescapable mission of serving as the sole mediator between the divine and the secular sphere. In this respect, the meaning behind royal titles of Sumerian kings in Ur III and Shang kings displayed some similarities, though the titles themselves remained different.

The reason for the different attitudes to the royal titles lies in the Ur III and Shang kings' completely contradictory strategies of strengthening royal power. Ur III kings preferred to show off authority; they, or their statues, would travel around the kingdom during festivals and ceremonies. When this attitude was reflected in the royal title of the king, it was diverse in form and varied in content, with a certain personal style that was accessible to a large number of subjects, even illiterate ones. By contrast, Shang kings enhanced their authority by being completely isolated from the commoners, maintaining a sense of elevated mystery. The audience of royal titles in oracle inscriptions was limited to educated elite.

32- For more discussion in detail, see Wang A. 2000: 29-37.

33- Wang A. 2000: 46.

34- For a division of the Ur III state into four separate stages of development, see Dahl 2007:1, n. 1.

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Extispicy and Consensus Decision-Making in Ancient Mesopotamia

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Abstract

This essay scrutinizes the relationship between the procedure of extispicy and the concept of decision-making in ancient Mesopotamian assemblies. The term 'procedure of extispicy' refers to consulting the gods for decisions and questions, observing organs of a sacrificial animal, recognizing and decoding omen features on the organs, and rendering a final answer. Given the explicitness of Mesopotamian texts, according to which extispicy is the outcome of the counsels of the gods in the divine assembly on a specific question, it follows that the features appearing on the sacrificial animal reflect the views of the gods. This corresponds to the characteristics of decision-making by assemblies and councils, which has been common at both the divine and human levels in Mesopotamia. This argument is reinforced by the fact that the final answer of extispicy, unlike some divinatory methods, which are based on numbers and mathematics, is determined by the largest possible percentage of binary decision-making processes (yes/no) reflecting the procedure of achieving a consensus decision through unanimity or super-majority. However, super-majority in extispicy could be affected by a veto sign, proving another parallel with the procedure of consensus decision-making.

Introduction

In the ancient Near East, extispicy was a prevalent divinatory method of acquiring a yes/no answer to a specific question through the observation of organs of a sacrificial animal. The final response depended on the super-majority of positive features versus negative ones and vice versa.[1] Extispicy was hardly grounded on numerical principles, but rather on the appearance of one type of feature, whether favorable or unfavorable, that heavily outweighed the other. As will be discussed throughout this paper, the omina or signs, which the diviner read on the organ, were the divine judgement/decision from an assembly of gods. The role of ancient Mesopotamian assemblies and councils at both civic and divine levels has long been discussed in Assyriological publications.[2] This essay particularly focuses on the divine level of ancient Mesopotamian assemblies, in which decisions were made collectively, though it does not consider the fundamental difference between the characteristics of divine and human assemblies. The core of this research argues that, on the basis of cuneiform texts, the divinatory consultation via extispicy was the outcome of the divine assembly where a decision was made by the will of almost all the gods.[3] The methodology applied to this study follows an emic approach, using Sumerian and Akkadian terms that attempt to excavate an 'insider' perspective.

Definitions

A Consensus decision-making system is based on unanimous collective agreements in councils.[4] As Dean Tjosvold and Richard Field point out, "in consensus decision-making, all group members express their opinions, discuss the issue, and then choose an alternative they all can agree to, at least in part."[5] This type of decision-making occurs "when the members of a group choose between two or more mutually exclusive actions with the aim of reaching a consensus."[6] In consensus decision-making, every member has the power of a veto or abstention power. The procedure of the final decision based on consensus is different from that of majority vote in which 51% of stakeholders have the authority to make all the decisions. In consensus decision-making, the ideas of every participant are synthesized into one decision. The present study argues that this fact is reflected in the procedure of extispicy where the final answer was determined by the excessive number of one type of features, whether favorable or unfavorable, versus the other. Using this method, the diviner observed several signs on different organs of the sacrificial animal. If the number of favorable signs was much higher than the number of unfavorable signs, he would declare a favorable result and vice versa.[7] There were two types of signs called *nipḫu* and *pitruštu* that could change the whole result, even when unfavorable signs were heavily outnumbered by unfavorable signs.[8] In fact, the signs that appeared on the liver in a one-to-one correspondence expressed the views of the gods in an assembly set up to decide on the human's request. These views, according to the rules of consensus-based

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1- Daneshmand 2017: 15-16.

2- Jacobsen 1943; Liverani 1993 and 1957; Van de Mieroop 1999; Lieberman 1992; Fleming 2004; Barjamovic 2004. For a detailed bibliography on assemblies and councils in ancient Near East, see Barjamovic 2006: 50, n. 7.

3- Heeβel 2010: 163.

4- Hartnett 2001: 23.

5- Tjosvold & Field 1983: 500-501.

6- Dyer et al. 2009: 781.

7- Multābiltu Tablet 2-3: 145=Koch 2005: 127; Daneshmand 2017: 15-16.

8- Multābiltu Tablet 2-3: 145=Koch 2005: 127; Daneshmand 2017: 16.

decision-making, must reach a super-majority, and a simple-majority did not suffice. For example, if in a given extispicy the number of favorable features versus the unfavorable ones was 6 to 5, the result was not sufficient for a final decision, and a repetition was recommended.

This article by no means overlooks some numerical aspects attested in the series of Multābiltu.[9] There are numerical rules for the appearance of two types of negatives signs (*nipḫu* and *pitruštu*),[10] not to mention the stipulated time for the validity of extispicy was also based on some calculations.[11] However, this approach seems to be related to the developments in the literature of extispicy, when long lists of omens were created and became part of the scribal tradition. In some cases, a distinction must be made between the simple principles of consensus governing the assembly of gods and the theory of extispicy in analyzing the signs sent from that assembly. For example, in the combination of the veto signs, according to theoretical texts, the presence of two *nipḫu* and the absence of *pitruštu* did not change the result.[12] However, such complexities are never taken into account in the practical reports of extispicy. In fact, there is no evidence that a diviner was involved in some of the complexities of theoretical texts. There were only two general rules for them: a super-majority of a decision, and a veto.[13]

In her book entitled "Mathematics Elsewhere," Marcia Ascher offers a comprehensive study on divinatory methods that follow a mathematical logic. To give only one example, in a passage she elaborates on knot divination in Caroline Islands and Yoruba Ifa:[14]

> In the knot divination, the mathematical ideas are primarily numerical: counting modulo 4; addition modulo 4; identifying destiny spirits by ordered pairs of numbers; and linking significant words and phrases to ordered pairs to ordered pairs of numbers. By contrast, in Ifa, the mathematical ideas are primarily logical; that is, creating symbolic representations of the outcomes; using ordered pairs of these representations to elicit the verses, and comparing and selecting among ranked symbolic representations.

Unlike the above example, in real and practical cases of extispicy, we do not come across a numerical interpretation of the features. As Robert Temple asserts, the number of coils of colon (*tirānu*) in extispicy reports, deals with anatomical verifications and not mathematical rules.[15] The actual reports of extispicy from both the second and first millennia BC do not calculate the number of features on the basis of the voting system. Nor do they follow the precise and obsessive details of the omen lists. In absence of veto features, the mere presence of a super-majority of positive features was enough to convince the diviner that

9- Koch 2005.

10- Koch 2005: 20; Maul 2013: 98.

11- Heeβel 2010: 165-168.

12- Koch 2005: 20.

13- There are ample examples of actual reports of extispicy in Goetze 1957; Koch 2002; Richardson 2002; Kraus 1985; Nougayrol 1967.

14- Ascher 2005: 14. For a comprehensive analysis of some divinatory methods based on mathematical ideas, see Ascher 2005: 5-37. A comparison with the examples discussed in this book shows that the practice of ancient Mesopotamian extispicy does not follow the characteristics and rules of mathematics

15- Temple 1982.

the outcome was a yes-answer.[16] It goes without saying that the rules of counting in theoretical texts bear no resemblance to the mathematical calculations of the divinatory methods in Caroline Islands and Yoruba Ifa.

A Case study

As ample evidence of cuneiform texts indicates, the democratic practice of consensus decision-making can be traced back to the roots of ancient Mesopotamian communities, where assemblies and councils were in charge of decision-making on some day-to-day urban issues.[17] The word $UKKIN_a$ (assembly) is mentioned in the earliest cuneiform texts dated to the fourth millennium BC.[18] As Gebhard Selz points out, the texts from the Uruk period as well as the later literary documents indicate that a multiple management/ decision-making system was in place in ancient Mesopotamian cities.[19] J. Cale Johnson argues that two major lists of professional titles from the Late Uruk period (NAMEŠDA list and $UKKIN_a$ list) reflect different social organizations and served "as inspiration for the bicameral model in the epic tale of *Gilgameš* and *Akka*".[20] Our evidence is not limited to written sources, and recent archaeological findings show that the role of municipal assemblies and bottom-up structures in Mesopotamia dates back to much older times. The new archaeological excavations have revealed early Mesopotamian large settlements from the fifth millennium BC, which lacked any forms of centralized governments, and their urban structures were based on neighborhood and consensus decision-making.[21] In his paper on three mega-sites, Khirbat-al-Fakhar, Tell Brak and Tell Chuera in northern Mesopotamia, Jason Ur demonstrates that "a critical look at the archaeological data set of sites and landscapes suggests that bottom-up processes were dominant."[22]

The first written texts recording references to the functioning of civic assemblies in Mesopotamian cities date back to the second millennium BC.[23] The archive of Mari presents outstanding examples of the role of civic institutions in decision-making. In a general division, the decision-making bodies in the Old Babylonian Mari consisted of two sections: city as a collective political entity, and assemblies at different levels of society (*puḫrum, taḫtamum, riḫṣum*).[24] Daniel Fleming points out that "in some cases, the collective action of the town is identified simply by the name of the town as subject."[25] To give only one example, according to a letter from the Mari archive[26], when Zimri-Lim, king of Mari, appointed a certain Ibni-Addu as the king of the city Tâdum he was ousted from power by the collective action of the city. A passage of the letter gives a direct quote from Ibni-Addu:[27]

16- As will be discussed later, the final outcome could also be subject to the presence of two Jokers (i.e. veto features).

17- Fleming 2004; Barjamovic 2004; Van de Mieroop 1999; Liverani 1993; Lieberman 1992.

18- Selz 1998: 301-304.

19- "Von daher ist die Existenz mehrerer Führungsebenen eine plausible Annahme" (Selz 1998: 291).

20- Johnson 2015: 171.

21- Ur 2020: 38; Frangipane 2018; Ur 2014; Creekmore 2014; Ur 2010. For a striking example of cities before the state in the fourth millennium urban centers of Ukraine, see Wengrow 2015. In a passage of this paper, David Wengrow notes: "Both Mesopotamia and Ukraine may be considered examples of 'cities before state', as indeed can the third millennium urban centers of the Indus Valley" (Wengrow 2015: 16).

22- Ur 2020: 38.

23- Larsen 1976; Durand 1990; Dercksen 2004.

24- Fleming 2004: 204-228.

25- Fleming 2004: 181.

26- ARM 26 310. The letter was sent from a certain Yamṣûm to Zimri-Lim.

27- ARM 26 310 6-8.

zimri-lim ana šarrūt tâdum iškunanni u issuḫūninni
Zimri-Lim assigned me as king of Tâdum, but they kicked me out.

The plural form of the verb '*nasāḫu* (to remove)' refers to the collective action of the city Tâdum. Ibni-Addu returned to Tâdum with an escort to regain the throne. However, a certain Ḫaya-sûmû wrote to the city, encouraging them to kill him:[28]

išpur-ma ḫaya-sûmû ana tâdim anumma dūkâššū-ma
Ḫaya-sûmû wrote to Tâdum: "Now kill him!"

The sender of the letter asserts that Ḫaya-sûmû wrote the letter to 'Tâdum', indicating that the addressee of the message was all the city as a collective entity. However, it remains unknown to us why the city decided not to kill him:[29]

u kennekēm lā idūkūšu
And, over there, they did not kill him.

The text continues with another direct quote from Ibni-Addu, emphasizing that he was not accepted by the city:[30]

u ittūram ana šēr kunnam ⸢umma⸣ šū-ma ul imgurūninni ⸢annummânumma⸣ kīma [lā] imgurū šukurrī līm emmuq ⸢ṣābī⸣ mi'at tanaddina
And he returned to Kunnam, (saying) thus: They did not accept me. Since they did not accept (me), you shall give me a thousand spears with which to equip a hundred soldiers.

Ibni-Addu's request to equip the military means that the city resisted to obey him and rejected his kingship.
   There is enough evidence to suggest that the Mesopotamian assemblies followed the rules of consensus decision-making.[31] As a clear example, we have a letter from the archive of Mari that records actual discussions taking place in the assembly of the Yaminites: when Zimri-Lim, king of Mari, was in war with Eshnunna, the Yaminites assembly held two sessions to negotiate a proposal to raid the bank of Euphrates. The first session met before Zimri-Lim's victory[32] over Eshnunna:[33]

inūma šarrum ina karāšim wašbu nīnu aḫ puratti i nisdud
When the king is in the military campaign, let us ride the bank of Euphrates.

28- ARM 26 310 12-14.
29- ARM 26 310 15.
30- ARM 26 310 16-21.
31- Fleming 2004; Barjamovic 2004; Van de Mieroop 1999; Liverani 1993; Lieberman 1992.
32- *lāma bēlī damdâm ša ṣābim ešnunna idūku* (ARM XIV 84 6-7= Charpin and Durand 1986: 176 = Durand 1998: 444).
33- ARM XIV 84 12-13 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 176 = Durand 1998: 444.

It is not clear why this meeting ended without a final decision. After Zimri-Lim defeated Eshnunna, they held a second meeting to discuss their previous proposal:[34]

> *inūma šarrum damdâm ša awīl ešnunna idūk u nīd aḫim iršû nūnu i nisdud-ma ištēt ana awīl ešnunna i nudammiq*
> Now that the king defeated the man of Eshnunna, and they (i.e. the king and his troops) relaxed, let us raid and do a favor to the man of Eshnunna.

This time they came close to the final decision:[35]

> *ana annêtim ˹epēšim˺ pānēšunu iškunū*
> They decided to accomplish this (decision).

However, a man stood in the assembly and raised concerns about the final decision:[36]

> *ištēn awīlum ina puḫrišunu itbē-ma kīam idbubšunūšim ˹ummāmi˺ ṣeḫrum u seḫertum u ûm ša kaprātim ša mārī simāl ana dannatim kamis ˹tasaddudā˺-ma mīnam teleqqē attunu tasaddudā-ma immērī u alpī teleqqē u šarrum zimri-lim illakam-ma biḫiršu...*
> A man stood in their assembly and talked to them thus: all the population and the grain of the Bensimalites villages are gathered in the fortress. If you raid, what will you acquire? If you raid, you will acquire nothing but sheep and oxen. On the contrary, the king Zimri-Lim will come and his soldiers...

As a result, the assembly paused their decision to make sure whether the issue raised by that member of the council was correct:[37]

> *ša ana ˹sadādim˺ ˹pānūšunu˺ ˹šaknū˺ ittaklū u ana ˹libbim˺ ša awātim amārim ˹makî˺ ˹išpurūnim˺*
> (the members of the assembly) who decided to raid stopped (their decision) and sent spies to verify the (man's) words.

The spies inspected the area and found out that the situation was the same as claimed by the member of the assembly. Consequently, the assembly blocked the initial decision and instead proceeded to fortify the city Abattum against possible invasion by Zimri-Lim's troops. This is a striking example that not only gives us an insight to the procedure of collective decision-making in a Mesopotamian assembly, but also shows how an individual opposition could block a collective decision. [38]

34- ARM XIV 84 18-22 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 178 = Durand 1998: 444.
35- ARM XIV 84 23-24 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 178 = Durand 1998: 444.
36- The text is broken. ARM XIV 84 25-33 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 178 = Durand 1998: 444.
37- ARM XIV 84 34-36 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 178 = Durand 1998: 444.
38- ARM XIV 84 47-48 = Charpin and Durand 1986: 178 = Durand 1998: 444.

Extispicy, judgment, and divine assembly

Many scholars have noted a correlation between divination, judgment and the divine assembly.[39] The discourse of judgment constitutes the main ideology behind the concept of divination in divinatory texts of the second millennium BC.[40] The future is decided in the court of the gods, and they decide the future events through issuing judicial decisions.[41] This view is well attested in the following passage from a Neo-Assyrian prophecy:[42]

> *ilū purussê māti ana damiqti iparrasū*
> The gods make a favorable decision for the land.

The notion of the judicial nature of divination does not mean that the client considers himself a wronged person in all circumstances[43], rather it implies that the system of divine decision-making was based on the concept of justice.[44] However, as will be discussed later, the gods could always issue an unfavorable decision against the will of humans. Therefore, a question such as "should I attack the enemy?" could be considered a potential future, a case that should be decided. In fact, the gods do not predict the future of the attack, but decide whether the king should attack or not. On some occasions, the repetition helped the fluidity and adaptability of decisions, that is, if the client did not like the divine decision, he could ask again and hope for a favourable decision a second time. Francesca Rochberg notes that divine decision-making is probably connected to the notion of fate (*šīmtum*).[45] However, in divinatory texts there is a distinction between the concept of *šīmtum* and that of *purussûm*, such as in this text from Adad-nirari (I)[46]

> *ilū rabûti gāmirūt purussê mušimmū šimāti*
> The great gods who make the decisions, who decree the fates.

As Ulla Koch notes, Mesopotamian divination seeks a favorable decision and a firm answer, not a fate that was probably a "blueprint" and a general path of destiny for both humans and the world[47]. The decision(s) taken by the gods and obeyed by humans, is the right order of the world, that is, *kittum* and *mīšarum*. However, a decision, unlike fate, can be altered.

39- Rochberg 2016; Guinan 2014; Glassner 2012; Wilcke 2007; Fincke 2006; Maul 1994. On divine assembly in Mesopotamian literature, see Bernardo Ballesteros Petrella's Oxford dissertation from 2018.

40- Rochberg discusses the judicial terms used in divinatory texts, as well as in the names of temples: "Divine decisions are also attested to in the names of temples constructed with EŠ.BAR (=*purussû*), for example, É.EŠ.BAR.AN. KI "House of Decisions of Heaven and Earth," EŠ. BAR.ME. SI.SÁ "(House which keeps in Order Decisions and me`s," and É.EŠ.BAR.ZI.DA "House of True Decisions (Rochberg 2004:195).

41- Bottéro 1974:157-160.

42- KAR 421 ii 4.

43- Compare with the attestations of *ḫablum* (wronged person, oppressed) in the legal context, e.g. CH xl. 73.

44- Wilcke 2007:209-244.

45- Rochberg 2004:196.

46- KAH 2 84: 5; CAD Š/III, P. 12.

47- Koch 2013:140-141.

The concept of judgment and judicial decision is well attested in Old Babylonian prayers to the gods Šamaš and Adad for the act of extispicy:[48]

[*šamaš*] ⌜*bēl dīnim*⌝ *adad bēl ikribī u bīrim* ⌜*našiākkunūšim*⌝ *šām māri šâti ellam*
Šamaš, lord of judgment, Adad, lord of prayer and divination, I bring you a sheep, a pure offspring of an ewe.

The seer asks the gods to place a true judgment in the extispicy (i.e. organs of the sacrificial animal):[49]

[*ina*] ⌜*têrti*⌝ *eppušu ina ikrib akarrabu kittam šukunān*
In the extispicy I make, in the prayer I pronounce, place a true (judgment).

After the introductory lines, the seer directly addresses the god Šamaš:[50]

tadîn dīn ilī rabûtim tadîn dīn umāmim tadîn dīn tenēšītim
You judge the case of the great gods, you judge the case of the beasts, you judge the case of mankind.

The judgment should be placed in the dedicated lamb:[51]

amtaḫarka ina puḫād akarrabu kittam šuknam
I beseech you. In the lamb that I offered you, place a true (judgment).

ūmam dīn annanna māri annanna dinā-ma ina imitti puḫādim annîm kittam u šumēl puḫādi annîm kittam šuknān
Today, (Šamaš and Adad!), judge the case of so-and-so, son of so-and-so, and place the true (judgment) in the right side of this lamb, and place the true (judgment) in the left side of this lamb.

Furthermore, the seer invokes all the gods who were decision-makers in divinatory consultations:[52]

irbam šamaš bēl dīnim irbam adad bēl ikribī u bīrim irbam sîn šarri agîm u bēlet bīrim išḫara wāšibat kummim guanna šassukkat ilī nāgirat anim nergal bēl kakkim ilam bēl têrti eppušu šuzizzānim-ma ina têrti eppušu kittam šuknān ina šiknāt ilī rabûtim ina ṭuppi ša ilī tākaltum līšib nisaba ṭupšarratum lišaṭṭer dīnam nusku immeram liṭeḫḫi ana puḫur ilī rabûtim ana ⌜*šulum*

48- Starr 1983: 30 HSM 7494 1-2; see also Goetze 1968. There is also a Neo-Assyrian text with a similar content, see Dossin 1935; Von Soden 1936; Wilcke 2007. For *šām māri šâti* (*šu'u*: sheep; *šâtu*: ewe), see AHw: 1256; CAD Š/III: 168 & 417; and Starr 1983: 47.

49- Starr 1983: 30 HSM 7494 6.

50- Starr 1983: 30 HSM 7494 11.

51- Starr 1983: 30 HSM 7494 8 and 12. We expect *šuknam*, though this form could also be an imperative second person plural followed by a ventive (*ni*), referring to Šamaš and Adad: [*šamaš*] ⌜*bēl dīnim*⌝ *adad bēl ikribī u bīrim* (Starr 1983: 30 HSM 7494 1).

52- Starr 1983: 30-31 HSM 7494 13-21.

dīnim⸌ lišbū-ma dayyānū ilū rabûtim wāšibū kuṣṣât ḫurāṣi ākilū paššur uqnim maḫarka ina kittim u mīšarim lidīnū dīnam ūmam dīn annanna māri annanna dīnā-ma ina imitti puḫādim annîm kittam u šumēl puḫādim ⸢annîm⸣ kittam šuknān puḫādam anniam ana šulum annanna māri annanna eppuš ana šulmim

Enter, Šamaš, lord of judgment, enter, Adad, lord of prayer and divination, enter, Sîn, king of the crown, and Išḫara, lady of divination, who dwells in the Guanna cella, accountant of the gods, herald of Anu, Nergal, lord of battle. Make the god, the lord of the extispicy stand in the extispicy I perform. Place the true (judgment) in the extispicy I perform. In the session of the great gods, in the tablet of the gods, may a *tākaltum* be placed. May Nisaba, the scribe (of the gods), write the case, May Nusku bring close a lamb for the assembly of the gods, for the well-being of the case (?). May the judges, the great gods who sit on the golden thrones, who eat at the offering table of lapis-lazuli in front of you, judge the case in righteousness and judgement. Today, judge the case of so-and-so, son of so-and-so, and place a true (judgment) in the right side of this lamb, and in the left side of this lamb. I will perform this lamb for the well-being of so-and-so, son of so-and-so, for well-being.

In the text above, *puḫur ilī rabûtim*, the assembly of the great gods, is a court, that is, a session of decision-making, where a case (i.e., a question) will be dealt with by the gods, who are actually the judges and decision-makers.[53] They deliberate over the question and reach a final result. The multiplicity of gods shows that they were all influential in decision-making. As the text asserts, the result of their negotiation and discussion over the case was written down by Nusku on the tablet of the gods (*ina ṭuppi ša ilī*).[54]

In a passage of his 2005 paper, Piotr Steinkeller notes the close resemblance between extispicy and the standard Babylonian court case:[55]

As imagined by the Babylonians, the procedure by which deities offered an insight into the future – or "established the truth" as it was known in Akkadian – resembled very closely the standard Babylonian court case, in that the person for whom the extispicy was performed assumed the role of the defendant, while his future, the subject of the inquiry, became the case that the divine tribunal was to decide. As in a real-life trial, the "case" was examined, deliberated over, and decided by the gods, with their being subsequently made known in the entrails of the sacrificial lamb. Metaphorically, the message was written down by the scribe of

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53- Lieberman 1992: 129-132. The divine meeting is usually accompanied by a banquet (Jacobsen 1943: 167, n. 49; Lieberman 1992: 133). Herodotus denotes the Persian custom of decision-making while eating and drinking: "They are accustomed to deliberating on the most serious business while they are drunk, and whatever decisions they reach in these sessions, it is proposed to them again the next day by the host in whose house they had deliberated the night before. Then, if the decision still pleases them when they are sober, they act on it. Conversely, whatever provisional decisions they consider while sober, they reconsider when they are drunk (Herodotus 1.133 = Purvis 2009: 72). This costume also has an analogy in Tacitus, Germania 22 (Peterson 1914: 294-1297). David Graeber notes that "in traditional societies that have been practicing consensus for centuries, the usual solution is to make a meeting fun: introduce humor, music, poetry, so that people actually enjoy watching the subtle rhetorical games and attendant dramas (Graeber 2013: 226).

54- Maul 2013: 103; Glassner 2012: 46; Frahm 2010: 98.

55- Steinkeller 2005: 14.

the divine tribunal on the entrails – primarily on the liver – as on the clay tablet. In this way, the liver became a written message or – by analogy with legal documents – an inner tablet, with the lamb taking on the function of the clay envelope in which the message was encased.

So, from an emic point of view, it can be suggested that what the diviner observed on the liver was construed as the details of the divine judgement and the final outcome of the divine assembly. This fact is explicitly expressed in textual examples, such as in the following passage from an Esarhaddon inscription:[56]

> *šamaš u adad... ša epēš bīti šâti udduš atmanīšu ušašṭirū amūtu*
> Šamaš and Adad...who ordered (their decision) for building the temple and renewing its shrine to be written on the liver.

As Stefan Maul notes, Mesopotamians did not believe that the signs had already existed in the body of the sacrificial animal, rather they would appear only when the diviner summoned the gods and invited them to the banquet.[57] In fact, the message of the gods is written only on the limbs of the sacrificial animal when they hold a meeting to discuss a question.

The final answer and the rules of consensus decision-making

The Akkadian expression for the act of extispicy is *têrētum epēšu*. The G-stem of the verb *epēšu* is used from the perspective of the agent of the text (e.g., (*têrētim ēpuš*) "I performed extispicy"). The Š-stem (*têrētam šūpušu*) is used, in case the agent of the text asks someone else to perform the divinatory consultation (e.g., *têrētim ušēpiš*).[58] The word *têrtum* means 'message and instruction' in general, and is equivalent to divination and divinatory consultation in particular.[59] As Jean-Marie Durand notes, *têrtum* is a noun consisting of ta-prefix corresponding to the D-stem attached to a form of the verb *wu"urum / wârum* 'to go up, to instruct, to give order' in the D-stem. The term *wu'urtum* from the same root is translated by François Thureau-Dangin as "permis ou ordre d'aller."[60] Since the word *têrtum* alludes to both the process of consultation and the final divine response, Durand argues that "the word *têrtrum* is basically the permission to take action, given by the deity in answer to a question."[61] Selz points out that UKKIN (assembly) may consist of two elements: uĝ (people) and kin, where kin/kiĝ may denote *šipru* (work) and *têrtu* (instruction).[62] So the word *têrtu* has a double connotation in extispicy: it refers to both the ritual and the results that are obtained.

The common Sumerian and Akkadian words denoting "(ominous) sign" are GISKIM and *ittu* (*giskimmu*) respectively. The word GISKIM (=*ittu*) includes the signs of heaven, earth, time, dreams, and people.[63] There is no firm evidence to show that GISKIM (=*ittu*) refers to the features observed on the liver. As Ulla Koch notes, "the Babylonians distinguished between two different kind of subsections of the liver: *šīru* (flesh)

56- Borger 1956, Esarh. 3 iv 6.

57- Maul 2013: 39.

58- Durand 2008: 492.

59- Durand 2010: 6.

60- Thureau-Dangin 1936: 174 n. 7.

61- Durand 2010: 6: "Le *têrtum* est fondamentalement la permission d'agir que donne la divinité en réponse à un questionnement."

62- Selz 1998: 301.

63- Maul 2003: 51-64.

and *uṣurtu* (drawing)," where the *šīru* denotes the constituent parts of liver and the term *uṣurtu* refers to the impressions caused by the pressure of the internal organs on the liver.[64] In extispicy omen lists, the word GISKIM (=*ittu*) usually indicates something other than the liver. Koch translates *ittu* as "defining characteristic," as in the following example:[65]

> *šumma manzāzu kabsu šalimtu u lā šalimtu laptat nabalkutu ša manzāzu u danānu šumma ittašunu ana pānīka*
> If the Presence is effaced, the favorable and not favorable (extispicy) becomes affected. "To turn" concerning the presence and the Strength, you have their defining characteristic before you.

Therefore, it seems that the extispicy features are not *ittu* (e.g., an eclipse, birth malfunctions, etc.) in the exact sense of the word. Given the *ikribu* text cited before[66], divination was actually a decision reached by the gods sent and written on the liver. Thus, it can be extrapolated that the extispicy features were encrypted messages,[67] denoting decisions of the gods expressed in the divine assembly in favour (*damiqtu*) or against the human's request (*lemuttu*).[68]

Although our extant documents lack enough information to elaborate on every detail of the divine assemblies, as will be discussed later, to see a consensus decision-making model in ancient Mesopotamian divine decision-making processes is not far off the mark. Thorkild Jacobsen points out that the term *šitūlum* "to ask one another" is well attested in Akkadian texts with references to the divine assemblies, denoting discussions and negotiations among the gods in the divine assembly. Through this method of consensus and empathy "the issues were clarified and the various gods had the opportunity to voice their opinions for or against."[69] This interpretation is aligned with the general rule of extispicy[70], in which a high and absolute majority of signs determines the final answer, as indicated in the below passage from the text Multābiltu:[71]

> *šumma têrta tēpuš damqātūša ma'dā lemuttūša iṣū têrtu šī šalmat*
> If you made extispicy and its favorable signs are many and its unfavorable signs few, that extispicy is favorable.

And conversely:[72]

> *šumma têrta tēpuš lemuttūša damqātūša ma'dā damqātūša iṣū têrtu šī laptat*
> If you made extispicy and its ufavorable signs are many and its favorable signs few, that extispicy is unfavorable.

64- Koch 2000: 38; Glassner 2012: 47-50; Meyer 1987: 68; Maul 2013: 68.
65- Koch 2000 153 20 10.
66- Starr 1983: 30-31 HSM 7494 13-21
67- Glassner 2012: 50.
68- Jeyes 1989: 51.
69- Jacobsen 1943: 168.
70- See the section "Definitions."
71- Koch 2005: 138 Multābiltu Tablet 3 A7`.
72- Koch 2005: 138 Multābiltu Tablet 3 A8'.

As can be deduced from the reports on the actual practice of extispicy, the general rule of extispicy (i.e. a high and absolute majority of signs) cited above was the most common method adopted by diviners to announce the final result of a divinatory consultation.[73]

Our documents indicate that the discussions in the divine assembly took place at different levels and groups of gods.[74] As Piotr Steinkeller argues, the gods of night, who acted as the defendants of the person for whom the divinatory consultation was performed, together with other gods were involved in the procedure of extispicy.[75] In order to find out more about how the Mesopotamians imagined the divine assembly, Old Assyrian assemblies present insightful examples. On the basis of evidence from an Old Assyrian trading colony, Marc Van De Mieroop summarized the role and characteristics of the Assyrian assemblies in the following passage:[76]

> Seemingly, the council was divided into three groups in order to facilitate the deliberations. When a majority was in favor of considering the case, the secretary was ordered to convene the entire assembly. This assembly may have been divided into seven groups, and its decision required a majority as well. We do not know how majority opinion was determined. Was a vote taken? If so, how? Further information about the proceedings of the assembly is not available unless we take into consideration the literary descriptions of meetings of gods, as Jacobsen did.

Van de Mieroop's description of the Old Assyrian assemblies is in alignment with characteristics of the procedure of consensus decision-making in various cultures. Anthropological studies show that in communities based on this kind of decision-making, different layers of councils are placed at different levels of decision-making.[77] In tablet XI of Gilgamesh, Enlil was criticized by Ishtar and Ea for not consulting all the gods before creating the deluge; a passage of the text reads: "You, the sage of the gods, the hero, how could you lack counsel and cause the deluge?" (*atta apkal ilī qurādu kī kī lā tamtalik-ma abūbu ⌜taškun⌝*).[78]

However, in a consensus-based culture no decision can be made against the will of the minority, and anyone can block a proposal. This is why Ishtar and Ea blamed Enlil for not involving all the gods in his decision. In the same vein, if the extispicy features correspond to the divine opinions, one expects to find features representing opposite views, which could alter the final outcome. Since the extispicy features on the liver (or on a relevant organ) correspond to individual divine opinions in a divine assembly, one expects to find the minority votes of the assembly represented in the minority of the signs on the organ. There were two types of signs called *niphu* (lit. blaze) and *pitruštu* (lit. separated apart) that could change the whole result, even in the case that favorable signs were heavily outnumbered by unfavorable signs or

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73- Richardson 2002; Koch 2002; Starr 1990; Kraus 1985; Nougayrol 1967; Goetze 1957.

74- Jacobsen 1943: 168-169.

75- Steinkeller 2005: 46; Maul 2013: 39-46. For the text see Dossin 1935; Von Soden 1936; Wilcke 2007.

76- Van De Mieroop 1999: 150.

77- In the village of Khuriet, for instance, there are different communities, each of which are in charge of some sets of enterprise or goods, and "each group has autonomy over his affairs," while members may belong to more than one group (El-Hakim 1978: 58). In Rojava, the autonomous district of North and East Syria, the councils exist at four levels, including the commune, the neighborhood, the district, and, at the highest level, the people's council (Knapp, Flach & Ayboğa 2016: 87-91).

78- Gilg. XI 183-184 = George 2003: 714.

vice-versa.[79] Ulla Koch states that the *nipḫu* sign functions like a joker in card playing.[80] A passage in the text Mulābiltu reads:[81]

> *šumma têrta tēpuš damqātūša ma'dū lemuttūša išū u nipḫu šakin ana qātīka tatâr*
> If you made extispicy, its favorable signs are many and its unfavorable few, and there is a *nipḫu* sign, return it to your hand (repeat it).

There is no doubt that Mesopotamian scholars never restricted the omen lists to a single rule of divination, and the corpus of omen texts contain countless combinations of these two Jokers with other negative signs that are effective in the final result.[82] However, in the practical and basic examples as attested in the extispicy reports, the mere presence of a negative sign was sufficient to indicate an unfavorable or dubious outcome. As mentioned in the example of the Mari letter (ARM XIV 84), collective decisions in ancient Mesopotamian assemblies could always be met with dissenting opinions. So the presence of Jokers, particularly *pitruštu* (a feature that is placed apart) may well indicate the important role of consensus blocking.

Conclusion

Mesopotamian texts on extispicy clearly show that the features appearing on the internal organs of the sacrificed animal were considered to be messages resulting from a meeting of the gods in the divine assembly, which was held to discuss a decision or question. These texts assert that what appears on the organs of sacrificial animals was written by the gods, that is, they were not accidental messages. Although we lack enough details to have a complete picture of the procedure of decision-making in ancient Mesopotamian assemblies, there is good evidence to argue that decision-making was a collective task. No matter whether the gods or humans gathered for a decision, all divine, juridical, political, and military issues had to be decided in assemblies and councils that sought consensus for decisions through discussions and deliberations.

The tendency of Mesopotamian kings to use divination for their decisions, was, in fact, a return, or rather, an escape back to the method of collective decision-making.[83] The king always discussed his decisions and asked for the opinions of advisors, and divination was a ritual to accomplish this purpose. In other words, any leader is a concrete embodiment of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of individual decision making.[84] This collective characteristic argues against the traditional image of eastern kings with

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79- Multābiltu Tablet 2-3:147.

80- Maul 2013: 94-100.

81- Koch 2005: 138 Multābiltu Tablet 3 A9̀.

82- Maul 2013: 98; Koch 2005: 277-278.

83- There is evidence to suggest that the city of Uruk had egalitarian characteristics in the fourth millennium BC, see Wengrow 2018: 32-35. Wengrow questions the extent of the leadership of the male figure in pictorial arts of the late fourth millennium BC. He states, "we cannot know whether his office was permanent and hereditary, or granted on a temporary basis by popular consent" (Wengrow 2015: 15).

84- The role of divination as a method of decision-making that helped decision makers to overcome the anxiety of heavy burden of responsibility has been discussed in Parsa Daneshmand's unpublished PhD dissertation "Ancient Mesopotamian Divination: Anxiety and Methods of Decision-Making" (Daneshmand 2019).

undisputed power. As David Wengrow points out Mesopotamian temples may not have had political power in the fourth millennium BC, and in the later periods, "autocratic institutions existed alongside civic assemblies, tribal councils, and other decision-making bodies whose influence was based on consensus and popular representation, rather than coercion or top-down control."[85] In his essay on "infrastructural power" in ancient Mesopotamia, Norman Yoffee argues that councils and assemblies established "the concept of a 'heterarchy of power' in Mesopotamia, which is a counternarrative to assertion of totalitarian power by kings and central governments."[86] Stefan Maul notes that this democratic aspect of Mesopotamian culture has been distorted by our modern biases of Greek democracy:[87]

> Der in unserer eigenen Kultur gepflegte Mythos vom Ursprung der Demokratie in der griechischen Polis verstellt allzuleicht die Einsicht, daß eine Kultur des Aushandelns nicht zwangsläufig an die Agora und an die uns vertrauten Formen und schon gar nicht an Aufklärung und Säkularisierung gebunden ist.

In consensus decision-making, the final result is based on unanimity and super-majority (yes/no) versus a very small number of dissenting opinions, and not on putting them to a vote. Of course, there are occasions when discussions come to loggerheads and there is strong opposition. These cases are treated by re-discussing the issue to the point where the largest number of participants agree with it. All this process is reflected in the way the diviner reads and interprets the signs. From the emic Mesopotamian perspective, the decision of the gods preceded its writing on the organs of the sacrificial animal. The omen texts and reports of actual extispicies indicate that the procedure of observing the features and achieving the final result conforms to the characteristics of consensus decision-making. If the analogy of the divine assembly and decision-making by consensus holds, the features observed on the liver should correspond to the opinions expressed by the gods; hence the rule of the final result on the basis of the excessive number of yes/no features. The Jokers, on the other hand, reflect a veto, which necessitates a consensus solution.

The main question of this essay is that if the method of rendering the final result does not follow mathematical rules, which seems certain, it should have been taken from a phenomenon, socially and culturally, well known to the people of Mesopotamia. The divine and human assembly had a long tradition in ancient Mesopotamia. The procedure of reaching a collective decision mentioned in the examples discussed in this paper corresponds to the characteristics of consensus decision-making. If all elements of consensus decision-making, including assemblies, ad hoc meetings, discussions, and opinions written on a tablet exist in the procedure of extispicies, which is the case, then one could expect to make an analogy between the technique of reaching a final decision in decision-making by consensus on the one hand, and the method of determining the final outcome in extispicy on the other.

85- Wengrow 2015: 16 and 17.
86- Yoffee 2016: 1053.
87- Maul 2013: 323.

Framing the Topic

↓

Open discussion

↓

Identifying Underlying concerns (Yes/No)

↓

Collaborative Proposal Development

↓

Choosing a Direction

↓

Synthetizing a Final Proposal

↓

Closure
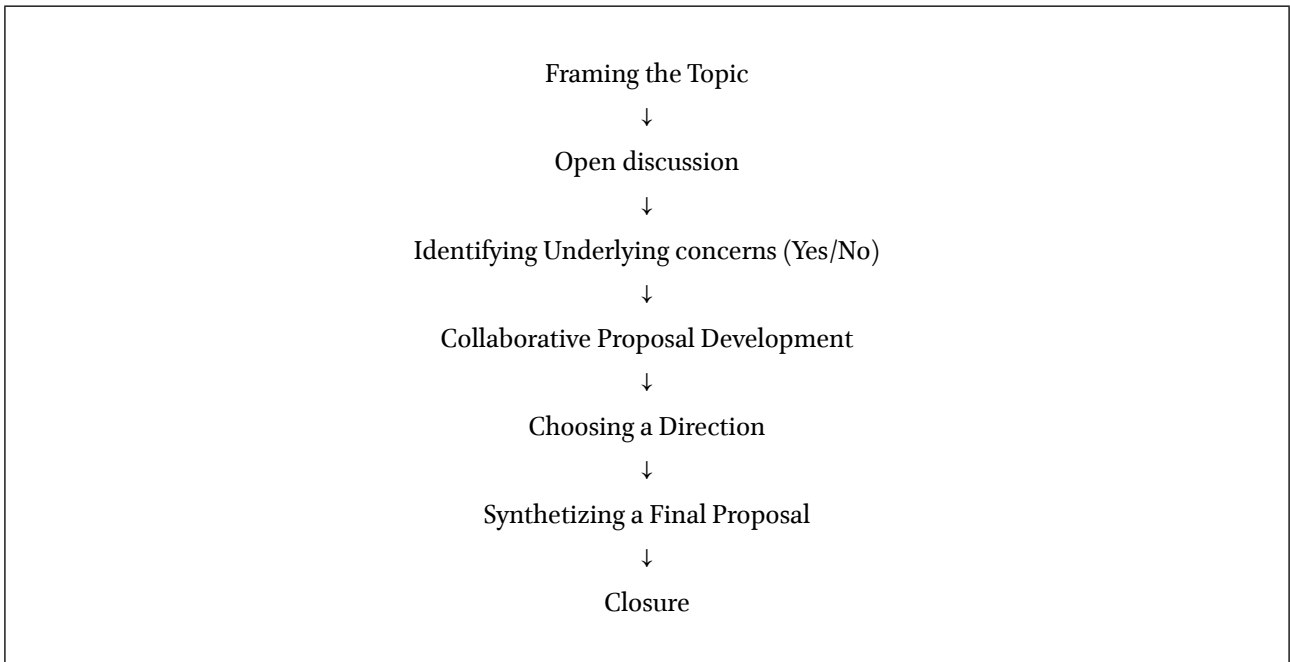
Figure 1: An Outline of the Consensus Decision-Making Process.[88]

Human Question / Decision

↓

Ritual: Invoking the gods - Offering the Sacrificial Animal

↓

Divine Assembly – Elaborating on the question

↓

Different Opinions (Yes/No; Block)

↓

Writing the details by the Divine Scribe on the Divine Tablet

↓

Mirroring the details on the Liver – Decoding the Message

↓

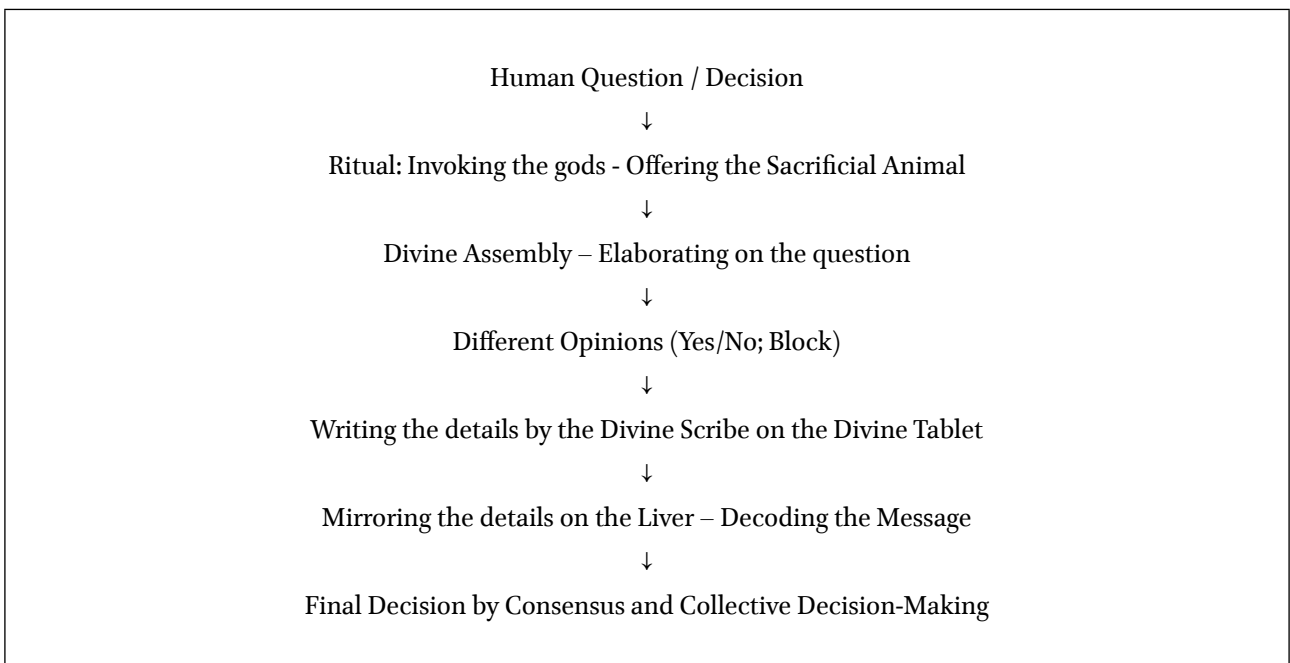Final Decision by Consensus and Collective Decision-Making

Figure 2: An Outline of the Extispicy Procedure

[88]- Based on Hartnett 2011: 37-38.

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Quotation as a Basis for Intertextuality in Sumerian Cult Lyric and City Laments

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Abstract

This short communication investigates the concept of intertextuality in Sumerian literary texts, by studying the use of quotations in cult lyric and so-called City Laments. These text genres exhibit a series of intertextual borrowings, and the aim of this study is to discuss some examples of the use of quotations in these texts, as one of the most basic and important features of intertextuality in Sumerian literature.

Introduction

Based on the ancient literary catalogues, the Sumerian cult lyric under consideration here can be divided into four different genres: balaĝ, eršemma, eršahuga and šu'ila.[1] In addition to these ancient text classifications, a fifth (modern) category of texts referred to as City Laments, has been included in this study. The different text types can be briefly described as follows:[2]

2- See Löhnert 2011.

TYPES	LENGTH	CONTENT
balaĝ	Hundreds of lines	Stories and rituals
eršemma	≤100 lines	Short myths, visions of destruction, praise poetry of deities
eršahuga	About 50 lines	Individual prayers
šu'ila	About 50 lines	Litanies and petitions to calm deities
City Laments	Hundreds of lines	Destruction and revival of Sumer cities

Due to their lengths, City Laments and balaĝ compositions are typically divided up into several distinct sections. These sections were referred to in Sumerian as giš-gi$_4$-gal$_2$ (composition division) and ki-ru-gu$_2$ (a technical term that indicates a specific song or a clearly defined section of a song).[3]

Since the 1980s, a handful of Assyriologists have identified the existence of quotations in Ancient Mesopotamian literature.[4] Erica Reiner proposed that Babylonian poetry used verbatim quotes which plays the same role as the quotes and allusions that punctuate modern poetry.[5] In her monograph entitled *Weapon of Words*, Selena Wisnom offers a literary study of three Babylonian poems, and demonstrates how each uses complex intertextual allusions to compete and contrast with their predecessors.[6] However, scholars are mainly focused on Babylonian literature, and our understanding of intertextuality in Sumerian literature remains inadequate.

The essential feature of intertextuality is "quotation." In the two passages below, Julia Kristeva describes the concept:[7]

> Le texte est donc une productivité, il est une permutation de textes, une intertextualité: dans l'espace d'un texte plusieurs énoncés, pris à d'autres textes, se croisent et se neutralisent.

> Tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte.

Thus, a text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations. Although all intertextuality theories are based on the quotation of texts, Kristeva argues that the concept of intertextuality is based on pan-textualism.[8] The words *texte*, *autre texte* or citation have very broad meanings in Kristeva's study. The *texte*, she states, can refer to literature, but initially it refers to a process of meaning production. The *autre texte*, she believes, can refer to another literary text, but it may also refer to all social and historical practices. So any symbolic system or cultural phenomenon (social practice) can be regarded as *texte*.[9] For social historicality, Roland Barthes argues that the intertextuality brings a social volume to literature theory.[10] In other words, the flat text gains volume through intertextuality, centered on the generalized quotation.

3- See Green 1975: 284-286.

4- Seri 2014: 89.

5- Reiner 1985: 33.

6- Wisnom 2019: 1.

7- Kristeva 1970: 12 and 16.

8- Walther Mitchell (1982: 617) described pan-texualism as a strategy that "reads the entire fabric of nature and culture as a network of signs."

9- Qin 2006: 17.

10- Barthes 1994: 1683.

Example of Citations

Potsherd (šika)

The following two sentences are attested in the Lament of Ur (henceforth LU),[11] and the text Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana (henceforth EaE):[12]

uĝ₃-bi šika ku₅-da nu-me-a bar-ba ba-e-si
It's people, (though) not potsherds, (but) littered outside.

iri-ĝu₁₀ dul he₂-a ĝe₂₆-e šika-bi ḫe₂-me-en
If my city becomes a ruin mound, then I will be a potsherd of it.

LU 120 describes a scene of a "storm" that destroys the city. EaE 133 is an emphatic reply of En-suhgir-ana to the messenger of Enmerkar, telling him that he shall never surrender, even if the city falls into potsherds. It is obvious that there is a tradition in using the image of potsherds as a euphemism for dying people, similar to how the metaphors for storm and flood stands for enemy.[13] It is possible that EaE was composed, though probably not written down, during the Ur III period, slightly earlier than LU.[14] Thus, it is possible that the šika metaphor used by the former text may have influenced the latter one. Of course, another possibility, although impossible to prove, would be that the metaphor was created in a time predating both these texts, and that the first occurrence of the metaphor has never been recovered Nevertheless, it may also be worthwhile to try to identify texts which is later than both our texts, and to see if the metaphor survived into later periods. In some later Akkadian praise poetry, potsherds were used to reference the characteristic features of abandoned city-mounds or the netherworld:[15]

ša ašar ḫaṣbate la iqabbû anâku

I am the one whom one does not mention at the place of potsherds.

To offer another example, Nili Samet compared the texts of LU and the Book of Lamentation, and found a handful of similar texts, in which there were some thematic and phraseological parallels.[16] For instance, the Book of Lamentations uses the image of potsherds as a metaphor for dying people:[17]

The precious children of Zion: Once valued as gold—Alas, they are accounted for as earthen pots, Work of a potter's hands!

11- See *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (= *ETCSL*) 2.2.2 (LU, line 210; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.2.2).

12- *ETCSL* 1.8.2.4 (EaE, line 133; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.4).

13- See Zhang 2020: 225.

14- Some scholar assume that these two texts were contemporary (e.g. Vanstiphout 2003: 1).

15- Meier 1941: 244.

16- Samet 2015.

17- See *Biblica, the International Bible Society* Lamentations 4:2; https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/lamentations/4/.

Moreover, the Book of Lamentations was composed one thousand years later, when the Sumerian City Laments had been erased from the memory of people. However, these two texts tend to use the same method of expression. Roland Barthes argues that text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture.[18] With this in mind, I suggest that this would allude to a literary tradition in the ancient Near East, and that the metaphor of the potsherd should be understood as a manifestation of this tradition.

Musical Instruments (šem-ala-tigi)

Another example is reference of musical instrument, which comes from LU[19] and the Gudea cylinders:[20]

šem$_3$ ^{kuš}**a$_2$-la$_2$** ni$_3$ ša$_3$ hul$_2$-le-da **tigi$_2$**-a nu-mu-ra-an-du$_{12}$-uš
They are no longer playing for you the šem and **ala** drums that gladden the heart, nor the **tigi**.

ušumgal-kalam-ma **ti-gi$_4$**-a mu-gub **a$_2$-la$_2$** u$_4$-dam šeg$_{12}$ mu-na-ab-gi$_4$
ušumgalkalama was accompanied by **tigi** drums, and **ala** drums roared for him like a storm.

Line 355 of the LU is part of the eighth verse/section (ki-ru-gu$_2$) of the composition. This verse mainly focuses on convincing the goddess Ningal to return to Ur, and the writer describes the various losses suffered by the city to make the severity and sadness of the events more vivid. The passage in the Gudea cylinders offers the reverse scenario. According to this text, the purpose of the instrument performance is to express strong positive emotions, to enhance and emphasize the rites of Gudea.

The word šem usually refers to a drum accompanying the gala singer in laments.[21] Francis Galpin recognized ala as a "big drum."[22] Tigi is probably a general name for a group of instruments,[23] and the word is typically used in expressions conveying positive emotions, like joy and celebrations.[24] Moreover, Dahlia Shehata found that the tigi, šem, and ala always appear together in the themes related to praise and sacrifice.[25] As I mentioned before, the *autre texte* can refer to another text, but it also refers to all social and historical practices. Any symbolic system or cultural phenomenon can be regarded as "text," and the process of intertextuality can be traced in the above examples.

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18- Barthes 1977: 146.

19- *ETCSL* 2.2.2 (LU, line 355; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.2.2) .

20- Edzard 1997: 98.

21- Gabbay 2007: 70.

22- Galpin 1937: 6-7.

23- See *ETCSL* 2.4.2.01 (Šulgi A, line 81; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.4.2.01): nar-ĝu$_{10}$ tigi 7-e šir$_3$-re-eš ḫa-ma-an-ne-eš "My singers praised me with songs accompanied by seven tigi drums."

24- See *ETCSL* 4.13.14 (Nanna N, lines 22-24; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.13.14): ki-sa$_2$-al ma-ḫe ninda ba-ĝa$_2$-ra-zu ti-gi ni$_5$ du-ge si ḫa-pa$_3$-ne-sa$_2$ um-mi an-na ti-gi mu-ra-an-du "The sweet-sounding tigi instruments are arranged in the majestic forecourt where your food-offerings are presented. In the heavenly assembly, the tigi instruments resound for you."

25- Shehata 2014: 104-105.

The Order of Cities

A balaĝ dated to the Old Babylonian period offers a short list of cities in central and southern Mesopotamia:[26]

uru$_2$-zu **nibru**^{ki} / še-eb-e$_2$-kur-ra / ki-ur$_3$ ki-gal / eš$_3$ e$_2$-nam-ti-la
še-eb-**zimbir**^{ki} / eš$_3$ e$_2$-babbar-ru$_3$
še-eb-**tin-tir**^{ki} / še-eb-e$_2$-sag-il$_2$-la
še-eb-**barsip**^{ki} / še-eb-e$_2$-zi-da

Your city **Nippur**! The brick work of the Ekur! The Kiur, the great place! The shrine Enamtila! The brickwork of **Sippar**! The shrine Ebabbar! The brickwork of **Babylon**! The brickwork of Esagila! The brickwork of **Borsippa**! The brickwork of Ezida!

Mark Cohen has interpreted the first line in the text as its title: u$_4$-dam ki am$_3$ us$_2$ "It touches the earth like a storm." In similar texts, the order of cities follows two governing principles: religion and geography. Because of Nippur's status as a religious center, it appears on the first line. The remaining cities are broadly arranged in geographical order, from north to south.[27]

   Listing cities in this way is not limited to balaĝ compositions, and in the first verse of LU, we encounter the following list of cities, organized according to the same principles (the order of cities is Nippur > Keš > Isin > Uruk > Ur):[28]

u$_3$-mu-un kur-kur-ra-ke$_4$ muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ ^{d}mu-ul-lil$_2$-le eš$_3$-e **nibru**^{ki}-a muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ dam-a-ni ^{d}nin-lil$_2$-le muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na-lil$_2$-e \\ ^{d}nin-lil$_2$-le e$_2$-bi ki-ur$_3$-ra muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-le
nin **keš$_3$**^{ki}-a-ke$_4$ muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ ga-ša-an-maḫ-e e$_2$-bi keš$_3$^{ki}-a muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-le
mu-lu **i$_3$-si-in**^{ki}-na-ke$_4$ muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ ga-ša-an-i$_3$-si-in^{ki}-na-ke$_4$ eš$_3$ e$_2$-gal-maḫ-a-muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na-lil$_2$-e
nin ki-**unug**^{ki}-ga-ke$_4$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na-lil$_2$-e \\ ga-ša-an-na e$_2$-bi unug^{ki}-ga muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e
^{d}nanna **uri$_2$**^{ki}-ma muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ ^{d}suen-e e$_2$-kiš-nu-ĝal$_2$-la muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na-lil$_2$-e \\ dam-a-ni ga-ša-an-gal-e muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na-lil$_2$-e \\ ga-ša-an-gal-e agrun-ku$_3$-ga-na muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e
am **uru$_2$-ze$_2$-ba**^{ki}-ke$_4$ muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e \\ ^{d}am-an-ki-ke$_4$ e$_2$-bi uru$_2$-ze$_2$-ba^{ki}-ke$_4$ muš$_3$ mi-ni-in-ga amaš-a-na lil$_2$-e

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26- Cohen 1988: 129.
27- Wilcke 1972: 43.
28- For an English translation, see *ETCSL* 2.2.2 (LU, line 3–18; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.2.2); or Samet 2014: 55.
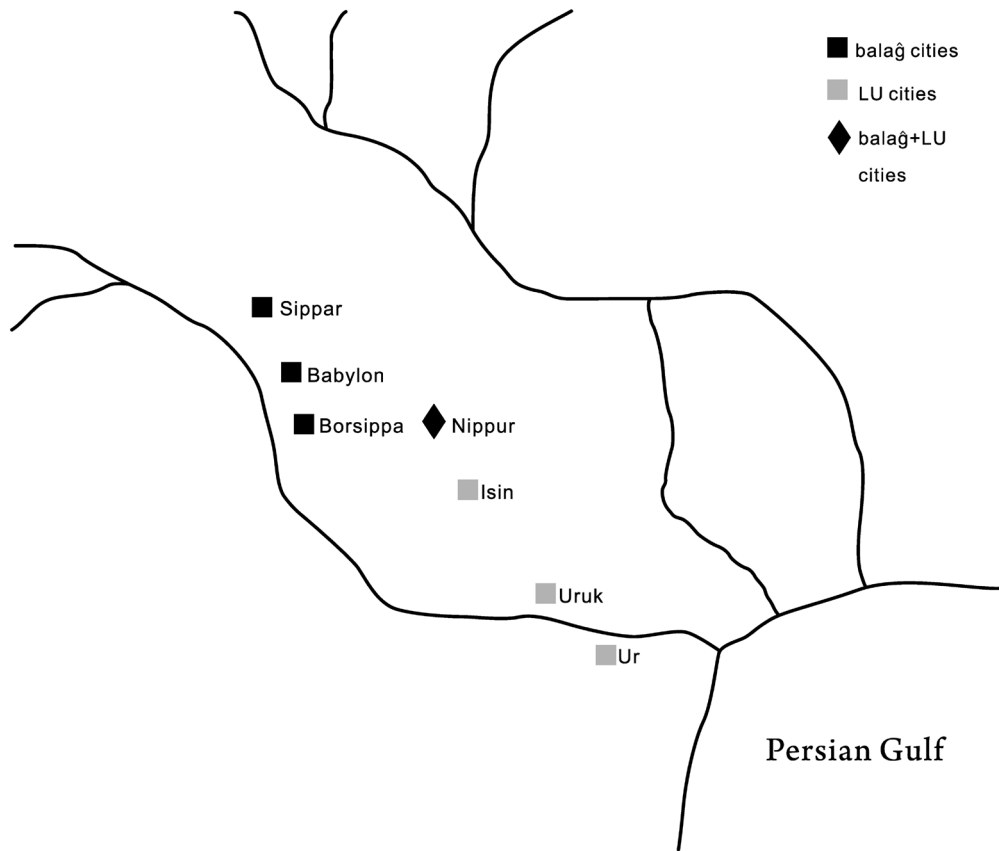
Map of southern Mesopotamia with the cities in two texts (the location of ancient Keš listed in LU remains uncertain)

In both texts, Nippur is listed in the first line, reflecting the city's importance as a religious and cultic center. Other cities are in both texts arranged according to their geographical location from north to south. The texts provide an example of a type of intertextuality that extends over multiple lines, and offer a hint at the implementation of more universal organizational and logical principles across different Sumerian text genres.

Idioms of chaos (*out of order*)

In Sumerian City Laments like "u$_2$ ḫul mu$_2$-mu$_2$-de$_3$," we encounter many idioms describing disaster, chaos, and destruction. Good examples are found in the Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur (henceforth LSU)[29] and the LU:[30]

> ^{e_2}tur$_3$-ra i$_3$ gara$_2$ nu-ak-de$_3$ šurum **ki nu-tag-e-de$_3$**
> That butter and cheese not be made in the cattle pen, **that dung not be laid on the ground.**

> **ku$_3$**-ĝu$_{10}$ lu$_2$ ku$_3$ **nu-zu**-ne šu-bi ḫa-ba-da-ab-si
> Men **ignorant of silver** have filled their hands with my silver.

29- Michalowski 1989: 39.

30- *ETCSL* 2.2.2 (LU, line 280; https://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.2.2) .

Similar examples can also be attested from incantations and related texts:[31]

> a-ba ᵈnanše-kam / **ku**₃ ᵈinanna-kam / še₃-**zu edin-na-kam** / edin-na lu₂ gu₃-di de₃-a an-ne₂ sag il₂-la / gir₃-pad-ra₂
> The sea belongs to Nanše, silver belongs to Inanna, your excrement belongs to the steppe. In the steppe a man (was) shouting, raising his head to the sky. Bone!

The last example is presumably a charm incantation intended to heal a broken bone. The incantation offers an image of a man crying out and turning to heaven for help, and it is possible that the incantation was originally performed by the city lamentation singer, on behalf of the injured man. In all these texts, the singer would have prayed for the return of the deity, describing a scene of chaos and despair in the abandoned city. The texts demonstrate similar concepts of social historicality of intertextuality, with the silver belonging to the god, and the dung belonging to the steppe (as fertile soil).

The social and historical characteristics of intertextuality are called *idéologème* by Kristeva. She thinks that the *idéologème* can connect a specific structure with other structures in an intertextual relationship. The relationship develops along with the progress of the text, and provides the text with social and historical coordinates.[32] In other words, the *idéologème* of the above text is the direct application of the intertextual function. It introduces the social and historical value of the external text into the laments.

Conclusion.

The forms of intertextuality as it is expressed in Sumerian literature is relatively clear, and it is easy to find the echoes of a particular plot in various works, across different genres. The core behind these echoes relate to the experiences of the scribe, and his knowledge of the society in which he lived, including its geography, religion and administration.

Establishing a multidirectional and multileveled text network will contribute to the understanding of literary texts. Analyzing the interrelationship between Sumerian lamentation texts and relationship with other texts can open a new way for understanding different models of intertextuality in the Mesopotamia written tradition. Quotation is only one layer of intertextuality, and there are many different intertextual approaches. By linking different texts and the social history of different periods, we can bring volume to these texts, and present them in a multi-dimensional fashion.

31- George 2016: 139.
32- Kristeva 1968: 312.

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The King's Spear: A Note on Bronze Weapons and Weapons Manufacturing in the Ur III Period

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Abstract

This paper focuses on three texts from Ur dated to the 15th year of Ibbi-Suen's reign. It investigates the production of a bronze weapon associated with the king (^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar), enhancing our understanding of the metallurgical technology of the Ur III period. The study discusses the raw materials, the forging process, and the process of recycling the metals used in the weapon. The texts suggest a possible standardization of the production of bronze weapons by the Sumerians, while the recycling of bronze fragments reflects the specialization of the craftsmanship during the Ur III period.

Introduction

The Third Dynasty of Ur (ca. 2112-2004 BC, commonly abbreviated as Ur III) was the last unified dynasty established by the Sumerians. The Ur III dynasty is one of the most well-documented periods in ancient Mesopotamia, having produced at least 120,000 economic and administrative cuneiform tablets. Despite this impressive array of texts, much of the period remains obscure, such as the state's military history. As evidenced by royal inscriptions and year formulae, military conflicts were a regular part of life during the Ur III period, but few details, about this history, have been found in the administrative record.[1]

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[1] For an overview study of military elements in Ur III, see recently Patterson 2018, with additional references; see also Maeda 1992; Lafont 2009; Garfinkle 2014 and 2021.

There are many weapons that have been recorded from the Ur III period.[2] This focuses on a special kind of weapon typically described by the postpositive attributive "šu-lugal".[3] This expression can be translated as "(in) the hand (of) the king," possibly referring to a weapon that belonged to the king. An alternative interpretation would be "(for the) royal hand," meaning that it was independent from the actual device. This would possibly mean that it was a measurement of "royal" quality.[4] Both interpretations would associate the weapon with the king, either as a weapon that the king used or owned or as a weapon made to his specifications.

There are only eight texts that contain this modifier in reference to the king's weapons. They provide us with the following forms:[5]

1. gag-si-sa$_2$ šu-lugal
2. gag-si-sa$_2$ ^{ğeš}nu-ha-an-ni šu-lugal
3. gag-su-um im-ba šu-lugal
4. gag-su-um im-ba ^{ğeš}nu-ha-an-ni šu-lugal
5. gag zu$_2$ zabar šu-lugal
6. šukur zabar 15 še šu-lugal

Based on an analysis of the existing text content, it seems likely that some weapons of the types listed above would have been associated with the king, even when not followed by the term "šu-lugal." Three texts from Ur, all dated to Ibbi-Suen's 15th year as king, record the production process of one kind of weapon that may be classified as "šu-lugal." The weapon is referred to as "^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar" in these texts, which we may translate here as "standard bronze spearhead."[6]

Bronze for Weapon Construction
The role of copper in alloys holds an important place in the history of metallurgy. The first evidence for human exploitation of copper was found at the Neolithic site of Çayönü Tepesi in south-eastern Turkey (ca. 7250-6750 BC).[7] However, it was not until the fourth millennium BC that metal production began in earnest. From the fourth millennium BC to the late Bonze Age, copper arsenic alloys were produced and used throughout the Near East.[8] Since tin is found in limited quantities in nature, especially in the Near East, tin-copper alloys (bronzes) are commonly believed to be synthetic.[9] Though tin bronzes were introduced during the middle of the third millennium (ED III, 2600-2300 BC), it was not until 1500 BC that

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2- For the study of various weapons in ancient Mesopotamia, see e.g. Schrakamp 2009 and 2011.

3- Note here giš-ŠU.LUGAL = MIN(*ni-mit-tu$_2$*) ša$_2$ šar-ru (*MSL* 6:127). For the meaning of *nemettu* as (among other things) some type of (divine/ritual) staff, see *CAD* N²: 164.

4- Paoletti 2012: 159.

5- *PDT* 1 0635 (*CDLI*: P126051), *AUCT* 1 321 (*CDLI*: P103166), *AUCT* 1 696 (*CDLI*: P103541), *TIM* 06 35 (*CDLI*: P134040), *TIM* 06 37 (*CDLI*: P134042), *TIM* 06 40 (*CDLI*: P134045), *TIM* 06 42 (*CDLI*: P134047), *TIM* 06 43 (*CDLI*: P134048).

6- The Sumerian word "gag" translates as "nail" and, by extension "arrowhead". However, considering the considerable weight of this weapon (see below), as the translation "spearhead," or simply "spear", may be more appropriate in our context.

7- Scott 2002: 4.

8- As it is impossible to determine whether an arsenical copper is natural or artificial, the term "arsenical bronze" is avoided in favor of the term "alloy" (see Moorey 1994: 242).

9- Much attention has been paid to the sources of tin in ancient Mesopotamia (e.g. Dayton 1973; Muhly & Wertime 1973; Crawford 1974; Muhly 1985).

tin bronze replaced copper arsenic alloys completely.[10]

Though both Sumerian and Akkadian have a varied terminology to distinguish different qualities of copper, they cannot be identified with any precision among archaeological materials.[11] Textual information on the copper and bronze industries becomes more widespread from the Ur III period onwards. However, the written evidence from this period is almost entirely limited to the city Ur and the end of Ibbi-Suen's reign.[12] Direct, detailed records of the bronze smelting process during the Ur III period are rare. Therefore, any records offering insights into the production of bronze objects are very important.

UET 3 486 (*CDLI*: P136808), Ibbi-Suen 15/v/1

1.	4(diš) ma-na 5(diš) gin$_2$ uruda	4 mina (and) 5 gin$_2$ copper, (= 2,042 grams)
2.	^{uruda}šen sumun kal-kal-ge-de$_3$	is fully melted in a copper vessel,
3.	4(diš) gin$_2$ igi-3(diš)-gal$_2$ nagga	4 (and) 1/3 gin$_2$ tin, (= 36 grams)
4.	mu ^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar-še$_3$	for the sake of the standard bronze spearhead.
5.	ki dingir-su-ra-bi$_2$-ta	From DINGIR-su-ra-bi,
6.	a-hu-wa-qar	Ahu-waqar,
7.	šu ba-ti	received.
8.	iti ki-siki-^{d}nin-a-zu u$_4$ 1(diš) ba-zal	(In) the month of ki-siki-Ninazu, on the 1st day. (= Ur month 5)
9.	mu …	The year … … IS 15

It is possible that copper smelting occurred in crucibles in Ur and other southern Mesopotamian sites. A significant number of crucibles have been unearthed in many sites across Iran throughout the fourth and third millenniums BC.[13] The copper vessel recorded in the second line of our text may be one such crucible.

The copper to tin ratio in the text is about 56.5 to 1, which would mean that the bronze contained roughly 1.7% tin. The use of bronze with this copper-to-tin ratio for forging weapons may have caused some confusion among scholars, as the amount of tin is too low to have any meaningful impact on the alloy. Modern bronze typically has a copper-to-tin ratio of 9:1, but in antiquity the proportions varied, possibly due to the difficulties involved in controlling the exact ratio.[14] According to P. R. S. Moorey, "both with tin and arsenic the lower limits for an international alloy are arbitrarily set, usually at about 2 or 3 per cent for tin (though much lower figures may reasonably be argued)."[15] Other scholars have suggested that tin concentration ranges from low (~2 wt. %) to high (> 10 wt. %).[16] As demonstrated by Henri Limet,

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10- For an overview of the Mesopotamian bronze metallurgy, see De Ryck, *et al.* 2005.

11- Reiter 1997: 149-204 and 288-343.

12- In addition to bronze-making, the texts from archives in Ur offer detailed information on various (precious) metals and metal objects, as well as the overall administrative structure of the craft industry in Ur III period (see in particular Limet 1960; Loding 1974; Neumann 1987; for the two archives in Ur during Ibbi-Suen, see also Widell 2003: 98-101).

13- For more on the crucible, see Tylecote 1992: 20-21; see also Moorey 1994: 243, with further references.

14- Moorey 1994: 251.

15- Moorey 1994: 242; see also Moorey 1972 and 1982.

16- De Ryck, *et al.* 2005: 267.

the tin levels in the bronze found in a craft archive at Ur ranged from 9% up to 17%.[17] On the other hand, laboratory testing of two bronze chisels from the Ur III period revealed very low tin levels (1.7% and 0.3% respectively).[18]

The low amounts of tin in the copper, reported in the textual documentation, can perhaps be explained by the fact that the products were often manufactured from scrap metal that already contained tin.[19] Nevertheless, it is still true that the low tin levels in the bronze, reported in our text, would have produced weapons of very low quality. This can be compared to another text from Ur, also from Ibbi-Suen's 15th year, which records the production of a bronze knife for killing sheep (gir$_2$-udu-uš$_2$). It had a copper-tin ratio of 7 to 1.[20] Thus, it may be that the weapon listed in *UET* 3 486 was not intended for use at all; perhaps it was intended for a ceremonial or cultic role.[21]

Weapon Manufacturing Technology

The production of bronze as a raw material and the manufacturing of weapons are two separate processes. Commercial transactions related to bronze as a raw material are rarely found in the texts. Therefore, it seems that bronze was often prepared on the spot from copper and tin by craftsmen and then distributed by court officials to palace artisans to produce tools and weapons.[22] Our textual record of the manufacturing process of the "standard bronze spearhead" offers some interesting information.

<div align="center">

UET 3 447 (*CDLI*: P136769), Ibbi-Suen 15/iii/7[23]

</div>

1.	1(u) 2(diš) 2/3(diš) ma-na 5(diš) gin$_2$ zabar	12 2/3 mina (and) 5 gin$_2$ bronze, (= 6,375 grams)
2.	^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ 3(diš) ma-na	3 mina (for) standard bronze spearhead, (= 1,500 grams)
3.	a-la$_2$-bi 1(diš) ma-na bar-bi 5/6(diš) ma-na	1 mina (for) its handle, 5/6 mina (for) its "tail/butt", (= 500 grams / 417 grams)
4.	^{uruda}gag-si-sa$_2$ 2(diš) 1/2(diš) ma-na a-la$_2$-bi	2 1/2 mina (for) bronze standard spearhead, its handle, (= 1,250 grams)
5.	5/6(diš) ma-na bar-bi 2/3(diš)^{ša} 1(diš)	(is) 5/6 mina, 2/3 mina (for) its "tail/butt" for 1 (object), (= 417 grams / 333 grams)
6.	u$_3$ ^{uruda}<gag>-si-sa$_2$ 2(diš) ma-na a-la$_2$-bi	and 2 mina (for) the standard bronze spearhead, its handle, (= 1,000 grams)
7.	2/3(diš)^{ša} bar-bi 1/2(diš) ma-na 1(diš)-še$_3$	(is) 2/3 mina, 1/2 mina for its "tail/butt" for 1 (object). (= 333 grams / 250 grams)

17- Limet 1960: 58.

18- Levey & Burke 1959; Levey 1959: 196-211.

19- For a more thorough discussions on this topic, see Tylecote 1992: 18.

20- *UET* 3 429 (*CDLI*: P136751).

21- Note *TIM* 06 37 (*CDLI*: P134042) from the reign of Šulgi, where 14 gag-si-sa$_2$ šu-lugal are listed with various other objects as nig$_2$ pi-lu$_5$-da, indicating a cultic function of the weapons (Sallaberger 1995: 20; for an edition of the text, see Paoletti 2014: 527).

22- Moorey 1994: 245, with additional references.

23- Note the identical *UET* 3 759 (CDLI: P137083), dated 10 days later than our text.

8.	ki ur-gu$_2$-edin-na-ta	From Ur-guedinna,
9.	a-hu-wa-qar	Ahu-waqar,
10.	šu ba-ti	received.
11.	iti ses-da-gu$_7$ u$_4$ 7(diš) ba-zal	(In) the month of eating piglets, on the 7th day. (= Ur month 3)
12.	mu ...	The year ... ... IS 15

One tentative possibility, would be to understand a-la$_2$-bi as "its handle," and bar-bi as "its tail/butt." This interpretation of the terms would perhaps find some support in the recovered spearheads and reconstruction of the complete spear from the Royal Cemetery of Ur. The spear's "head" and "tail/butt" were made from metal, and metal was also used for reinforcement and decoration on the surface of the wooden rod, the "handle."[24]

Fig. 1. Spearheads and the "tail/butt" from the Royal Cemetery of Ur (ca. 2600 BC).[25]

24- For the archaeological report of the cemetery, see Woolley 1934.

25- From Woolley 1928:15.

Fig. 2. Reconstruction of a spear from the Royal Cemetery of Ur (ca. 2600 BC). ©The Trustees of the British Museum

It is interesting to note that the ratio between the head and the handle is 3 to 1, whereas the "tail" (bar-bi) equals the weight of the handle minus 10 gin_2. This seems to indicate that technical standards were applied in the forging of these weapons. These fixed technical standards suggest, that the Sumerians may have practiced some degree of standardization in metal smelting and forging during the Ur III period.

UET 3 447	Head (weight)	Handle (weight)	"Tail" (weight)
Lines 2-3	180 gin_2	60 gin_2	50 gin_2
Lines 4-5	150 gin_2	50 gin_2	40 gin_2
Lines 6-7	120 gin_2	40 gin_2	30 gin_2

Finally, if we compare the weight of the raw material with the weight of the forged weapons, we can see that the bronze listed as a raw material in the first line weighs 765 gin_2, (6,375 grams), whereas the total weight of the different parts added together (lines 2-3, 4-5, 6-7) is 720 gin_2 (6,000 grams). In other words, 45 gin_2 (375 grams) of bronze disappeared during the production. This may have been lost in the heat treatment. A certain amount of weight is lost when metals are smelted. This can be caused by various factors, such as vaporization or residual metal on the smelting vessel. According to the calculations based on this text, the raw material lost in the forging process was about 5.9% of the total.

The final point of concern is the actual weight of these weapons. These weapons are so heavy that they could never have been fired from a bow. This is why "[uruda]gag-si-sa$_2$ zabar" is translated as "standard bronze spearhead" rather than as "standard bronze arrowhead" in this study.[26]

26- For other contexts where the translation of gag as "arrowhead" may be more appropriate, see Paoletti 2012: 157.

Recycling Bronze Fragments

Our final text *UET* 3 450 appears to reference the process of recycling bronze scrap to make new weapons.[27] The text records the recycled slag used for the spearheads, but does not include the new raw materials that would have to be added in the production process. As a relatively complete and routine metallurgical process, there is significant documentation of re-manufacturing metals during the Ur III period.[28] The recycling of tin bronze during the third millennium BC, has also been evidenced from several sites in Mesopotamia: the low concentration of tin in the copper arsenic alloys of Tell Beydar (ED III); at Susa, the tin concentration in the copper arsenic alloys increases simultaneously with the increased use of tin in bronze.[29]

<p align="center">*UET* 3 450 (*CDLI*: P136772), Ibbi-Suen 15/iii/17</p>

1.	3(diš) gin_2 su_3-he_2	3 gin_2 bronze slag, (= 25 grams)
2.	mu zabar ^{uruda}gag-si-sa_2 3(diš)-$še_3$	for the sake of 3 standard bronze spearheads.
3.	ki dingir-su-ra-bi_2-ta	From DINGIR-su-ra-bi,
4.	a-hu-wa-qar	Ahu-waqar,
5.	šu ba-ti	received.
6.	iti ses-da-gu_7 u_4 1(u) 7(diš) ba-zal	(In) the month of eating piglets, on the 17th day. (= Ur month 3)
7.	mu ...	The year ... ... IS 15

As for the three officials mentioned in these texts, Ahu-waqar, with the title of "šabra," was the well-known overseer of the institution. He acted as a supervisor for every phase of the operation.[30] There is no mention of DINGIR-su-ra-bi (IS 15/ii-IS 16/viii) or Ur-guedinna (IS 15/i-IS 23/xii) in the lists of workers in the overall bureaucratic system. They may just have operated as suppliers of raw materials.[31]

Conclusions

This article, has argued that the Sumerians of the Ur III period had relatively mature and standardized technologies, as well as a sophisticated management system for smelting bronze raw materials, forging bronze weapons, and recycling bronze fragments. In response, the Sumerians of this period kept parts of different materials in a modular and specialized form of preservation. All in all, the above research suggests a deeper understanding of Sumerian metallurgical technology and weapon manufacturing during the Ur III period.

27- Considering that *UET* 3 450 and *UET* 3 759 are dated to the same day (Ibbi-Suen 15/iii/17), it is possible that the bronze fragments recorded in *UET* 3 450 came from the forging activity recorded in text *UET* 3 759.

28- Limet 1960: 45 and 145.

29- De Ryck, *et al.* 2005: 267.

30- Loding 1974: 18.

31- For the worker lists in Ur, see Loding 1974: 20-26 and 197-225; for the organization and administration of craft in Ur, see Loding 1974: 17-20; Neumann 1987: 75-86.

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Reviews

Mas, Juliette & Notizia, Palmiro (eds.). *Working at Home in the Ancient Near East*. Archaeopress Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology 7. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2020. Pp ii + 116, ISBN: 978-1-78969-591-5 / 978-1-78969-592-2 (eBook)

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The collection of papers under review consists of seven studies presented in 2016 at a workshop with the same (somewhat foreboding) title, at the 10th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE) in Vienna. The aim was to investigate "the socio-economic role played by non-institutional households in Mesopotamia during the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, and their interaction with the institutional economy" (p. 1). The ensuing book is edited by the Sumerologist Palmiro Notizia and the archaeologist Juliette Mas, whose work so far has focused on Upper Mesopotamia and Syria in the Bronze Age. With the exception of Paolo Brusasco's analysis of the domestic architecture in Old Babylonian Ur and Nippur (pp. 55-69), all contributions in the volume are based on archaeological and/or textual data from Upper Mesopotamia in the 3rd and 2nd millennia (4 studies), or on the analysis of Ur III textual data from the last century of the 3rd millennium in southern Mesopotamia (2 studies).

The so-called "Gelb-Diakonoff controversy" focused on the economic and social contexts of labor and production in early Mesopotamia – a favorite topic among Assyriologists during the final decades of the 20th century – appears to have reached an *impasse* in more recent years, although the editors rightly observe a recent proliferation in workshops focused on investigating the nature of the Mesopotamian households

(pp. 6-7). However, the topic as such is far from exhausted, and the study under review, which encourages a new form of dialogue between philologists and near eastern archaeologists, represents a welcome and much-needed response to Robert McCormick Adams' call for a more interdisciplinary approach to the topic, with a greater emphasis on the study of material culture:[1]

> It will be a primary responsibility of future archaeologists, not Assyriologists, to discover the real scale as well as the details of these more differentiated patterns of socio-economic life, of which only hints will have found their way into cuneiform texts through the myopic view of ancient scribes of their own hinterland.

The first contribution in the volume is a very useful overview by Laura Battini of the architectural and archaeological remains in ancient Nuzi, and how the data from the site may (or may not) help us reconstruct the domestic and palatial contexts of crafts production. Unfortunately, the architectural remains, as documented from the excavations of the site in the 1920s, do not clearly support (or contradict) the existence of crafts production in domestic contexts. According to Battini (p. 13), this absence of clear architectural evidence for domestic production is the result of the incomplete state of excavations (and excavation reports), and, at least to some degree, the insufficient comprehension among the archaeologists of the time of the evidence at hand. As pointed out by Battini, a few artefacts excavated in private houses, including whet stones and other hand tools (pp. 13-15), offer some glimpses into the work conducted within these structures, and more research is needed on this material. Nevertheless, the evidence presented by Battini remains rather underwhelming, and she concludes that very little evidence in the published reports suggest that specific craft activities took place in the private houses in the city (p. 13).[2]

Battini's assessment of the published data – and her somewhat negative conclusion overall – is entirely valid. Nevertheless, it would have been interesting to investigate further how/if the (admittedly very scant) architectural and archaeological data associated with the crafts production that has been recovered might enhance our understanding of the very rich data that we have on this topic from the ca. 5,000 cuneiform tablets from the city.[3] For example, although largely unpublished, the archaeologists of Nuzi did unearth a significant number of spindle whorls and loom weights (offering evidence that the vertical warp was used for weaving in Nuzi), and the majority of these finds appears to have been made in the private houses of the city.[4] These finds are interesting in light of the textual attestation of a group of female workers referred to as the "weavers of the thread" (*ušparātu ša gê*), which appear to have operated within the city's large households, seemingly outside of the administrative jurisdiction of the palace administration.[5] If the connection between the "weavers of the thread" and the loom weights and spindle whorls excavated in the private houses of the city has any merit, it would offer evidence supporting the notion that large scale textile production took place within the domestic quarters in the city. Of course, domestic craft production

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1- Adams 2007: §11.

2- Referencing Starr 1937: pl. 99-103, 116-127.

3- First studied in detail by Leo Oppenheim in 1939; see also Mayer 1978. More recent studies on production and labor in the Nuzi texts include Negri Scafa 2015 and Abrahami & Lion 2018.

4- Lion 2016: 365; with further references.

5- Abrahami 2014: 293-294; Abrahami & Lion 2018: 341.

does not constitute unambiguous evidence for independent crafts activities. Nevertheless, Jeanette Fincke has recently demonstrated that a wide range of work in Nuzi, including crafts activities, happened within the structural confines of the family household,[6] and any evidence of more organized crafts production taking place within the city's domestic/private quarters are important for our understanding of the social and economic contexts in which labor took place.

Alexander Pruß is basing his study on the organization of labor in ancient Nabada (Tell Beydar) on the ca. 220 administrative cuneiform texts that were discovered in the city in the 1990s and early 2000s.[7] It has been known for some time that these Pre-Sargonic texts (Early Jezirah IIIb, or ca. 2425-2340 BC), which primarily concern farming and grain management, labor and some aspects of animal husbandry, belong to a single archive that in all likelihood should be associated with the central administration of the city.[8] Several texts with allocation of rations offer evidence of a redistributive economy, listing different workers involved in agriculture and herding, as well as artisans and crafts workers, including "potters, millers, fullers, basket-weavers, leather workers, cartwrights, one sculptor, and possibly a seal-cutter" (p. 21).

According to Pruß (p. 20), the entire population of Nabada, or at least a very large percentage of it, were sustained through barley rations distributed by the central administration. This understanding of the organization of labor at Nabada goes back to a detailed analysis of the site's ration lists by Jason Ur and Walther Sallaberger, and their (reasonable) assumption that the total population of Nabada consisted of approximately 2,000 people.[9] In addition to the textual data, a large storage structure (possibly a granary), excavated on the edge of the central mound of the site, offers further support for a redistributive aspect of the economy of Nabada. On the other hand, several "family-sized" storage rooms in the city's domestic quarters suggest that not all households relied entirely on the collective/central management of agricultural reserves,[10] highlighting the importance of a more nuanced understanding of the city's economy. Indeed, and as noted by Pruß, different people in Nabada received different amounts of barley, with rations ranging from the usual "minimum wage" of 60 $sila_3$/month for the men (and 30 $sila_3$/month for the women/children), to 90 $sila_3$/month for the "sheep watchers" (ba-ri_2 udu), and as much as 120 $sila_3$/month for the "persons, bringing the wood(en implement)" (lu_2-geš-DU).[11] Assuming that even the lowest rations were able to sustain their recipients, the obvious problem with such diverse amounts of rations is to offer a reasonable explanation for what the more privileged and well-paid groups in Nabada were supposed to do with their surplus. The answer, of course, is that they would exchange the surplus for other products and services in the city. The fact is that people cannot survive on barley alone, and *any* group sustained by barley rations – no matter how

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6- Fincke 2015.

7- See Ismail et al. 1996; and Milano et al. 2004.

8- Sallaberger 1999: 397; see also Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 104.

9- Sallaberger & Ur 2004: 58-59; Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 103-104.

10- Hole 1999: 274; see also Paulette 2015: 64-69. According to Pruß (2020: 33), none of the excavated houses (which typically only measured around 40 m²) had the capacity to store enough grain to sustain its inhabitants for a whole year.

11- Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 94-95. Pruß further believes that the lu_2-geš-DU were allocated additional sustenance land (p. 20, referencing Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 94).

modest in size – will have to exchange a portion of the barley for other necessities of life.[12] Such exchange can only take place if there is demand for barley among the people with access to those necessities, which is difficult to envision in a socio-economic system assuming universal (or near universal) rations of barley.[13] After all, who would exchange anything for barley, in a society where the state already provides everyone with all the barley they need? With this in mind, it may be necessary to consider the possibility that the recovered/available ration and worker lists in Nabada count the same individuals more than once,[14] within a much smaller group of state employees (with the same individuals working for several/all of the five leading officials in the city). Alternatively (or additionally), it is possible that the barley rations in the texts simply refer to short-term compensations for regular/conscripted citizens, taking on temporary jobs during labor intense periods, such as the harvest or public construction projects. Such arrangements, whereby the state temporarily compels workers outside its immediate control to contribute their labor, are well known from southern Mesopotamia.[15] The nature of the main "professions" in Nabada remains uncertain, and it is possible that these generously compensated groups "bringing wood(en implements)" or "watching sheep" held temporary – and much needed – functions within the administration and economy of the city, rather than permanent occupations.[16] This interpretation might find some support in the curious fact that the overseers of work teams (perhaps permanent staff on regular incomes) received less barley than the workers under their supervision.[17] Martin Savage has recently demonstrated that unskilled female workers temporarily employed in construction work in Ur III Garshana received 3 sila$_3$ barley/day, a significantly more generous (pro-rata) compensation than offered to the city's permanent workforce.[18]

Juliette Mas is concerned with households and production in Upper Mesopotamia in the third millennium BC, where she distinguishes between production in non-urban and community controlled (private) households, typically built around patrilineal kinship groups, and state-controlled production taking place in larger households embedded in the bureaucracies of the major cities. While the textual evidence from major sites, such as Mari and Nabada, offers insights into the organization of the large urban households, we must rely on archaeological data for our reconstructions of the socio-economic contexts of production within the smaller, non-urban households (p. 37). To provide a more holistic picture

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12- Pruß is right that "the amount of grain distributed through the ration system was sufficient to cover the basic caloric needs of the recipients" (p. 20 n. 16; referencing Ur & Wilkinson 2008), but there is more to a sustainable diet than just calories. Anyone trying to survive on barley rations alone would experience the first symptoms of scurvy within a few months, and almost certain (and excruciating) death within a single year. While 2-3 raw onions/day might keep the scurvy away (just about...), humans also need essential fatty acids and complete proteins. For a more wholesome and sustainable diet in southern Mesopotamia in the late third millennium, we may turn to the Ur III state's provisions of its messengers, who typically received beer, bread, onions (or "soup"), oil, and (occasionally) mutton and/or fish, for additional proteins and fat (McNeil 1971, summarized by Pomponio 2013: 223-227; and Brunke 2013).

13- Hence Stanley Jevons, in his formative classic on the basic principles of exchange (1875: 3): "The first difficulty in barter is to find two persons whose disposable possessions mutually suit each other's wants."

14- We have to assume that the archaeologists of Nabada have only recovered a small fraction of the total number of ration- and worker lists that were produced by the city's central administration, in the same way as the 220 tablets in total almost certainly only represent a fraction of the city's archive as a whole.

15- Garfinkle 2010: 315.

16- Sallaberger & Pruß (2015: 94) have suggested that the lu$_2$-geš-DU may have served as plowmen (lu$_2$-geš-DU APIN), and it is reasonable to assume that the "sheep watchers" were engaged in livestock farming in the city.

17- Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 95.

18- Savage 2020: 231-234 (edition of CUSAS 3 324; *CDLI*: P329384).

of production in Upper Mesopotamia, Mas offers an analysis of the archaeological remains of what have been identified as workshops from 15 different Bronze Age sites in northern Syria, ranging from small hamlets to the provincial capitals of the area. Based on the data from these sites, Mas reconstructs two co-existing systems of production, taking place in both the urban and the rural settings. Production was either organized/controlled centrally through specialized workshops associated with the public institutions (e.g. Nabada),[19] or it occurred within the private houses in the settlements (e.g. Mari), and was for the most part coordinated outside the direct authority of the central administration, although any private groups involved in production would have maintained strong links to the state bureaucracy.

Mas presents a very interesting model for craft production in Upper Mesopotamia, that has important consequences for our overall understanding of the administrative and economic organization of cities and towns in the region. As pointed out by Mas (p. 36), the socio-economic systems of Upper Mesopotamia remain relatively poorly understood in comparison to the south, and her research successfully fills a gap in our knowledge of the region. Nevertheless, more data, from a wider range of sites, remains necessary before conclusions that are more definitive can be drawn regarding the social/economic contexts of craft production in Upper Mesopotamia. Future studies must separate between the actual data obtained from these various excavations, and the sometimes fanciful interpretations offered by the sites' archaeologists, whose willingness/reluctance (over the last century) to identify ancient workshops in the material culture is far from consistent. On page 42, Mas highlights the analytical complexities involved: several peculiar installations discovered in the temples of Nabada were originally interpreted as toilets by the excavators,[20] but later reinterpreted as "craft installations" (installation artisanales) by Jean-Claude Marguren. Based on their similarity to installations discovered in "Palais de la Ville II" in Mari, Marguren interpreted the Nabada structures as factory-temples, engaged in large-scale crafts production.[21] Other factors that have to be considered in archaeological studies of the socio-economic contexts of craft production include the overall scale of operations, as well as the precise nature of the craft activities. Not all activities are equal, and a loom for weaving textiles, or a small workshop for shoemaking, can easily be accommodated in a domestic building, but the same might not apply to a large-scale tannery, a metal workshop or a shipyard.

In his contribution to the volume, Paolo Brusasco offers an original and interesting interdisciplinary approach to spatial analysis of the domestic and commercial quarters excavated in Old Babylonian Nippur and Ur. In addition to the archaeological and textual data, Brusasco relies on environmental/social psychology, producing "sensorial maps" that emphasize "the flow of life" in the cities (p. 56). The article successfully demonstrates that by calculating/mapping zones of smell (good and bad), noise levels, light/darkness, as well as lines of sight, we can enhance our existing reconstructions of the various activities

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19- Note that the excavations at Nabada have focused on the acropolis, where private houses are entirely lacking, and it is generally assumed that only a minor portion of the domestic architecture in the so-called Upper City has been excavated to date (Sallaberger & Pruß 2015: 105-106).

20- See the detailed description of these benched temple toilets, complete with plumbing and screen walls, in e.g. Lebeau & Suleiman 2005.

21- Margueron 2014: 287-288; see also Margueron 2008. Another example (p. 40) of the uncertainties surrounding the interpretations of some of these structures is the "Maison aux installations artisanales," which has been interpreted as a workshop for dyeing textiles (Marguren 2007) or for the caulking of boats and carts (Sallaberger 2014), two seemingly very different types of crafts activities. For the bitumen caulking of boats in early Mesopotamia, see now Talib Mohammed Taher 2016: 69, with further references.

taking place in Mesopotamian cities.

In his article on the merchant (dam-gar$_3$) Ur-saga from Ur III Girsu, Steven Garfinkle presents a picture of a thriving market economy during the final century of the third millennium BC, with entrepreneurial "family firms" of merchants, maneuvering around competing households. As pointed out by Garfinkle (p. 71), the debate continues on the precise nature of the work conducted by the state's merchants, and not all Ur III scholars will agree with the picture presented here.[22] Garfinkle further notes that the reconstruction of this private side of the economic organization of the Ur III state is complicated by the fact that the numerous economic and administrative texts of the period were almost exclusively drawn up within the administrative contexts of the state's large and public institutions. Naturally, such texts will mainly concern administrative and economic matters relevant to the institutions that produced them (p. 72). Nevertheless, certain economic activities taking place outside the traditional boundaries of the large households, such as loan agreements and sales/purchase transactions, generate cuneiform records, which may throw some light on the non-institutional sector of the Ur III economy (pp. 72-73).

There can be little doubt that the early Mesopotamian creditors offering (interest-bearing) loans to their fellow citizens operated outside the institutional economy of the state, and the nature of these loan agreements show that the creditors were driven by an incentive to make profit. As an example of the private endeavors of the Ur III creditors, Garfinkle refers to the small archive of the Susa official Igibuni, which included 14 loan contracts, half of which were interest-free barley loans referred to as še ur$_5$-ra.[23] It is worthy to point out here that Igibuni was not a merchant in Susa. Based on his seal, we know that Igibuni was a scribe (dub-sar), although this may simply have been an honorary title. Of course, we know of several merchants who are attested acting as creditors, but as already noted by Garfinkle several years ago, the link between the loan industry and the office of the merchant in the Ur III is not immediately obvious.[24] Anyone with surplus capital could become a creditor, but the only way of becoming a merchant in the Ur III period was to be employed (or engaged) as one within the state administration. Nevertheless, we agree with Garfinkle that some kind of relationship in all probability existed between the merchants of the Ur III institutions and private economic activities, including loans.[25] However, the precise nature of this relationship remains unclear, and the fact remains that all merchants were engaged by the large public institutions, whose economic activities they sustained by securing a wide range of raw materials and other commodities.[26] This was the main responsibility of the merchants in the Ur III period, and concrete evidence for merchants acting as "facilitators of commerce" (p. 72) outside this professional capacity within the state bureaucracy remains rather scant.[27]

22- See e.g. Garfinkle 2010a: 192: "For some, the damgars were employees of the state, and this would imply that the state was responsible for determining their hierarchy. For others, including myself, the damgars were representatives of their own individual households whose professional responsibilities included a great deal of contact with the state."

23- De Graef 2015: 290. Note that the institutionally issued barley loans referred to as še ur$_5$-ra in the Ur III texts only rarely identify the individual creditors by name. When creditors of še ur$_5$-ra loans are mentioned by name, prosopographical analysis typically identify them as mid- to upper level official within the state bureaucracy (Notizia 2019: 275).

24- Garfinkle 2004: 24, n. 63; see also Widell 2008.

25- See e.g. Neumann 1999; Steinkeller 2004: 105-109.

26- Steinkeller 2004: 97-98. As argued by Garfinkle (2010b: 309-310), it is likely that merchants were organized in special offices in the Ur III cities, perhaps referred to as the "house of merchants" (e$_2$-dam-gar$_3$).

27- Cripps 2014: 206.

As a dam-gar$_3$ 1(u), "merchant (overseeing) 10 (merchants)," Lu-saga was an important and senior official in Girsu. From other studies by Garfinkle, we know that he was himself the son of a merchant, and that several of his sons were merchants in the city.[28] That kinship ties played an important role in the organizational structure of the Ur III merchants is well known among Ur III scholars. For example, many years ago, Hans Neumann demonstrated that (at least) three sons of the merchant Ur-Dumuzida, who worked in the Šara temple in Umma, followed their father's example, and became merchants in the city.[29] In fact, more than half a century ago, Robert Adams argued that the *entire* administration in the early Mesopotamian city-states was based on kinship affiliations.[30] An increasing number of prosopographical studies of the Ur III material, from a variety of official contexts, have since then appeared in support of Adam's proposition, showing that kin based succession of offices and responsibilities in the Ur III period does not, in itself, demonstrate independence from the state institutions.[31] Indeed, as the next article in the volume under review demonstrates (see e.g. p. 84-86 and n. 10), Ur III officials routinely worked together with their fathers, brothers and sons, and there can be no doubt that both public and private organizational structures in the Ur III state were shaped to, and even took advantage of, existing kinship ties in the society.

Palmiro Notizia is presenting a fascinating account of the long career, and the personal wealth/assets, of the high-ranking Girsu official Lugal-irida, who was in charge of the Ur III state's important textile mill in Guabba in the Lagaš province. While Notiza's contribution is focused on the multi-column text RTC 304 (*CDLI*: P128457), an inventory of Lugal-irida's various assets, his careful analysis of the overall organization of the textile mill in Guabba is excellent, and offers important insights into the hierarchical structure of a major provincial production center in the Ur III period. This analysis includes a detailed and very useful prosopographical study of Lugal-irida and his family, and we learn that Lugal-irida quickly advanced from being the "overseer of the weavers" (ugula uš-bar) to the important "superintendent of the weavers" (nu-banda uš-bar), a position he held for over two decades, until his retirement (or death) from the office at the end of Amar-Suen 5. In this capacity, Lugal-irida was coordinating the work of anywhere between 17 and 27 "overseers" (p. 85), several of which were his own sons, and Notizia estimates the total number of people involved in the textile industry in Guabba (and its nearby satellites Nigin and Kinunir) to 10,000 individuals, with more than 6,200 female weavers in Guabba alone (pp. 86-87).

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28- Garfinkle 2010a: 192-193, n. 23 and 2010b: 309, n. 8.

29- Neumann 1993.

30- Adams 1966: 85-86. Also note David Schloen's now famous "patrimonial household model," which, based on the theories of Max Weber, argues that the patriarchal household served as the universal paradigm for all social, economic, political and religious relationships in the ancient Near East (Schloen 2001).

31- See e.g. Hallo 1972; Steinkeller 1987: 80; also figures 2-4; Wu 1995; Dahl 2007: 131-132; Widell 2009: §§3.3-3.3.5; Allred 2013: 118, n. 6; and Widell, forthcoming.

A complete assessment of the importance of kinship ties within the administration of the Ur III state is somewhat complicated by the fact that the Sumerian word for "son" (dumu), in some contexts, appears to refer to an administrative relationship between an apprentice and his master, rather than a biological one (see e.g. Widell 2004; and, most recently, Pomponio 2013: 227-231). This ambiguity of the meaning of dumu in administrative contexts continues in the second millennium, and Jeanette Fincke writes about the household of the Nuzi scribe Taya (2015: 557; with additional references): "Perhaps student scribes that had entered Taya's household were later called his "sons". Since according to all Ancient Near Eastern contracts of apprenticeship the young apprentice entered the household of a craftsman to be taught his profession, a similar procedure may have been adapted to train scribes."

Notizia shows how two texts provide us with some information on the agricultural domain land under Lugal-irida's control (pp. 88-89). Based on Zinbun 21, pl. 10 43 (*CDLI*: P142613), Lugal-irida was allotted 12 bur_3 of institutional land (ca. 77.76 ha), which would correspond to two standard (or ideal) fields in the Ur III period, each being the responsibility of one "cultivator" (engar).[32] However, according to the large account City Life 2, 101-102 (*CDLI*: P143192), the "superintendent of the weavers" in Guabba only contributed 720 $sila_3$ of flour in zi_3-KA tax, the expected amount liable for a holder of a plot measuring 6 bur_3. A possible explanation for this difference might be that the 12 bur_3 represented the total amount of agricultural land allocated to Lugal-irida, of which only 6 bur_3 was cultivated (and thus liable to the zi_3-KA tax), while the remaining 6 bur_3 was left unplanted, in adherence with the bi-annual fallow requirements in the region.[33]

Notizia's translation and analysis of RTC 104 is exemplary, offering an insight into some of Lugal-irida's institutional and private assets, and his (or his household's) possible involvement in a fairly wide range of economic activities, unrelated to his official role within the state's textile industry, including exchange (of aromatics and metals), date production, and animal husbandry. Considering Lugal-irida's long and successful career, as one of the most senior officials in the province, the inventory is remarkably modest: a handful of domestic animals, some wool and a few dozen textiles, a year's worth of barley, dates and oil for the family and staff, a few everyday tools and utensils, etc. Such entries tell us about the production, consumption and everyday life in a wealthy Ur III household, but they do not offer us much information on (any) more serious economic endeavors undertaken by Lugal-irida, with potential of having more than a marginal impact on the overall wealth of the household. As Notizia observes (pp. 93-94), the 50 gur of barley recorded in the inventory (= 15,000 liters), would not cover the annual outlay associated with the 27 individuals employed in the household, assuming a monthly compensation of 60 $sila_3$/person. On the other hand, according to the nominal yield rate used in Girsu, Lugal-irida's 6 bur_3 of cultivated domain land produced 180 gur barley every year (= 54,000 liters), which, using the same monthly compensation estimate of 60 $sila_3$/person, would be sufficient for the annual salaries of 75 individuals. In other words, Lugal-irida did not store the main part of his barley harvest within the confines of his residence/office (and the same would no doubt apply to other bulkier assets), and offsite holdings were not recorded in RTC 104.

The final contribution in the book is a shorter article written by Gojko Barjamovic and Norman Yoffee. Barjamovic first offers a brief but competent overview of the Old Assyrian trading activities of the early second millennium, emphasizing the undisputable private and profit-driven nature of the trade. Based on data from the private archives unearthed at the trading colony Kaneš (Kültepe) in Central Anatolia, Barjamovic concludes that the Old Assyrian trade was coordinated and maintained through an extensive network of private agents, who were supported in this endeavor by a wide range of legal and political institutions of a collective authority.

The second part of the article, written by Yoffee, is concerned with the importance of mercantile systems in antiquity more generally. Yoffee points out that a wide range of foreign goods and commodities are present in the material culture of prehistoric Mesopotamia, and argues that cross-cultural studies of the importance of trade and exchange can aid our reconstructions of the social, political and economic

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32- Widell 2013: 60-61.

33- According to Govert van Driel (1999/2000: 81, n. 4), land in fallow was included in the allocations of sustenance plots of the Ur III state (cf., however, Maekawa 1986: 99; and Widell 2013: 63). For the disastrous results following violation of fallow in Mesopotamia, see Gibson 1974.

contexts in which the earliest Mesopotamian city-states acquired those goods and commodities.

To sum up this review, Juliette Mas and Palmiro Notizia have put together a successful collection of very interesting and intersecting articles, which raises a number of important questions regarding the structure and function of the non-institutional household in Mesopotamia in the third and second millennium BC. We are most grateful to the editors as well as the contributors of the volume, which is highly recommended to anyone interested in the socio-economic history of early Mesopotamia. The book is available directly from the publisher both in hardcopy and as an eBook.

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