

OLD ASSYRIAN TRADE IN NORTHERN SYRIA THE EVIDENCE FROM TELL LEILAN*

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Introduction

Compared to the abundant data on trade conducted by the Old Assyrian and local merchants in Anatolia little is known about contemporary trade dynamics in the North Syrian area. New information provided by the archives found at Tell Leilan in 1985 and 1987 in the so-called “Lower Town Palace East”, serves to improve this situation. The archives belonged to the kings Mutiya, Till-Abnû, and Yakûn-Ašar, who reigned at Leilan c. 1755-1728 BC. The archives include some 200 letters from the royal correspondence, more than 500 administrative documents, and remains of 5 tablets with the texts of political treaties concluded by Leilan rulers. Pending full publication of this material, inexplicably delayed, a number of preliminary studies have provided sufficiently comprehensive summaries that it should be possible to proceed almost immediately to a presentation of the aspects relevant for the subject of trade and traders.¹

The Old Assyrian traders and their caravans crossed the Ḥabur Basin before moving into Anatolia, and during the earlier phase of the trade contemporary with Kültepe Level II (c. 1950-1835 BC), they passed a town named Apum. Although as yet unidentified Apum was located in the vicinity of Tell Leilan, ancient Šeḫnā/Šubat-Enlil, which during the later phase of the Old Assyrian trade (= Kültepe Level Ib, c. 1800-1700) functioned as capital of “the land of Apum”. In this latter period Leilan seems to have inherited the earlier role of Apum as relay station for the traders, probably as a result of intervention by Šamšī-Adad, who made Leilan his own residential capital. Subsequently, in the mid-18th century BC, the new Leilan archives document an Assyrian *kārum* establishment, including an institution known as the “House of the Servant of Aššur” at Leilan. The official nature of the Assyrian presence is underlined by the conclusion of a formal treaty between the king of Leilan and the city of Assur, while contemporary administrative texts

* This is a slightly updated version of the paper read at the Leiden meeting. On that occasion the author could unfortunately not attend and the paper was instead presented by J. G. Dercksen. For this and his kind invitation to contribute to the meeting he is warmly thanked. It should be noted that most of the information and discussion here is also incorporated in the comprehensive summary of the Leilan evidence Eidem n.d. The letters and treaties are published in Eidem YTLR (in press).

¹ For the letters and treaties see especially Eidem 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, and n.d. For the administrative texts see the provisional editions Vincente 1991 and Ismail 1991. An excellent short summary of the reported evidence can be found in Charpin 2004: 348-351.

show that the Assyrians participated in banking activity in the local region. Also of considerable interest is the existence in Leilan of *kārum* establishments belonging to other North Syrian city-states and to Sippar in Babylonia, a reflection of both local and international trade networks.

The Location of Apum

To set the scene, however, we must first go back to the earlier Old Assyrian period, and consider an important geographical problem, namely the identity of the town Apum, which the traders passed, and which we now know was the base of a *kārum* colony settlement.² Was it Tell Leilan itself or some other site in its vicinity? It has long been established that the imposing site of Tell Leilan should be identified with ancient Šeḥnā and Šubat-Enlil. Tablets found on the high mound “Acropolis” of Leilan in 1985 made the identification with Šubat-Enlil virtually certain (Whiting 1990a and 1990b). At the same time evidence from Mari revealed that the original name of the city was Šeḥnā, and under this name the site is mentioned several times in Old Akkadian texts found at Tell Brak (Eidem, Finkel, Bonechi 2001). Šeḥnā was presumably renamed Šubat-Enlil by Šamši-Adad (c. 1835-1778 BC), and the city was again referred to with its old name following the dissolution of his kingdom. Šeḥnā is also encountered in the year-formula for the 23rd regnal year (= 1728 BC) of the Babylonian king Samsu-iluna, which records the destruction of “Šaḥnā, the capital city of the land of Apum” (Horsnell 1999, vol. 2: 211-213.) This is the latest known reference to Leilan, where major occupation also seems to have come to an end about this time.

Thus the Babylonian year-formula, as well as sources from Mari and Leilan itself, show clearly that Šeḥnā or Šubat-Enlil was the capital for an area called “the land of Apum”, which presumably covered a large eastern portion of the Ḥabur Basin. Apum, however, must also have been the name of a town as shown by the Old Assyrian texts where Apum was a distinct locality with a *kārum*. Further the documentation for a paramount local goddess, Bēlet-Apim, points in the same direction, since such compounds usually involve a town (Charpin 1987).

Although a town Apum is not in clear evidence outside the Kültepe material, it thus seems likely to have existed. It seems unlikely moreover to be identical with Leilan itself, where the excavator has repeatedly stressed a “hiatus” in settlement for the period c. 2200-1900 BC (= Leilan Period IIc). Looking in the Leilan hinterland for likely candidates one immediately thinks of Mohammed Diyab, another large second millennium site a few kilometres southeast of Leilan, and one notes the find of an Old Assyrian cylinder seal at Mohammed Diyab, which prompted the following comment from one of the excavators: “on peut affirmer désormais que Mohammed Diyab se trouvait sur la route commerciale qui reliait l’Assyrie à l’Anatolie centrale, en plein cœur du “pays d’Apum” (Castel 1990: 53). Also Mohammed Diyab, however, seems to have been abandoned during Leilan Period IIc (Nicolle 2005: 181), and must therefore, at least

² Mentioned specifically in AKT 2, 19: 13.

formally, be discounted. According to recent and very detailed survey work in a 30 km strip of the Syrian Ḥabur Basin the Leilan Project team found only a few, mostly very small sites, which show occupation in Period IIc. Although even the best survey has obvious limitations, especially with regard to identification of such a narrow time range, it seems prudent to limit search to the sites presently identified. Since Apum should be a relatively large and important place this allows virtually only a single candidate, namely Tell Aid, c. 15 km due west of Leilan, and c. 15 km southeast of Qamishli.³ Is this possible? One observation which could point in the same direction is the rather curious fact that among the senders of letters to the kings of Leilan only the king of Šunā, a vassal, reports on the well-being of the “land of Apum” (see the letter YTLR 101 published in appendix below), as if Šunā was particularly associated with Apum. Was Šunā, a town which must clearly be sought west/northwest of Leilan, somewhere in the vicinity of Qamishli (Charpin and Ziegler 2003: 275), thus perhaps closer to the core of Apum than Leilan itself?⁴

The important point, however, is that Apum almost certainly was a town distinct from Šeḥnā/Šubat-Enlil identified with Tell Leilan. Leilan may have been the capital of an important Ḥabur kingdom prior to its abandonment around 2200 BC. In the following centuries Apum could instead have become a political and religious center for this part of the Ḥabur Basin, and as such a natural relay point for the Old Assyrian traders. When Šamši-Adad conquered the Ḥabur Basin in the late 19th century he chose the perhaps still deserted mound of Leilan as his residence, instead of the local capital, a strategy also seen elsewhere in this period. Šamši-Adad is known to have deposed some local rulers in the areas he conquered, while allowing others to remain as vassals. What happened to the ruler of Apum is uncertain. The cult of Bēlet-Apim was probably transferred from Apum to Šubat-Enlil, which now also became transit point for the renewed Assyrian trade on Anatolia. Possibly Apum was destroyed or at least severely reduced, but the name remained as a designation for the region.⁵

Perhaps we here have a fairly clear and concrete example of how political circumstances reshaped the Old Assyrian network between the two main periods of the

³ The site is no. 90 on the Leilan period maps (available at: http://research.yale.edu/leilan/regional_survey.html). In the Leilan IIc period occupation is estimated at 10-20 ha. The same site is no. 166 in Meijer 1986: 19-20, where it is reported to be ca. 500 m in diameter, and that: “Ancient remains consist of four summits, the western one ca. 35 m high, the eastern (covered by the modern village) ca. 22 m., the southern and northern ones lowish”. Occupation was estimated to cover EB IV through LB.

⁴ The correlation of archaeological and historical data is of course precarious. The end of the Leilan IIc period would formally include the inceptive phase of the Old Assyrian trade, and it is of course logical to think that there is a general connection here: the revival of settlement in the North would have provided the stability and prosperity which allowed the trade to proceed, further supporting the revival. In archaeological terms the margin is slim, but one would still prefer clear evidence for “pre-Šamši-Adad” occupation at any particular site before claiming that it was occupied when the Old Assyrian trade began.

⁵ With the exception of a single uncertain example a town Apum is not mentioned in the archives from the Lower Town Palace East.

trade. How Šamši-Adad interacted with the Assyrian trade is as yet little known, and I shall not attempt to discuss this subject. It is clear, however, that Leilan, during a fairly brief period became an extremely important hub in international relations. Just to mention two examples. One is the incident late in his reign when Šamši-Adad exchanged envoys with the king of Dilmun in the Arabian Gulf, and the Dilmunite envoys travelled all the way up to northern Syria to Šubat-Enlil.⁶ The other example is even more curious. When the Leiden archaeologist Diederik Meijer surveyed in the Ḥabur he was at Leilan shown a fragment of an alabaster vessel with remains of an inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphs (Meijer 1986: 44 and Fig. 7 a-b). The vessel is probably of Middle Bronze Age date, and a rare example of such an object in these parts. It is tempting to see it as a trace of the international activities focusing on Leilan during the period when Šamši-Adad was in residence.

Merchant Offices at Leilan

We know that Leilan housed an Assyrian *kārum* during the subsequent period contemporary with the reign of Zimri-Lim at Mari. The evidence from the Mari archives includes some significant references to the traders. At one point they were evicted from their houses in Leilan by an Elamite army which had seized the town in ZL 10 (c. 1765 BC), and it has recently been suggested that the Elamite invasion and brief occupation of the Ḥabur could have been prompted by desire to take over the Assyrian trade (Charpin and Ziegler 2003: 217f.).

The most important evidence for Assyrian presence from Leilan itself is the tablet with the text of a treaty between Till-Abnû of Apum and Assur (Eidem 1991b). No doubt it dates to the beginning of Till-Abnû's reign, thus c. 1750 BC, and would have been necessitated by the change of rule. The details of the treaty are unfortunately obscured by the broken condition of the tablet, but basically the preserved text consists of two main parts. The godlist and adjuration closes with a direct appeal to Till-Abnû, the king of Apum, to swear to the Assyrians, namely the representatives of the "city of (divine) Aššur, the son(s) of (divine) Aššur in transit, and the *kārum* in your city". Then follows the clauses of the treaty in the form of oral statements put by the Assyrian representatives to the king, who is addressed in the 2nd person sg. Few of the stipulations are preserved or can be reconstructed fully, but they seem to follow a pattern very similar to that of the new examples of Old Assyrian treaties from Kültepe. The large four-column tablet would have had a longer text than any of the Old Assyrian treaties known from Kaneš, but otherwise seems very similar, especially with the treaty concluded between Assur and Ḥaḥḥum (Günbattı 2004).

The contemporary letters from Leilan do not provide any information on the Assyrian trade, and this must be sought in the administrative texts. First it is of interest to note that other towns had colonies or merchant offices in Leilan. There was a *kārum* of

⁶ For this incident see Charpin and Ziegler 2003: 140 ff. with further literature.

Sippar in Leilan, unfortunately only mentioned once,⁷ and we hear nothing of its functions, but we know that Babylonian traders operated in the North in this period, and from Sippar itself there is evidence for an Assyrian merchant establishment (Veenhof 1989). The administrative texts also show that Leilan housed merchant offices of local Ḥabur kingdoms. The kingdoms of Kaḥat, Šunā, and Amursakkum are concrete examples,⁸ but quite likely there were more merchant offices than those attested in the available texts. In sum it is clear that Šeḥnā was part of both international and regional networks of trade, and must have housed a busy merchant quarter. In 1991 excavations at Leilan tested the possibility of a *kārum* type quarter in the southern part of the Lower Town, but found only a Mitanni period cemetery imposed on remains from the third millennium (Weiss 1991). The Leilan commercial district therefore must be sought elsewhere, but quite likely within the safety of the city walls. Although the large Lower Town may not have been densely inhabited in the Old Babylonian period, we are gradually gaining some insight into the topography of the site. Apart from temples on the Acropolis, we have the large Lower Town Palace East, of which only some 1000 square meters have been excavated, but is estimated to have covered an area of some 12500 square meters (Akkermans and Weiss 1991). In 1991 excavations explored part of another large administrative building belonging to the king of Andarig in the Lower Town North (Operation 7) (Van De Mieroop 1991). Such buildings plus residences of foreign kings, the merchant offices, residences for many officials, service personnel and so on must after all have filled much of the available space within the walls.

In charge of the merchant offices was an official with the title "overseer of the merchant offices" (*wakil kārī*). His name was Iši-aḥu, and so he was probably not an Assyrian. He is mentioned twice in the archive. In one instance he is paid silver from the royal coffer as price for some jewelry,⁹ and on another occasion he brings a jar of wine to the king.¹⁰ In spite of the different title his functions were probably equivalent to that of the "overseer of the merchants", known from Assur during the time of Šamši-Adad (Michel 1996: 420-422). The main function would have been to act as a link between the merchant offices in Leilan and the palace. It is not clear whether he was appointed by the king or chosen by the merchant offices themselves, but the latter possibility seems the more likely.

A special designation is also found for the Assyrian commercial establishment in Leilan. Although it is called a *kārum* colony in the treaty with the king of Leilan, administrative texts refer several times to "a house of the servant of Aššur". The "servant of Aššur" could of course be understood as a simple personal name, Warad-Aššur, but almost certainly qualifies the "house" as an Assyrian institution. After the death of Šamši-Adad there was a struggle between his old official Samiya, who controlled Leilan and a

⁷ Vincente 1991: no. 176: 7f. lists a certain Bunuma-Addu dub-sar, lú *ka-ar si-ip-pi-ir*.

⁸ All mentioned in the text Ismail 1991: no. 103 discussed below.

⁹ Vincente 1991: no. 65; l. 5 should no doubt be read: *ugula kar-meš-ri*.

¹⁰ Vincente 1991: no. 114; the occasion is a kind of play performed with the king, but the important l. 5 of the text is not clear, and may require collation.

local prince Turum-natki, possibly related to the former king of Apum. Troops from Ešnunna occupied Leilan and inhabitants who supported Turum-natki of Apum declared: "Let us kill Samiya and the nobles, and let us either make 'the son of Aššur' (dumu^d Aššur) king or give the city to Turum-natki, but we shall not join Ešnunna" (Charpin and Ziegler 2003: 198). The rather mysterious Mār-Aššur or "son of Aššur" is very likely another term for "servant of Aššur", and both terms should probably be understood as "director" of the Assyrian merchant office.

The texts also provide some limited information on activities of the merchant offices in Leilan. A small series of texts from the last regnal year (*limmu* Ḫabil-kēnu) of Mutiya, so shortly before the conclusion of the treaty between the Assyrians and Till-Abnū – concern a group of 22 slaves who are transferred from the "house of the servant of Aššur" to the palace. Subsequently some of these slaves are ransomed by their relatives from various small towns in Apum. The exact background for this is not clear, but it seems likely that the slaves were residents of Apum who had been caught in foreign raids, and later ransomed by Assyrian traders in transit.¹¹ The only other references to Assyrians in the texts concern first a text which mentions a present of oil to the palace from a merchant Innāya arriving from Mammā.¹² Second we find mention of another merchant with a typical Assyrian name, Alī-waqrūm, who presents a jar of wine to the palace.¹³

As for the activities of other non-Assyrian merchant offices we get some information in a tablet which is an interim account for silver set aside for purchase of wool and barley for the palace cultivators ("the farmers of the villages").¹⁴ It totals 14 5/6 minas of silver, listing expenses and incoming amounts of silver. The text is unique, and not all details are clear, but some interesting features emerge. First that wool is procured from 1438 sheep (= c. same kg wool), probably belonging to the palace, and shorn by Ḫaneans, i.e. the semi-nomadic population of Apum, for a fee of 1 shekel silver for each 7 or 8 sheep. Next some 600 kg of wool is purchased from the "merchant offices" of "the man of Šunā" and "the man of Amursakkum". Although this phrasing is unusual it presumably means offices of these towns, rather than specifically their kings, both vassals of Apum. The explanation for these purchases is possibly that sheep belonging to Šunā and Amursakkum had been shorn close to Leilan, and the wool therefore was most easily

¹¹ The relevant texts are as follows:

Vincente 1991: no. 168 (15/... Ḫ-K) lists 22 slaves, among them boys, girls, "old" women, from "the House of the servant of Aššur", entrusted to the palace official Mannum-baḫti-El.

Vincente 1991: no. 64 (24/vi Ḫ-K) is a note of 1 mina of silver received from "the House of the servant of Aššur".

Vincente 1991: no. 31 (27/vi Ḫ-K) is a note of 1/3 mina silver as ransom for a man from "the House of the servant of Aššur", and released to a man from Ḫizḫizzi (= Izḫizzi).

Vincente 1991: no. 35 (27/vi Ḫ-K) is a note of 1/3 mina silver as ransom for a woman from "the House of the servant of Aššur" to a man from Lazapat.

¹² Vincente 1991: no. 153.

¹³ Ismail 1991: no. 15.

¹⁴ Ismail 1991: no. 103. For more details on this interesting and difficult text see for now the comments in Ismail 1991: 111-116. Detailed analysis of the text is beyond the scope of the present study.

sold through the merchant offices there. Why the palace farms needed two tons of wool is not stated, but presumably the staffs were supposed to spin and weave in their spare time.

Conclusions

The evidence discussed in this short paper admittedly raises more questions than it answers. Why did the Assyrian *kārum* or at least one of its structures have the unusual designation "house of the servant of Assur", and who was the "servant" or "son" of Assur? Was the house the equivalent of the "house of the *kārum*" known as the administrative center for the Kaneš colony, and was the "servant" equal to its so-called "secretary", in charge of the *kārum* house in Kaneš (see Dercksen 2004: 99ff.)? Do the differences reflect geographical or chronological circumstances?

At present the evidence does not allow secure answers to such questions, but the information available is clearly just the shadow of an intricate and extensive merchant activity in the North Syrian area, both internationally and locally, and only represented by scattered references in a palace archive. Clearly a main focus for the Old Assyrian traders was the Anatolian market, but one is tempted to postulate a second system which already in the earlier period of the trade concentrated more on the northern Jazira, a system which has left few traces in the archives from Anatolia.

Tell Leilan first became famous as the site which hides the ruins of Šubat-Enlil, and finding major archives from the time of Šamšī-Adad there is certainly still a possibility. At present, however, the site has mostly produced texts which date to the generation or so following Šamšī-Adad's reign, and nearly all of them related to official activities. It is clear, however, that the site may also hide considerable written evidence in the ruins of its many merchant offices. Ancient cities in the North, like Kaneš, Mari, and Šeḫnā/Šubat-Enlil had the misfortune to be basically abandoned in the early second millennium BC, leaving huge archives to be fortunately retrieved by modern scholars. As yet ancient Šeḫnā/Šubat-Enlil has presumably yielded only fractions of its epigraphic treasures, and since 1991 excavation strategy at Leilan has targeted mainly Early Bronze Age remains. Hopefully excavation of the early second millennium city, a potentially rich source of historical information, will be resumed in the near future.

Appendix: A letter from ancient Šunā

The letter YTLR 101 is one of a series of letters sent from the Aya-Abu, the king of Šunā, to Till-Abnū of Apum. A unique feature of this specimen is that it is co-authored by a certain Šibila, possibly Aya-abu's *šukkallum*-minister. The contents refer to a complicated and rather unclear political situation, which unfolded in the early year(s) of Till-Abnū's reign. At the core of the situation was a military menace created by Ḫalu-rabi (king of Ṭabātum?) and a certain AŠK'-Eddu. The senders here report on the manoeuvrings of troops serving these two figures, and request a reinforcement of 150

troops to safeguard the town of Šunā and the “district” of the land of Apum. The letter ends with the assurance that both Šunā and the land of Apum are well.

The land of Apum is not mentioned in similar terms by other correspondents, and the impression is certainly that Šunā must have been closely associated with Apum. As discussed above this may indicate that the core of the territory known as Apum was west of Leilan, and that the original town Apum should be sought between Leilan and Šunā, which M. Wäfler recently suggested to place at Tell Abu Rasein, SW of Qamishli (Wäfler 2001).

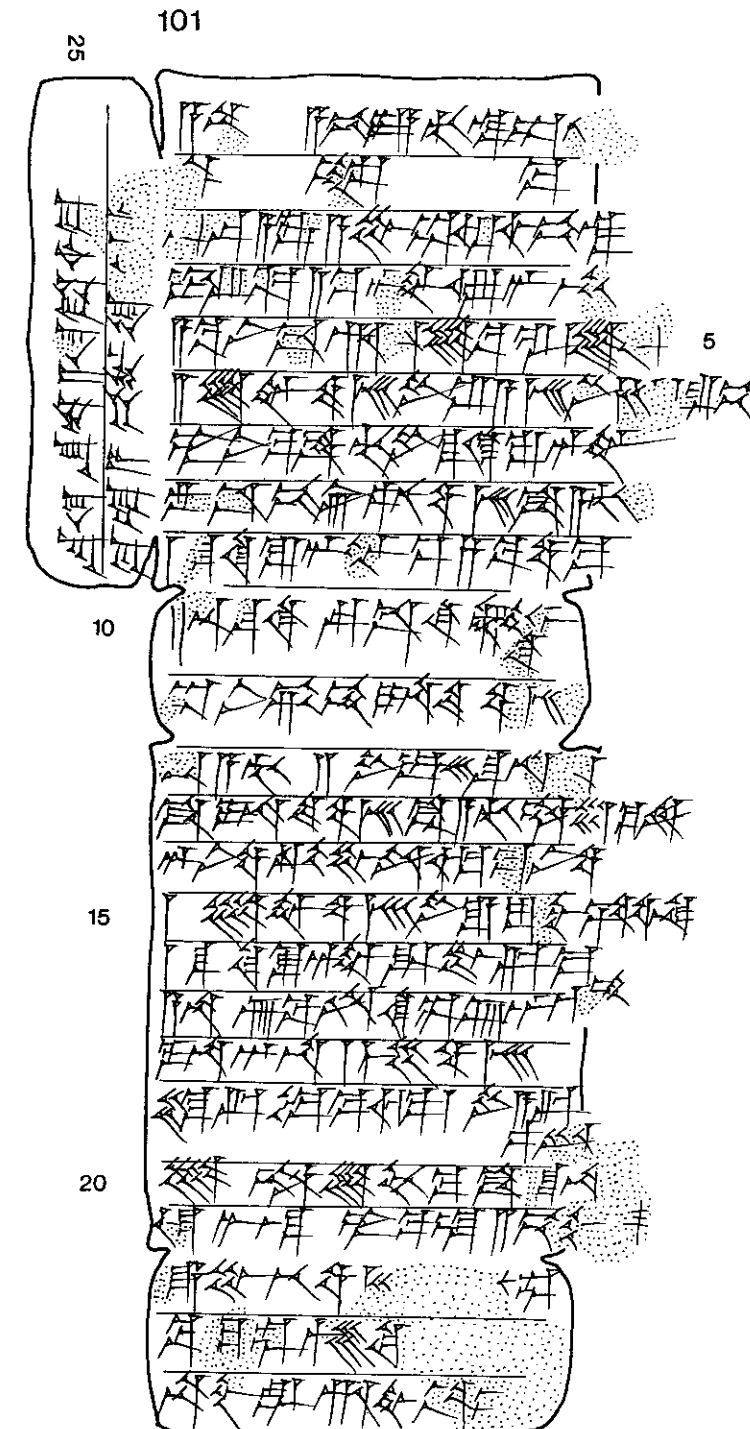
YTLR 101 (L.87-1430)

- obv. *a-na a-bi-ia ti-la-ab-n[u]*
[q]i-bi-ma
um¹-ma a-ia-a-bu-um ù ši-bi-la
dumu-ru-ka-a-ma^dim ù^daš-kur
 5 *a-ba-ni da-ri-[i]š li-ba-al-li-^{tú}*
2 li-im érin-meš lú dirig-meš lú ḥa-^{lu}-ra-bi
iz_x-ni-ma it-ti lú āš-ki-e^dim
ú-da-pi-ir pa-nu érin-meš ša-a-ti
māš-ki-e^dim iṣ-ša-ba-tam-ma
 l.e.10 *a-na uru^{ki} gur-da-ba¹-ah¹-ḥi-im^{ki}*
iš-ni-qá-am i-na ša érin-meš
 rev. *ša¹-a-ti 2 lú dumu-meš šu-na-[a]^{rki}*
ša i-na ša érin-meš ša-a-ti il-li-ku-nim
an-ni-tam iq-bu-nim ù¹ ša¹-ni-tam
 15 *1 li-im érin-meš e-lu-uḥ-ta-yi^{ki}*
māš-ki-e^dim iṣ-pu-ur-ma
a-na sa-ba-nim^{ki} iṣ-sa-an-qa-am
i-na-an-na 1 me 50 érin-meš
tú-ur-dam-ma ù 1 lú a-lik / pa-nim
 20 *li-il-li-kam-ma ša šu-na-[a]^{ki}*
ù ḥal-la-aš ma-at a-pi-im^{rki}
 u.e. *e-pu-úš érin-me[š an-n]u-um*
ba-lu-um ši-di-[tim a-na]
na-aḥ-ra-ri-im li-i[l-li-kam]
 e. 25 *uru^{ki} šu-na-a^{ki} ša-lim-ma*
ma-at a-pi-im^{ki} š[a-li]m

Say to Till-Abnû: Thus (say) Aya-abum and Šibila, your sons:

May Adad and Aškur grant our father long life!

2000 supplementary troops of lord Ḥalu-rabi became dissatisfied, and detached themselves together with lord AŠK'-Eddu. AŠK'-Eddu has taken command of these troops and reached the town Gurdabaḥḥum (?). Among these troops were two men from Šunā, who marched with these troops, (and) told me this. Also AŠK'-Addu sent off 1000 Eluḥut troops, and they have reached Sabbānum. Now send me 150 soldiers, and let a



Copy of YTLR 101 (L.87-1430); tablet of pale reddish, gritty clay; 4.7 x 4.0 x 2.1 cm.

commander come, and do what (is necessary for defense of) Šunā and the district of Apum. Let these troops come without provisions as reinforcements.

The town Šunā is well, and the land of Apum is well.

Selected Notes:

4) This divine pair is found in several other letters from Šunā. Aškur is otherwise only known from some PNs (like prominently Mut-Aškur, the son of Išme-Dagan), but may now be identified as an important deity associated with Šunā. For a possible interpretation of the DN as Asqur ("mountain") see Durand 1991: 88.

7) Reading and interpretation of the first part of the PN is not clear to me. AŠK'-Eddu occurs in several other letters as an enemy of Apum.

10) The town mentioned here, the latter part of the name written over erasures, is also attested in YTLR 102, 8, where it seems to be spelled ...-baḥḥum, and so probably is identical with the town Kurdubaḥ in ARMT XXVIII 91, where Šubram of Susā relates that men from there (lú-meš ku-ur-du-ba-aḥ-ḥa-ju^{ki}) have destroyed the town Kalmatum. A location in the north central sector of the Ḥabur Basin seems likely.

Addendum (February 2008)

As this article was going to press I became aware of a new Old Assyrian text from Northern Syria, excavated by Polish archaeologists at Tell Arbid (some 15 km east of Chagar Bazar). It is a fragment of an envelope, found in a Mitanni period pit in step trench S, and preserves part of a text in clearly OA script and language (for a photo see www.siwaiwa.pl/TellArbid). Besides the OA treaty from Tell Leilan this specimen is the only other OA text which has yet surfaced in Syria, and must reflect some OA activity at Arbid. While detailed discussion of this find will be presented in a forthcoming publication (Bielinski and Eidem, n.d.), it may be noted that it invites the theory that Tell Arbid could be identical with ancient Amaz. This town is known to have been a potential next stop for OA traders leaving Apum (the Leilan region) en route to Anatolia. Judging from fairly extensive information about Amaz from Mari and Leilan, the town was the capital of a small kingdom placed in the north central part of the Ḥabur, i.e. in the same general area as Arbid. However that may be, the new find provides welcome confirmation that sites in NE Syria may eventually yield more information to help illuminate OA activity in this region.

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