

The General's Letter from Ugarit

A Linguistic and Historical Reevaluation of
RS 20.33 (*Ugaritica V*, No. 20)



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TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES
TEL AVIV, 1990



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מכתב הגנרל מאוגרית

עיון לשוני והיסטורי בטקסט RS 20.33 (Ugaritica V, 20)

אוניברסיטת תל אביב

בית הספר למדעי היהדות ע"ש חיים רוזנברג

תל אביב תשנ"א 1990

金華市人民醫院

PREFACE

This book, although in many respects a product of fertile cooperation and mutual assistance, consists of two independent studies. Following a joint introduction, Shlomo Izre'el presents a philological and linguistic analysis of the General's Letter, and Itamar Singer presents a historical investigation which attempts to place this text within the context of Aziru's apostasy. Thus, while acknowledging one another's contribution, each of the two authors takes sole responsibility for his respective chapter. We hope that the interdisciplinary teamwork which we enjoyed over the past year has left its mark on the scope of both studies.

We wish to thank Bati Levite for drawing the maps, Miriam Shlesinger and Ya'akov Davidor for their help in presenting our arguments in a better English style, and especially Jun Ikeda and Masamichi Yamada for the effort they took in preparing the manuscript for print. We acknowledge with thanks the kind permission of M. Jean-Marc Dabadie of the *Imprimerie Nationale* (Paris) to reproduce the photographs and Nougayrol's handcopy of the tablet, originally reproduced in *Ugaritica V*. The preparation of the manuscript for print has benefitted from grants from the Israel Academy for Sciences and Humanities. Lastly, thanks are due to the Chaim Rosenberg School for Jewish Studies, Tel Aviv University, for accepting this book for publication.

Tel Aviv, July 1990

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INTRODUCTION

Shlomo Izre'el and Itamar Singer

THE ARCHIVE OF RAP'ANU

The so-called General's Letter (RS 20.33), one of the most outstanding texts discovered at Ugarit, was found in the archive of Rap'anu.

The house assigned to Rap'anu, excavated in 1956 and 1958, is located in proximity to the palace of Ugarit, and faces the "Rue de Mineptah".¹ It was a large, lavishly built building, probably the largest private house at Ugarit.

The archive unearthed in two rooms of the building (van Soldt 1986: I: 172), is one of the largest and most important private archives excavated in Ugarit. 335 tablets have been discovered inside and just outside of the building. The archive included tablets of varied contents: letters, some of them of significant political importance such as royal and international letters, juridical texts, economic and other administrative texts, and many literary, lexicographical and school tablets (Nougayrol 1968: 41; van Soldt 1986: I: 182).

The quantity of the tablets and their contents, the considerable size of the house, and its proximity to the royal palace point to the importance of the personage in whose house this significant collection was kept.

¹ See Schaeffer 1968: 638-9; van Soldt 1986: I: 172 with further bibliography. For a plan of the house see, e.g., Saadé 1979: 121 fig. 29.

The identity of the owner of this library is not readily ascertainable. Nevertheless, it is quite likely that the house was inhabited by Rap'anu, to whom two letters (at least) are addressed. Another letter bears Rap'anu's signature. He is further mentioned in several other documents (Nougayrol 1968: 42). In view of the large number of lexical and other educational texts in the archive, it has been suggested that Rap'anu was an important scribe, notwithstanding the fact that his signature does not appear on any of these compositions (*op. cit.*: 172). On the other hand, he may have been one and the same person as the scribe Rap'anu, whose signature appears on the legal document RS 21.07A (= *Ugaritica V*, no. 88, pp. 183-4; cf. *op. cit.*: 172; van Soldt 1986: I: 24).¹

In any case, in addition to his scribal activities, Rap'anu must have held a prominent position in the administration of Ugarit, as evidenced not only by vital economic texts (Nougayrol 1968: 187), but especially by his access to state documents of the utmost importance (*op. cit.*: 42, 172). The latter, which compete in quantity and importance even with the palace archives, include royal correspondence with the courts of Hatti, Egypt, Alašiya, Qedeš, Ušnatu-Siyannu and Amurru, as well as letters sent to and by the queen and the governor of Ugarit (*op. cit.*: 65f). Schaeffer suggested that Rap'anu may have been a minister in charge of the foreign affairs of Ugarit (1968: 638-640). In view of all this, there is no reason not to identify him with that Rap'anu who received a royal donation from Ammištamru II (*PRU III*, p. 163).

The datable documents of the Rap'anu archive fall within the reigns of Ammištamru II and his successors, i.e., they date roughly from the mid-13th century on (van Soldt 1986: I: 183-184). This, of course, has singled out the General's Letter as the only document in the archive dated by Nougayrol to the 14th century. Schaeffer had used this as a decisive argument against an early dating (1968: 640).

¹ Whether our Rap'anu should also be identified with Rabanu, son of Šumiyānu, who is the author of two vocabularies found elsewhere in the city, remains doubtful (see discussion below, pp. 174-5).

Although the bulk of the material was indeed written in the late 13th century, in his meticulous reconstruction of the archives of Ugarit, van Soldt has called attention to at least one lexical text (RS 20.32 = *MSL* X, 149-153) which may have been written much earlier (van Soldt 1986: I: 184). It is signed by *'ba-la-as/z-ki*, who claims to be an apprentice of Šapšu-Malku. If this is the same Šapšu-Malku (= Šamaš-šarru in Nougayrol 1955: XXXIX) as the well-known scribe who was active under Niqmaddu II, Arḥalbu and Niqmepa (van Soldt 1986: I: 24, 33), his apprentice *'ba-la-as/z-ki* must have written this text no later than the first half of the 13th century (time of Niqmepa). If so, this would no longer leave the General's Letter in its "splendid isolation" within the archive. Still, these two texts are just solitary exceptions to the rule, and the circumstances under which the General's Letter found its repository in this late archive remain a mystery (see further below, pp. 172-3).

DESCRIPTION OF THE TABLET

The exact findspot of RS 20.33 cannot be identified in the available reports on Rap'anu's archive (van Soldt 1986: I: 172). The *point topographique* (for a definition see *op. cit.*: II: 279-281) is 1864, but there is no indication of either locus or depth (*op. cit.*: II: 324).

The preserved dimensions of the tablet are 130 x 102 mm. Some fifteen lines are missing at the bottom. The original length has been estimated by Nougayrol to be c. 190 mm, so that there are about 15 lines missing from the bottom of the obverse, and another 15 lines from the beginning of the reverse (Nougayrol 1968: 76). On the left side of the obverse there is a large break, extending to line 15. The preserved part of the reverse is in almost perfect condition.

Enlarged photographs of both the tablet itself (kept in Damascus, museum number: 5290) and its plaster casts have been published in *Ugaritica V* (figs. 22-22B, pp. 641-643; figs. 22C-G, pp. 645-649). This extensive photographic documentation is accompanied by a handcopy by Nougayrol (pp. 380-381). Both Nougayrol's handcopy and most of these photographs are reproduced as pls. I-VIII below.

The reddish color of the tablet, its large size (especially for a letter) and the density of the script immediately aroused the curiosity of the excavators (Schaeffer 1968: 640; Nougayrol, *op. cit.*: 76). It differs considerably from the tablets written at Ugarit.

Nougayrol noted that the tablet on which the General's Letter was written resembles in its physical characteristics two other tablets of Amurru provenance discovered at Ugarit, which should be dated to the Amarna period or shortly afterwards, namely the inventory of Queen Aḫatumalki¹ (RS 16.146+161 = *PRU III*, pp. 182-186), and the Niqmaddu-Aziru accord (RS 19.68 = *PRU IV*, pp. 281-286). He has also noticed the great similarity in sign forms and other affinities in writing between our text and what he termed "la 'Syrie du Nord' des archives amarniennes (Qatna, Mittanni, *et surtout Amurru*)" (Nougayrol 1968: 76; our emphasis).

He further noted some divergences from the orthographical system of the mentioned texts, mainly in the form of the signs *TI*, *EN* and *AL*. These rarities, together with what he thought to be a "goût marqué de ce scribe" (*loc. cit.*), led Nougayrol to conclude that this scribe had a clearly distinguishable ductus.

Nougayrol's excellent handcopy of the tablet and its fine photographs definitely bear out his assessment. A further study of the orthographic characteristics, namely the syllabary used by the scribe and its relation to that of Amurru Akkadian, will be offered below (pp. 52-56; cf. Appendix: Signlist, pp. 185-191).

¹ For this reading of the name (rather than Aḫatmilku) see references below, p. 51 n. 1.

SYNOPSIS OF THE LETTER

The letter is sent by a certain Šumi[-¹ to "the king, my lord" (ll. 1-2). Šumi[-, a military field commander,² opens his letter with a demand for three pairs of chariots to be sent to Ḫalba, complaining that his former messages have been consistently ignored (ll. 3-8). In the following fragmentary lines, he mentions supplies and troops (of an unnamed enemy) which might enter (or have already entered?) into that area. This may endanger his task force (ll. 8-14). Šumi[- has been stationed with his troops in Amurru for the last five months at a strategic pass, between the sea and the Lebanon mountain (ll. 15-20). His troops are weary of the cold and rain, and have suffered casualties. Dwelling on his prolonged commitment to his mission, Šumi[- desperately expresses a wish to terminate his stay in that region within a year (ll. 21-30).

After a long gap (of c. 30 lines) there follows the description of a battle waged near the city of Ardat. The enemy has apparently managed to infiltrate the General's defensive lines, and has conducted night raids on his troops (ll. 4'-6'). In an ensuing battle, fought within the fortress, the enemy was driven out and his equipment was taken (ll. 7'-10'). Also, a prisoner was captured and was interrogated about the prospects of the Egyptian king (ll. 10'-11'). The

-
- ¹ The name of the sender has been preserved only in its first component, so that various restorations are possible. In order not to impose any preconceptions with regard to this name, we will refer to the General by the notation Šumi[-. Possible restorations and their implications are discussed below, pp. 174-8.
- ² The military rank of Šumi[- and the size of his unit are unknown. Nougayrol, in his first announcement of the discovery of this letter (1957: 80), has termed our commander "une sorte de général", and thus Šumi[- has been entitled a General ever since. We have decided not to reduce him to the ranks. However, the notation "General", always spelled here with a capital G, does not imply any position on our part with regard to the actual military rank of Šumi[-.

captive said that the king of Egypt was preparing a campaign, but would first send forth his troops and would join them later (ll. 12'-14'). The anxious General estimates his chances as follows: Should the king of Egypt arrive himself, there is little chance of stopping him; should he, however, only send a task force (*pd*t troops; see the commentary to l. 19', pp. 46-7 below), the General's forces will be able to hold their ground. In any event, urgent reinforcements are needed because it is imperative to ward off the Egyptian offensive at once, lest they continue to attack again and again (ll. 15'-29'). The letter ends with another emphatic wish for the successful completion of the mission (ll. 30'-32').

This, in brief, is the content of the letter, one of the most vivid examples of ancient military intelligence. Many details are unclear, others are missing, especially in the large gap between the obverse and the reverse of the tablet. Most significantly, the identities of both the reporting General Šumi[- and the unnamed king are unknown. Thus, the historical setting of the letter is open to interpretation.

PREVIOUS EDITIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

A short résumé of the General's Letter was first presented by Nougayrol in a communication to the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, following its discovery in 1956 (Nougayrol 1957: 80-82). Already in this preliminary account of the text, Nougayrol noted the numerous traits which bring this exceptional tablet closer to the Amarna archive, despite the objections raised by Schaeffer on account of its findplace in the archive of Rap'anu. He repeated his conviction of this dating in an article devoted to war and peace in Ugarit (Nougayrol 1963: 120).

The masterful *editio princeps* was presented by Nougayrol in *Ugaritica V* (1968, text no. 20, pp. 69-79). In addition to transliteration, translation, and numerous textual notes, Nougayrol has supplied the reader with a detailed commentary on the script, the orthography and the language of this text.

In an extensive commentary included in the same volume, Schaeffer objected to Nougayrol's dating, and suggested instead a rather far-fetched historical interpretation of the

General's Letter, relating it to the invasion of the Sea Peoples in the early 12th century (*op. cit.*: 640-691). On the other hand, Schaeffer's first-hand acquaintance with the geographical scene of northern Lebanon has greatly facilitated the proper interpretation of the contents of the letter.

The General's Letter, a remarkable document of military history, has attracted the attention of many scholars, even before the publication of its *editio princeps*. Thus, Liverani (1962: 76-78) connected the events described in the letter with the Battle of Qedeš (1275 B.C.), thereby departing from the dating both by Nougayrol and by Schaeffer. This dating of the General's Letter, around the Battle of Qedeš, is shared by most scholars who have since dealt with the text.

The geographical scene and the military strategy portrayed in the letter as part of the overall campaign of Qedeš were discussed in detail in joint articles by Cazelles (1970) and de Vaumas (1970). In the same year, Berger presented several philological notes on the text, in his review article on *Ugaritica V* (Berger 1970).

In the following year, a new treatment of the text, including transliteration, English translation and philological and historical commentaries was presented by Rainey (1971). Rainey advocated a date shortly after the Battle of Qedeš. However, in a later article (Rainey 1973), he allowed for the possibility of an earlier date, perhaps at the time of Horemheb and Muršili.

Numerous studies have touched upon the document, some in more detail, others just in passing (e.g., Ahl 1973: 326-335; Heltzer 1973 with a note by Nougayrol, 1974; Klengel 1969b: 213-4 and p. 241 n. 120; 363-4; Klengel 1969c: 128-9; Altman 1973: 285; Kühne 1974: 151 with n. 53; Astour 1981: 23 with n. 116). Most of the scholars who have commented on its dating, have shown preference for a 13th century dating, connecting it with one of Ramses II's campaigns — before, during, or shortly after the Battle of Qedeš.

Two notable exceptions are the studies of Kuschke and Finley, the former historical, the latter linguistic. Kuschke, in his study on the itinerary of this campaign, stresses the need for

judiciousness and warns against rashly relating the anonymous General's Letter to any known historical event. Moreover, he strongly advocates serious consideration for Nougayrol's expert view concerning the document's epigraphic and stylistic properties, which point to a 14th rather than a 13th century dating (Kuschke 1979: 17-18; 21). Finley, in his doctoral dissertation which deals with some linguistic aspects of Syrian Akkadian, accepts Nougayrol's dating of the General's Letter, and comments that "precise dating depends upon correct historical interpretation, and so far no decisive historical interpretation has been given" (Finley 1979: 21).

In his doctoral dissertation on the Akkadian dialect of Amurru, Izre'el (1985) dealt with the linguistic affinities of the General's Letter and reached the firm conclusion that Nougayrol's original dating must be maintained. The results of Izre'el's investigation of the text, including a new edition and a philological and linguistic comparison with the early Amurru texts, were presented at a conference held at Haifa University in 1985, published three years later (Izre'el 1988).¹

The implications of Izre'el's results have called for a thorough reevaluation of the historical setting of the General's Letter within the overall context of the political disposition of Amurru during the Amarna age, and especially of its political shift from Egypt to Hatti. The results of this reevaluation by Singer, together with an extended linguistic examination by Izre'el of this fascinating text, are presented in this book.

¹ Izre'el's results have already found an echo in a recent article by Schulman (1988), which deals with Akhenaten's Hittite wars (see below, p. 123 n. 4).

PART ONE

THE GENERAL'S LETTER:
PHILOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

Shlomo Izre'el

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In his very first treatment of the General's Letter, Nougayrol has stressed the similarity of its language to that of some of the Amarna letters, and has reached the inevitable conclusion that it should be dated, on linguistic grounds, to the 14th century B.C.:

"Par de très *nombreux* détails (emphasis in the original), de forme ou de fond, en plus du nom même de l'expéditeur, le texte 20.33 semble nous ramener au temps des archives amarniennes, soit : sensiblement plus haut que les documents habituels de Ras Shamra. Mais, après certaines données archéologiques, M. Schaeffer inclinerait plutôt à admettre que les archives de Rap'anu sont entièrement du XIII^e, et non, en partie, du XIV^e siècle. Je ne me risquerai donc pas plus loin. Tous les épigraphistes comprendront, et excuseront, ma réserve : il faut avoir entre les mains un tel document, le tourner en tous sens pour pouvoir en tirer des conclusions plus fermes." (Nougayrol 1957: 81)

In another paper, published six years later, Nougayrol still insisted on a 14th century dating. He did try to relate the General's Letter to some information attained from the Amarna letters from the vicinity of Ardat, a town mentioned in our text. Yet he was not satisfied with his results, and had to admit that

"la date de cet important document, qui, par son écriture et sa langue, diffère notablement des textes découverts jusqu'ici à Ras Shamra, et, en conséquence, son 'contexte' historique, nous échappent encore." (Nougayrol 1963: 120).

In the *editio princeps* in *Ugaritica V*, Nougayrol offered an extensive treatment of the orthographic and linguistic characteristics of the General's Letter (Nougayrol 1968: 69-79). Nougayrol's analysis of these features, together with his comments on the physical features of the tablet, clearly demonstrate the early date advocated in his preliminary report, although the emphatic statement concerning the date of the letter has not been repeated here.

As already mentioned in the introduction (above, pp. 14-16), linguistic arguments were not considered sufficient grounds for dating the General's Letter. As we have seen, this has resulted in the repudiation of the linguistic data at hand, which has yielded the common opinion that the General's Letter should be dated to the 13th century B.C.

This unfortunate outcome has emerged not because one lacks solid and sufficient linguistic data, but because an accurate historical setting to comply with these data has yet to be found.

This being the state of research, one of the goals of this study has been to strengthen the approach whereby linguistic grounds should provide the essential foundation for dating any text, and the General's Letter in particular. Thus, I shall try to prove that a 14th century dating is a necessary and preliminary point of departure for any historical setting which may be applied to this text.

While noting that the language of the General's Letter is related to that of some of the Amarna letters, Nougayrol stressed the similarity to the Tušratta letters from Mittanni, and especially to the Amurru letters (Nougayrol 1968: 76; cf. also Rainey 1971: 141-2). He has also noted the similarity in form with two other tablets of Amurrite provenance found at Ugarit (see the introduction, above, p. 12).

A comprehensive study of the Akkadian dialects written by scribes of Amurru during the 14th and 13th centuries B.C. (Izre'el 1985; *AmAkk*), has made it possible to conduct a thorough comparison between the language of the General's Letter and the various subdialects of P(eripheral) A(kkadian) used in Amurru.

The study presented here¹ aims at a comparison between Amurru Akkadian and the General's Letter. It is divided into three investigations.

¹ After having presented the first results of my investigation of this text at Haifa University (cf. Izre'el 1988), I was given an opportunity to discuss the General's Letter at a seminar at

The first investigation is philological. It includes a new transliterated, translated and annotated edition of the text.

The second investigation is a discussion of the language of the General's Letter as compared with the language of the Amurru Akkadian texts from the Amarna period. This will be done in an endeavor to obtain a solid linguistic basis for its dating and for establishing the scribal tradition used by its scribe. It will be shown that the scribe who wrote this tablet used a scribal tradition which was very close to that of the scribes of Amurru in the Amarna period. Proof will be adduced to show the intimate and intrinsic relationship between the structure of its language and 14th century Amurru Akkadian. A clue to a possible historical setting for this find will then be offered. Thus far, the linguistic study is an elaboration and revision of my former work on the subject (Izre'el 1985: 383-385; 1988).

In the third and concluding investigation, the extra-systemic components of the language of the General's Letter are analyzed. Besides the linguistic benefits of this investigation, it will be shown that it may also offer some insights into the historical setting of the General's Letter, much the same as those yielded by the investigation of the systemic structure. Thus, I will try to advance some further suggestions towards a possible sociolinguistic and sociohistorical setting which might have triggered these deviations.

the University of Michigan in 1987 (courtesy of Peter Machinist). This resulted in further stimulation to extend my study and to gain some more insights into its linguistic character.

I wish to thank Ya'akov Davidor, Jun Ikeda, Peter Machinist, Anson Rainey, and Gernot Wilhelm for reading previous versions of this chapter, some in whole, some important parts of it, and for their important insights and suggestions.

I am also grateful to John Huehnergard, David Owen and Joan Goodnick Westenholz for their help in suggesting corrections and improvements to the English style of the translation of the text.

INVESTIGATION I
PHILOLOGY: THE TEXT

- O 1 *a-na šār-ri be-[lī-i]a qí-bí-ma*
 2 *um-ma¹ šu-mi-i[t¹-x] ardī(lR)-ka-ma a-na šēpē(GÌR.MEŠ) >ia< be-lī-ia am-qut*
 3 *mi-i-nu i-na-an-n[a -]te.MEŠ an-nu-ut-ti ša be-lī-ia*
 4 *ša i-te-ne-ep[-pu-u]š-šu-nu iš-tu ši-ma-an šu-wa-ti*
 5 *a-na be-lī-ia aš-t[a-na]m-pár šu-uš-ší-šu-mi 3 ta-pal narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)*
lik-ta-an-ni-na
 6 *ù lu-ú aš-b[u-]^rni,¹ D[l¹+DIŠ¹-ti¹]li-iš-ra i-na ḫal-bá.KI ki-i-me šu-šu-ru-ni,
 7 *a-di ša[]i-il-lu-ú-ni, ar-ḫi-iš*
 8 *[]b[e¹-lī damiq(SIG,-iq)-mi i-na-an-na*
 9 *[uš-te-er-r]i-bu-ni, ukullá(ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ) ù šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ) til-la-ta*
 10 *[an-n]u-ut-ti ma-an-nu i-na-an-na šur-ru-um-ma*
 11 *[]^ri¹-nu-ma ukullá(ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ) ù šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ) til[-l]a-ta*
 12 *[B]AD-šu-nu ik-šu-du-ni, a[-na] mu-ti-i-im*
 13 *[i-bal-]lu-ḫû-nim-me-e ù a-i-ki-a-am lu-ú-ul-lik*
 14 *[ù¹ i-na-an-na(?) šur²-ru²-]um-ma la a-kaš-ša-ad-šu-nu e-^rmu¹-uq-qa-am*
 15 *[iš¹-tu¹] 5 [ar]ḫē([IT]I.5.ḪÁ) a[n-nu-]ú i-nu-ma i-na māt amurri(KUR MAR.TU.KI)*
aš-bá-k[u]
 16 *ù ^ra-na¹-aš-ša-ar-šu-nu u₄-ma-am ù mu-ša-am*
 17 *ù ki-a-am a-na-aš-ša-ar-šu-nu ḫarrānī(KASKAL-ni)-šu-nu ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu*
 18 *a-na-aš-^rša¹-ar-šu-nu mišil(BAR) narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)-ia i-na a-ḫi*
ti¹āmti(A.AB.BA) ša-kín
 19 *ù mišil(BAR) n[arkabātē](GI[Š.GIGIR.MEŠ])-ia i-na i-ir-ti šadu(H[U]R.SAG)*
li-ib-la-ni ša-kín-ma
 20 *ù a-na-ku i-na ra-ma-ni-ia-ma u[l-l]a-^rnu¹ i-na tu-ša₁₀(SA)-ri aš-bá-ku*
 21 *zi-i-nu i-za-an-ni-nu ku-up-pu i-il-la-ak**

- 1 To the king, m[y lo]rd, say:
 2 Message of Šumi[--,] your servant: At the feet of my lord I fall.
 3 What, now, are these []s of my lord,
 4 that he has been do[i]ng? Since this last (month of) Sivan
 5 I have been writing to my lord: "Send it forth! Three pairs of chariots
 are to be assigned,
 6 so that they may be settled. May he send? ..[] to Ḫalba as soon as they are ready.
 7 Until []they will? stand forth quickly
 8 []my? [l]ord?, be pleasing." Now,
 9 [] supplies and auxiliary troops [have been intro]duced
 10 []the]se []. Who, surely now,
 11 []that supplies and auxiliary troops
 12 []their [] arrived. For death
 13 []they [will l]ive! So where am I to go?
 14 [Sure]ly?[now?] I shall not (be able to) overpower them by force.
 15 [It is for] 5 [mo]nths n[o]w that I have been settled in Amurru,

 16 and I guard them day and night.
 17 I guard them thus: their roads and their entrances
 18 I guard; half of my chariots are stationed at the coast,

 19 and half of my c[hariots] are stationed in front of the Lebanon Mountain,

 20 and I, personally, am settled there, on the plain.
 21 Rains are falling, the pond(s water) runs,

- 22 *ù ni-i-nu la ni-pát-ṭar ù ki-i i-na-an-na 'i-nu'-ma i-na 1-en u,-mi*
 23 *ku-up-pu dá-a-an ù ip-ṭú-ru-ni, awilū(LÚ.MEŠ) na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ*
 24 *ù la ni-i-de,-šu-nu i-nu-ma uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni,*
 25 *ukullá(ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ) ù šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ) til-la-ta be-lí mi-i-nu i-na-an-na >an<*
 26 *mu-uš-šú-ia ša ia-ti iš-tu an-ni-ki-a-am*
 27 *i-nu-ma iš-tu 5 arḫē(ITI.5.ḪÁ) ku-uš-šú i-ik-kal-an-ni*
 28 *[narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)-i]a 'še-eb'-ru-ni, sīsī(ANŠE.MEŠ.KUR.RA)-ia*
mi-tu,-ni, ù šābī(ÉRIN.MEŠ)-ia ḫa-liq
 29 *[ù a-na-ku an[?]-nī[?]-k]i-^ra¹-am lu-ú aš-bá-ku-mi lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi 9 arḫē(ITI.9.ḪÁ)*
 30 *[lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi(?) ša]tta(M)U.KAM) ù li-ig-mu-ru-ni, ištēn(1-en)-ma zé-ra-ni-ia*
- 31 [*i-na(?)]^rpa¹-ni pa-ni-i-im-ma*
 32 [*]x-^rIK[?] be-lí a-na-ku aq-bi i-na libbī(ŠĀ)-ia*
 33 [*]x [b]e-lí-ia*

C. 30 lines missing

- R 1' [*]i-na MU¹[*
 2' [*]i-na MU ŠU T[I*
 3' [*pa[?]-ni-ia a-ḫi ti[?]āmti(A.AB.BA) a[-*
 4' [*]aš-bat-šu ù uš-te-er-ri-bu-^rni,[?]*
 5' [*a[?]-n]a i-di URU.ar-dá-at.KI*
 6' *[ù[?] it[?]-tá[?]-na]m[?]-ḫé-ru-nim-ma^{1?} awilū(LÚ.MEŠ)-ia i-na qa-bal mu-ši*
 7' *[ù i-i]p-pu-šu-ni, tá-ḫa-za-am i-na bi-ri-šu-nu*
 8' *ù i-ib-bu-ku-šu-nu awilū(LÚ.MEŠ)-ia ù iš-pu-ku-šu-nu*
 9' *ú-nu-te.MEŠ-šu-nu ù qaqqad(SAG.DU)-šu-nu i-na dan-nu-ut-ti-ma*
 10' *uš-te-eš-šú-ni, ù 1-en awīla(LÚ-lum) iš-tu bi-ri-šu-nu iš-bat-tù-ni,*
 11' *ù aš-tá-na-[?]al-šu aš-šu,¹ šār māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI um-ma šu-ma*
 12' *šār māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI ú-uš-ší-mi ù za-ka,-am ú-uš-ší-mi*
 13' *i-na ūmi eššēši(UD.ÈŠ.ÈŠ) ša i-il-la-kam ú-nu-te.MEŠ-šu i-nam-mu-šu-ni,*

- 14' *ù šàr-ru iš-tu arki(EGIR) ú-nu-te.MEŠ ú-uš-ša-am-mi*
15' *ù li-wa-²-ir šàr-ru šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu) ù narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ) ša i-il-lu-ú*
16' *DI+DIŠ-ti li-iš-ra as-sur_x(ZUR)-ri ha-mu-ut-tá-am*
17' *šàr māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI i-kaš-ša-ad-mi ù 'e'[-mu-u]q-qa-am*
18' *la ni-kaš-ša-ad-mi as-sur_x(ZUR)-ri šàr māt(KUR) mi-iš[-ri].KI*
19' *ú-uš-ša-am la ú-uš-ša-am ù šābi(ÉRIN.MEŠ) pí-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma šu-ú-ut*
20' *ša ú-uš-ša-am ù a-kaš-ša-ad e-mu-uq<-qa>-am*
21' *ù li-ša-am-mi-id-mi šàr-ru šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu) ù narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)*
22' *ki-i-me-e [ni-]ip-pu-uš it-ti-šu tá-ḥa-za-am*
23' *ù ni-kaš-ša-ad e-mu-uq-qa-am šum-ma i-na-an-na*
24' *šābi(ÉRIN.MEŠ) pí-iṭ-ṭa-te.MEŠ-ma šu-ú-ut ša ú-uš-ša-am*
25' *ù la-a la-ad-du-uk it-ti-šu ù lu-ú i-de_x-šu be-lí-ia*
26' *i-nu-ma i-na šatti šattīma(MU.KAM MU.KAM-ti-ma) it-tá-na-aš-ša-am*
27' *i-nu-ma i-na u_x-mi-ša-am-ma a-na mu-uḥ-ḥi-ni it-tá-nam-bal*
28' *ù lu-ú ni-iš-bat i-na-an-na šur-ru-um-ma ši-im-qa-am it-ti-šu*
29' *ki-i-me-e i-mar-ru-ur i-na ša-ni-šu a-ši-i-šu*
30' *ù šum-ma i-na-an-din ilānū(DINGIR.MEŠ) a-na qātī(ŠU-ti)-ni*
31' *ù lu-ú ni-ra-aḥ-ḥi-iš abunnat¹(UZU.DUR)-šu i-na eršēti² aḥīti³(KI.BAR)*
32' *ù i-gám-me-ru-ni, l-en zé-ra-ni-ia*
-

14' and the king will come after the equipment."
15' So, may the king send troops and chariots that will stand forth,
16' may he send? Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt
17' should arrive quickly; then we shall not (be able to) overpower (him)
18' by force. Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt
19' should come forth! Should he not come forth, and it is the *pdt*-troops
20' that come forth, then I shall (be able to) overpower (them) by force.
21' So, may the king assign troops and chariots,
22' in order that [we] (can) fight against them
23' and (will be able to) overpower (them) by force. If, now,
24' it is the *pdt*-troops that come,
25' and I do not fight with them, then be it known to my lord
26' that every year they will come out here,
27' that every day he will keep sending (troops) against us.
28' Hence, we must surely now get in contact with them,
29' (just) as they start their sorties again.
30' And if the gods permit us,
31' then we shall smash his belly? in the enemy's? country?,
32' and once and for all my enemies will be annihilated.

COMMENTARY

As one can observe in the text edition presented above, I have not hazarded too many restorations. Moreover, restorations offered by others have not been followed, nor have they been in most instances discussed, since they may differ substantially from each other. I have, however, mentioned the suggested restorations in the commentary below. For further discussions of these restorations the interested reader may refer to the works of Nougayrol in his *editio princeps* and Rainey (1971), as well as to the relatively vast literature dealing with this text.

Note the bibliographical notations "Nougayrol" and "Rainey", which refer, in the commentary below, to Nougayrol's edition in *Ugaritica V* (Nougayrol 1968: 69-79) and to Rainey's edition in *UF 3* (Rainey 1971) respectively.

Lines 1-2: For this formulaic opening address see the discussion on p. 109 below; also in Singer's study, pp. 171-2.

Line 2: According to a widespread, even standard PA construction, the presentational *umma* "message of" (standard Akkadian "thus") attracts a following genitive (*AmAkk* §3.3.1.1.1; Moran 1987: 28 n. 51 with more references).

ʾšū-mi-i[tʰ-x]: The third syllabic sign can be interpreted as the first half of either *ID* or *I*. While in Izre'el 1988 I followed Nougayrol's suggestion in *Ugaritica V* to read the General's name as a Semitic PN, namely *šumi[yānu]* (cf. Gröndahl 1967: 52, 194), I have now changed my mind, and prefer a reading with the sign *i[t]*. This view, which complies with Nougayrol's first suggestion (1957), tends towards a non-Semitic interpretation of this name, and has emerged from my recent awareness that the sender of this letter was despatched to the Amurru region from the north, i.e., from a non-Semitic milieu. A detailed discussion of the possibilities of restoring the sender's name is offered below by Singer (pp. 174-8).

šēpē(GĪR.MEŠ) >ia< be-lī-ia: The scribe, who first skipped the signs for "lord", returned to them only after writing the sign for "my", i.e., *ia*. He then inserted the *ia* sign correctly,

in its appropriate place following "lord". However, he forgot to erase the displaced *ia* which he had written before.

Lines 3-4: Nougayrol restored [*ú-nu(??)-te.MEŠ*] "équipements" in l. 3. He also thought of the possibility of restoring [*a-ma-te.MEŠ*] "words". Rainey followed Nougayrol in restoring [*ú-nu(??)-te.MEŠ*]. I would have expected "delays" or the like. The translation of *iteneppuššunu* would hence be "repeatedly doing" rather than "repeatedly making".

Line 3: *inanna* (also ll. 8, 10, 22, 25, 23', 28'): Nougayrol has noted the abundant use of the temporal adverb *inanna* in this text. He further notes the combination *inanna šurrumma*, as well as the occurrence of *inanna* after interrogative pronouns, and compares this latter use to BH *ze* following interrogative pronouns, but also recalls Hurrian *-nin*, thus implying that Hurrian had had its influence on the language of this scribe, at least in this particular trait. West Semitic substratal background is, however, the only influence manifest in the General's Letter (cf. pp. 78-9 below). I rather doubt the possibility of relating the abundant use of Akkadian *inanna* to Hurrian *-nin*, of which the exact meaning is still unknown (cf. Bush 1964: 269). However, if we are indeed to attribute this trait to Hurrian interference, it must have affected the Akkadian of our scribe only indirectly and through a West Semitic vernacular. Cf. further the comments on *annû inūma* (l. 15) and *inanna inūma* (l. 22) below.

annutti : See the discussion on consonantal doubling below (pp. 61-4).

Line 4: For the spelling *ši-ma-an* see the discussion on pp. 87-100 below. As noted by both Nougayrol and Rainey, the fact that the noun comes in *status absolutus* suggests that it designates a proper name rather than a common noun (meaning "proper time" or the like). This, indeed, supports Nougayrol's rendering of the vocable as the Babylonian month Siman (Sivan). Nougayrol noticed that this mention of an actual month suggests that the General's Letter was written in October, at the beginning of the rainy season.

Line 5: *aš-t[a-na]m-pár* was thus restored by Nougayrol on the grounds of the parallel form *ittanambal* on l. 27'. Both forms exhibit nasalization instead of consonantal doubling, as is

the case with the form *inandin* "he will give" (l. 30'). The latter form also occurs in EA 158: 9, a letter by Aziru. Nougayrol has noted the occurrence of similar nasalizations in other Akkadian dialects, as well as — in front of a voiceless consonant — in Nuzi. Cf. Reiner 1966: §6.2.1.4(5); 1973: 37; also the discussion of Durham (1976: 440-442).

šu-uš-ši-šu-mi : With Nougayrol (and contrary to Rainey) this verb must be rendered as a separate sentence. The singular pronominal suffix cannot possibly refer to the chariots mentioned later in this line. Should we translate "him" rather than "it"?

3 *ta-pal narkabātē*(*GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ*) seems to be a contamination of 3 *tāpal sīsē* "3 pairs of horses" and 3 *narkabātē* "3 chariots", although we would have expected *šimittu* "team" (or the like) instead of *tāpal* (cf. *CAD*: Š: 198b).

lik-ta-an-ni-na "are to be assigned" looks like a Dtn precativ with passive meaning from *kānu*, if this context-dependent meaning is indeed accepted (cf. *CAD*: K: 166f, s.v. *kānu* 3j). Its formation, however, is better interpreted as if derived in the Dt stem (i.e., for passive denotation) according to the sound verb conjugation. Hence, its root is \sqrt{knn} rather than \sqrt{kvn} (Akkadian *g/k/qanānu* would then have no relationship to this verb here). If so, this should be regarded as an ad hoc derivation by our PA scribe, which is a feature of simplification, of the type very likely to have emerged in a lingua franca. "Chariots" being the subject of this verb, the final *-a* is neither the ventive ending (as suggested by Rainey) nor the vowel of a putative West Semitic energetic ending *-na* (as suggested by Nougayrol, who took this verb as if derived from *kanū* Dt "préparer avec soin"). Rather, it is the 3rd feminine plural ending *-ā*, in spite of an *-ūni* ending for the 3 f pl stative probably attested for "chariots" as well on line 28. I am unable to decide whether the chariots are the subject of the two stative forms which follow on l. 6 (for the ending *-ūni* see below), yet it seems that at least here (contrary to the similar structure on l. 28), this is not the case.

Another possibility to consider, is to take this form as a 3 f pl precativ of either a G or, preferably, a D stem from *kanānu*. Although with regard to its form this is a simpler assumption than the one suggested above, in terms of meaning this is more doubtful. For possible meanings, i.e., "to twist", "to wrap", "to pull" see *CAD*: K: 142-2; *AHW*: 435.

Line 6: *aš-b[u-]ni₇*, *šu-šu-ru-ni₇*: for the transliteration of *NIM* as *ni*, here and in many other forms in final position see the discussion below, pp. 57-60, and especially p. 59. As for the meaning of this ending, see below, pp. 66-8.

D[^l+DIŠ^l-ti^l]i-iš-ra: Following Nougayrol, the restorations are according to l. 16' (see below, p. 45).

ḥal-bá.KI: The transliteration of *bá* for *PA* is supported by alphabetic and other spellings of this GN, as noted by Rainey. Rainey further notes that the spelling tradition of this scribe indeed lends itself to such a transliteration (see below p. 188, Signlist no. 295/153). Thus, as against the normalization adopted by Nougayrol, the name of this town should be rendered with a *b* rather than with a *p* bilabial consonant, namely Ḥalba. This is further supported by the etymology of this GN, probably related to the Semitic root $\sqrt{ḥlb}$ designating "forest", "hill" or the like (cf. Baumgartner 1967: 302b, s.v. *ḥlb* II; the town of *ḥelbā* [*Judicum* 1: 31] in the western Galilee seems to have the same name as our Ḥalba here; note further that the city of Aleppo is spelled in the Ugaritic script *ḥlb*, i.e., with a *ḥ* and a *b*; Gordon 1965: 402a, §19.963).

ki-i-me: As noted by Nougayrol, this particle is typical of *PA*. In Amurru Akkadian it occurs mostly in the spelling *ki-i-me-e*, a spelling attested in the second occurrence of this particle in our text (l. 23').

Line 7: Regarding its plene spelling, it is unlikely that *ji-il-lu-ú-ni₇* should be restored as a precativ form, i.e., *li-]i-il-lu-ú-ni₇* (pace Nougayrol). This spelling could represent either a preterite or an *iparras* (= present-future) form (cf. the grammatical comments on consonant doubling, pp. 61-4 below). In this case, the context seems to demand a future rendering, as is also suggested by the parallel form *i-il-lu-ú* on l. 15' (Rainey).

Line 8: Nougayrol has suggested the possibility of restoring, according to the common formula, *a-na b]e-lí damiqmi*. He comments that since *be-lí-ia* stands for an expected *bēlī* on l. 25', the inverse may also be possible. This is not the case, however. As in other *PA* dialects, notably in the Amarna Canaano-Akkadian mixed language, Amurru Akkadian has

-*ia* as the normative 1 sg genitive pronominal suffix. This is the result of allomorphic reduction, thus gaining a systemic simplification. -*i* for the 1 sg is attested in some of the texts after the substantive *bēlu* "lord", but is only attached to the noun when in the vocative (*AmAkk* §2.1.1.2). This is exactly what we have in our text on l. 32, and probably also in this fragmentary context on l. 8. Thus, a restoration which includes a preposition seems impossible.

-*mi*: Following Rainey, here ends the quotation opened on l. 5. Nougayrol interpreted this passage as if the quotation was just the verb *šū-uš-ṣī-šū-mi*, followed by the direct speech particle as well. Both interpretations are possible, as far as the enclitic particle is concerned, since there is another particle -*mi* used for emphasis attested in this text later on (l. 29 etc.; see the discussion below, pp. 72-3). Note further, that the direct speech marker can occur more than once in a citation, especially in one which includes more than one sentence (*AmAkk* §4.7.2.1). This is exactly the case in ll. 12'-14' in our text.

Line 9: Nougayrol restored *šurrunma* at the beginning of this line; Rainey suggested *inūma*.

uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni: I understand this form (complete in ll. 24, 4') as designating a -*t*- form ("perfect") of the Š stem rather than a Štn preterite formation; hence the translation "have been introduced" (for the grammatical meaning of *iptaras* forms see below, pp. 71-2; for the passive rendering see the commentary to l. 24 below, p. 39). Nougayrol analyzed the first occurrence of *ušterribūni* as a Štn form. Rainey has proposed that all three occurrences are to be analyzed as Š perfect.

That these are not Štn preterite forms is suggested by the occurrence in this text of some other Štn forms in the *iparras* pattern which have past meanings: *i-te-ne-ep[-pu-u]š-šū-nu* (l. 4); *aš-t[a-na]m-pár* (l. 5); [*it'-ta'-na*]m'-*ḫé-ru-nim-ma*!¹? (l. 6'); and especially *aš-tá-na-á'-al-šū* (l.11'). -*tan*- forms are virtually excluded from the *iprus* (preterite) pattern in the Akkadian dialect of Amurru (*AmAkk* §§3.6.1; 3.6.2; see further below, pp. 69-71). This is also the case here, in the General's Letter, so that -*tan*- *iprus* formations are not expected to occur. The doubling of the second radical is a phonological feature of this dialect (see pp. 61-4 below).

ukullâ(ŠÀ.GAL.MEŠ) (also ll. 11, 25): Nougayrol noted the occurrence of this word in several PA dialects, notably in Alalah, Boghazköy and Mari (for its different meaning nuance see the references in Nougayrol 1968: 70 n. 8; now also *AHw*: 1406a).

šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ) til-la-ta (also ll. 11, 25): Rainey noted that *tillata* stands in apposition to *šāba*, as is suggested by its case ending. This contrasts the phrase *šābi piṣṣattē* (ll. 19', 24'), which is a genitive construction, as is suggested by its position as the sentence subject in both its occurrences in our text. Being a collective noun, the logogram *ÉRIN.MEŠ* is rendered in Akkadian as *šāba*, i.e., in the singular (Nougayrol, n. 9 with references; Rainey, commentary to l. 8; *AmAkk* §3.3.2.1).

Line 10: Nougayrol restored *a-na LÚ.MEŠ KÚR.MEŠ* "chez ces ennemies"; Rainey proposed *a-na URU.MEŠ* "to the cities".

i-na-an-na šur-ru-um-ma: Nougayrol has noted the occurrence of the second adverb mainly in PA. See his note 10 (p. 70) for a discussion of the origin of this adverb; further *AHw*: 1286a. Cf. also above, p. 29, the comment to *inanna*, l. 3.

Line 11: Rainey restored *lu-ú i-de-šu-nu* "know truly".

i-nu-ma (also ll. 15, 24, 26', 27'): The main function of *inūma* in this text is to introduce object clauses. This usage of *inūma*, attested in the earlier subcorpus of Amurru Akkadian and in the Canaano-Akkadian Amarna letters, is parallel to the Akkadian usage of the particles *kī* (MB) and *kīma* (OB). Both usages are also attested for the West Semitic cognate of *kī*, already noted in Nougayrol's commentary (further Moran 1950: 67 and n. 173 on pp. 132-3; Youngblood 1961: 20). Rare occurrences of *inūma* introducing object clauses are found elsewhere in Akkadian, as in OB Harmal, possibly in Mari, and in other PA dialects, notably the Amarna letters from Canaan. They also occur in PA dialects which seem to be out of the scope of direct influence of West Semitic dialects, like Boghazköy (*CAD*: I/J: 161a for the OB and Boghazköy occurrences; Finet 1956: 238 for Mari). Direct West Semitic influence is possible, even plausible for some PA dialects, whether as an ad hoc borrowing or as an element which had already been integrated into the system in

ancient times. This is, however, not necessarily so everywhere, and a semantic analogy or some other semantic trend may well have resulted in assimilating the usages of the two genuine Akkadian particles *kī* and *inūma* (*AmAkk* §4.5 s.v. *inūma*).

Note the combination *inanna inūma* on l. 22, where *inūma* is still used in a temporal meaning (see the commentary below, p. 38).

Another exceptional expression used by our scribe is *annū inūma*, for which see the commentary to l. 15, p. 35 below.

For the use of *inūma* as a temporal adverb see the commentary to l. 27, p. 40 below.

Line 12: Rainey restored [*a-na lib-bi URU.MEŠ*]-*šu-nu ik-šu-du-ni*, "have been obtained by their cities". What follows the break can hardly be *MEŠ*, however. I have translated the verb "arrived", yet in view of the other occurrences of *kašādu* in this letter (ll. 14, 18', 20', 23'), it is certainly possible that the context, were it not been so fragmentary, would demand the translation "overpowered", "conquered", or the like.

a[-na]mu-ti-i-im: Following his restoration proposal for l. 13 (see below), Rainey suggested the translation "from death" for this prepositional phrase. Ahl (1973: 333) accepted this proposal, and even compared Ugaritic *l*, which can be rendered either "to" or "from". It is, however, very difficult to accept this rendering for Akkadian *ana* in any Akkadian text originating outside of Ugarit.

mu-ti-i-im: For plene writing and mimation in this vocable see below, pp. 59-60. Cf. further the comments on *i-bal-]lu-ṭū-nim-me-e* (l. 13) below.

Line 13: Nougayrol restored *i-na-an-na* "dans ces conditions"; Rainey restored *URU(sic!)-šu-nu* "their cities".

i-bal-]lu-ṭū-nim-me-e: For the enclitic see below, p. 73. Although I translated this form as if it were occurring in an exclamative sentence, it is also possible to take this sentence as an interrogative one. Notice that both *mu-ti-i-im* (l. 12) and *i-bal-]lu-ṭū-nim-me-e* exhibit plene

spellings which may be interpreted as reflecting an accentual pattern resulting from either an exclamative or an interrogative intonation.

a-i-ki-a-am lu-ú-ul-lik: Rainey suggested that *lullik* had probably been intended to represent the asseverative *lū allik*. Although the underlying concepts of assertion and injunction tended to be mixed in some of their performances in Amurru Akkadian (*AmAkk* §3.6.5), this use of the precativ in questions is normative in core Akkadian (*GAG*: §153g; Aro 1955: 87, 112, already noted by Nougayrol). Thus, there is no reason to suggest a different interpretation of this form. As for its spelling, the plene writing does not indicate vocalic length; it is rather a conventional spelling drawn from the regular way of spelling the modal particle *lū*, i.e., *lu-ú* (*AmAkk* §1.14); cf. *lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi* (l. 29).

Line 14: *a-kaš-ša-ad-šu-nu e-^rmu¹-uq-qa-am*: The same idiom also occurs in ll. 17', 20' and 23'. Nougayrol has noted that this collocation is unknown in core Akkadian, apart from MA *emūqa šabātu*. I do not see, however, why he sought to attribute the frequent usage of this idiom in our letter to the influence of a substrate. *kašādu* means "to defeat" (*CAD*: K: 277); *emūqu* means "force" or "military force" (*CAD*: E: 157-160), and the adverbial form *emūqa(m)* (pronounced with a double *q* by our scribe, as is discussed below, pp. 61-4) means "by force". Thus, an ad hoc collocation could well have emerged, especially by a non-native speaker of Akkadian.

Line 15: *a[n-nu-]ú i-nu-ma*: For this combination cf. the similar *inanna inūma* in l. 22. Cf. further the phrase *annū inanna* occurring in an Amarna letter from Byblos (EA 125: 19). While *inūma* is regularly used as a conjunction, note the usage of *inūma* as a pure adverb standing by itself in a similar context in l. 27. For *annū* as a temporal or presentational adverb see *CAD*: A2: 138b; also *AmAkk* §4.1.2. The usage of *annū* as a presentational particle, recalling BH *hinnē*, can be attributed to a West Semitic influence (cf. Böhl 52: §34; also Youngblood 285: 33). This rendering of *annū* (rather than interpreting it as a demonstrative particle) solves the problem of disagreement in case and in number between the putative demonstrative pronoun and the noun phrase *[IT]I.5.ḪÁ* "5 months" (implied by Rainey's translation). Nougayrol too has understood this particle as implying "V[oic]i".

māt amurri (*KUR MAR.TU.KI*): In Amurru Akkadian country names are preceded by a construct *māt* "land-of, country-of". The regularity of the occurrence of the *-i* ending in country names shows that the preceding sign is indeed to be interpreted as a logogram designating a noun (in the construct state) rather than a determinative. The same applies to *māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI* (ll. 11', 12', 17', 18'), and possibly also to *šadu(H[U]R.SAG) li-ib-la-ni* (l. 19).

This is not the case, apparently, with regard to city names. Thus, the General's Letter attests *ḫal-bá.KI* (l. 6); *URU.ar-dá-at.KI* (l. 5'). In the latter case, the city name does not have any consonantal ending, and hence the sign *URU* is taken as a determinative; in the first case, the name is written with no determinative at all. (For the possibility that the absence of the city determinative before *Ḫalba* indicates that this name designates a region rather than a city see Singer, below, p. 118.)

For further discussion of this subject see *AmAkk* §3.3.1.4.4.

Line 16: *'a-na'-aš-ša-ar-šu-nu*: The pronominal suffix probably refers to "the land of Amurru" of the previous line. The reference is thus not grammatical, as there is disagreement between the singular *māt* and the plural resumptive pronoun, which may imply the people of Amurru, or rather the impersonal.

Nougayrol notes the similarity in meaning between Akkadian *našāru* used in this context and BH \sqrt{nsr} . The Amarna letters, including letters from Amurru, attest many occurrences of this verb indicating "protect", "guard" (a city for the Pharaoh), etc. (e.g., EA 60: 12, 19, 22, 29; a letter of Abdi-Aširta). However, this nuance of the general meaning of *našāru* is not unique to Amarna, and is attested elsewhere in Akkadian (*CAD*: N2: 36). See further the discussion of the verb *uštēribūni* in the commentary to l. 24, p. 39 below.

Lines 17-18: *ḫarrāni(KASKAL-ni)-šu-nu ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu a-na-aš-ša'-ar-šu-nu*: For the resumptive pronoun annexed to the verb see the discussion below, pp. 74-5.

Line 17: *ḥarrānī(KASKAL-ni)-šu-nu*: The phonetic complement *-ni*, indicating an oblique case ending, ensures that the noun is in the plural, just like its apposition *nī-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu*.

Line 18: *A.AB.BA* (also l. 3'): There is no support for a possible syllabic reading of this sign sequence in Amurru. Hence the transcription is *ti'āmti* rather than *ayabba* or the like (pace Nougayrol and Rainey; cf. Albright and Moran 1948: 167; *CAD*: A1: 221b).

Line 19: *i-na i-ir-ti*: Nougayrol suggested "pied, base (de montagne)" as the meaning of *irti* here, comparing it with an occurrence of this noun in a passage from Gilgameš. Rainey followed. However, as Nougayrol himself noted, *ina irti*, when appearing in a prepositional use in Akkadian, usually means "opposite", "in front of" or the like (*CAD*: I/J: 187). There is no real reason not to accept this meaning for our context here.

šadu(Ḥ[UR].SAG): *šadū*, rather than *ḥurs/šānu*, is the usual rendering of this logographic complex in PA (cf. Borger 1978: no. 401). Nougayrol and Rainey transcribed *ḥuršān*. With Rainey, I take it as a logogram rather than a semantic denominator (as Nougayrol did); cf. the discussion of *KUR* and *URU* in the commentary to l. 15, p. 36 above.

li-ib-la-ni: Nougayrol notes different spellings for this GN in Boghazköy. See further Weippert, *RLA VI*: 641-2 §2.1; cf. §3.2 on p. 646 and §4.2 on p. 648.

Line 20: *tu-ša₁₀-ri*: Nougayrol compared this term to Ugaritic *'mq*, BH *'ēmeq* (cf. now further *AHW*: 1374). For the spelling with *ša₁₀(SA)* see the discussion on pp. 96-8 below.

Line 21: *zi-i-nu*: Rainey noticed that this form must indicate the plural, according to the form of the verb, *izanninū*. As already noted by Nougayrol, the spelling of this form reflects a by-form of the more regular *zunnu*, namely *zīnu* (in the plural: *zīnū*, attested beside *zinnu*; cf. *AHW*: 1529b).

i-za-an-ni-nu: For the pattern with *i* see the discussion below, pp. 65-6.

kuppu (also l. 23) usually means "pond" (cf. *CAD*: K: 550-1) rather than "oued" (Nougayrol, who remarked that "ici, semble-t-il, la traduction proposée paraît seule convenir", p. 71 n. 10). Rainey's translation, i.e., "spring" (also followed in the *CAD*, p. 551a), conforms to other attestations of this noun in Akkadian better than to our occurrence. Rainey suggested that "*kuppu*, 'well, spring', stands here for the whole complex of wadies and springs below Halba." The *CAD* notes that "the word *kuppu* denoted a man-made enlargement of a spring for the purpose of ensuring water supply" (p. 551b). I have tried to adhere to this notion by using the word "pond", which seems to fit better what we know of the Akkadian term.

Lines 22-24: *ù ki-i i-na-an-na 'i-nu'-ma* literally means "and as/that, now, when/that". Attention has been paid above (p. 35, commentary to l. 15) to the regular usage of *inūma* in this letter as a conjunction opening object clauses. The scribe who wrote this letter used the adverb *inanna* extensively (see above, p. 29, commentary to l. 3), and thus it might have occurred to him to combine these temporal adverbs. Rainey suggested reading *'šum'-ma* instead of Nougayrol's *'i-nu'-ma* here, but the traces seem to support Nougayrol's reading (see also his own comment, p. 71 n. 11). There is no need for *šumma* for the understanding of what follows as a hypothetical situation, as suggested by Rainey. There are no constraints against the occurrence of either *kī* or *inūma* in a connotation of hypothetical future (for *inūma* see, e.g., ll. 25'-27' of this text). Thus, Rainey's translation of this passage may still hold, and we are not forced to regard the whole situation described in what follows as a past event, as translated by Nougayrol. Notice that no predicative form in this passage (ll. 22-25) has an overt past denotation, including *ip̄turūni*, which here denotes modality. See the ensuing respective comments.

Line 23: *ip-ṭú-ru-ni*, marks a modal (hypothetical, or dependent future) situation rather than past. As against Rainey's translation, I take this form as opening (after the conjunction *u*) the apodosis of this conditional complex rather than a part of the protasis clauses. The *iprus* patterning (Akkadian "preterite") may mark modal situations in the Amarna corpus of Amurru Akkadian (*AmAkk* §3.6.2). On this modal form see the discussion below, pp. 70-1.

dá-a-an: Nougayrol compares BH \sqrt{gbr} used in collocation with water (Genesis 7: 18ff). Akkadian *danānu* is attested in similar contexts as well (CAD: D: 83-84).

awilū(LÚ.MEŠ) na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ: For this genitive construction see below, p. 68. The second form, being a substantivized plural adjective, is certainly (as noted by Rainey) the active participle pattern ($\leftarrow nāširu$), here changed by the rule of consonant doubling $V:C \rightarrow VCC$ discussed below, pp. 61-4.

The transliteration of *ši* in *na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ* is confirmed by the cuneiform copy, as well as by the photographs. Nougayrol's *śí* is a printing error (copied also into Rainey's edition).

Line 24: *ni-i-de₁-šu-nu*: The pronominal suffix refers to the subject of the following clause. See the discussion below, pp. 74-5.

uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni₇: 3 pl verbal forms with impersonal subject are frequently used in this text to convey what we tend to render in the passive. The underlying subject would hence be what is marked in the sentence by the accusative case as direct object of the verb. The same applies to *ligmurūni* (l. 30); probably *ippušūni* (l. 7'); *inammušūni* (l. 13'); *igammerūni* (l. 32'); as well as to the other occurrences of *ušterribūni* (ll. 9, 4'). Rainey has noted this feature for *ligmurūni*, *inammušūni* and *igammerūni*. The application of this observation to the occurrences of the verb *ušterribūni* is needed if we do not want to force an unwarranted preconception of the identity of the military units involved. Rainey, following Nougayrol, translated: "they bring in". The question may arise: Who are "they"? In order to get an answer to this question, one might be tempted to return to ll. 15-16, and suggest that the pronoun *-šunu*, suffixed to the verb *anaššar* in l. 15, refers to the same individuals who were in a position to bring supplies and military aid into that area. While this possibility cannot be ruled out altogether, it is more likely that the pronominal suffix in l. 15 refers to "the land of Amurru" mentioned in the previous line, and that the verb *anaššar* connotes protection rather than blockade (see the commentary to l. 16, p. 36 above).

The form is a Š "perfect", as has been suggested in the commentary to l. 9 above, p. 32. The so-called "perfect", or *-t-* form of the verb, does not indicate any specific tense; hence it can come in a future context (see the discussion of the TMA system, pp. 69-72 below).

Line 25: *i-na-an-na >an<*: I do not think that the final *an* sign bears any specific meaning (cf. Nougayrol; Berger 1970: 285). Even if an *n* closing a final syllable is attested for some Akkadian particles and pronominals, I would rather regard the last *an* sign here as superfluous. This may be the result of the abundance of *na-an* strings in this text (cf. the discussion of *inanna* in the commentary to l. 3, p. 29 above).

Line 26: *mu-uš-šú-ia*: Nougayrol compared BH *mōšāʾā* "retraite", yet Akkadian *mūšū* fits the context very well too (cf. *CAD*: M2: 248b). For the consonantal doubling see below, pp. 61-64.

Line 27: *inūma* is used here as an adverb. *inūma* in adverbial usages is attested in PA (in EA in letters from the vicinity of Amurru), as well as in both MB and MA, besides later periods (*CAD*: I/J: 158b). Cf. the discussion of other usages of *inūma* in the commentary to l. 11, pp. 33-4 above.

Line 28: *sīsī(ANŠE.MEŠ.KUR.RA)-ia*: Nougayrol noted that this spelling of the logogram, the plural determinative in its middle, occurs also in other PA dialects.

Line 29: The restoration proposed above is Nougayrol's, also followed by Rainey.

lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi: This reading (as well as the respective form restored at the beginning of the next line) has been suggested by Berger (1970: 285). Both Nougayrol and Rainey read *lu-ú ma-al-li-mi* here, though without giving any explanation for the doubling of the *l*. For the plene spelling cf. *lu-ú-ul-lik* (l. 13) and the commentary for that form, p. 35 above.

Line 30: *1-en-ma* (also l. 32', yet without an enclitic *-ma*): Nougayrol has compared with BH *ʾahat* "une fois pour tout".

zé-ra-ni-ia (also l. 32'): The possibility of transliterating this noun with *zé* rather than with *še* has been mentioned and discussed by both Nougayrol and Rainey. Neither of these scholars has, however, adopted this transliteration. It is to be noted, though, that PA has indeed preserved this value for the sign regularly rendered as *ši* for derivatives of *zēru* "to hate" (*AmAkk* §1.15; also Moran 1973: 160 n. 32; cf. *AHW*: 1521). Ahl (1973: 329) did accept the transliteration with *zé* (cf. also her comment to l. 30 on p. 334).

Line 31: *i-na(?)]'pa¹-ni pa-ni-i-im-ma*: Nougayrol has suggested that this adverbial phrase is construed after *ina šatti šattīma* (cf. l. 26). If this is correct, then the translation must accordingly convey intensiveness, in this case intensiveness of past-time. For the spelling see below, pp. 59-60.

Line 4': *aš-bat-šu*: This rendering of the sign sequence has been proposed by Rainey. His translation of the pronominal suffix as plural is, however, unlikely. Nougayrol's reading of the sign *BAD* as *ziz* is unlikely for a PA text (cf. Jucquois 1966: 64 no. 69).

Line 5': The restoration of *ana* instead of Nougayrol's *ina* was suggested by Rainey. For the meaning of this prepositional expression cf. *CAD*: I/J: 13b. Rainey translated "up to Ardat"; Nougayrol translated "aux bords de la ville d'Ardat".

Line 6': Neither Nougayrol's own handcopy nor the photographs recommends Nougayrol's reading, i.e., *mi*, for the sign following the string [*it²-ta²-na*]*m²-hé-ru-nim*. The sign as it appears has two horizontal wedges and a vertical one, i.e., it looks like the sign *GIŠ*^x. There seems to be no *Winkelhacken* preceding the two horizontal wedges, and what is seen is probably a crack. Following Nougayrol's other suggestion in his note for this line, I would rather interpret this sign as designating a miswritten enclitic *ma*. If this is correct, then we have here another case (as in, among others, *ina danuttīma*, l. 9', for which see the comments below, p. 42, s.v. *ušteššūni*) of comment marking by the enclitic *-ma* ("logical predicate") rather than by its cognate *-mi* (for which see the discussion below, pp. 72-3).

Lines 6'-10': The interpretation offered here for these lines differs substantially from all previous translations of this passage. For this interpretation, the following should be considered:

(1) All verbal forms except for *[ittana]mḥerūni* and *ušteššūni* denote the preterite and are formed accordingly. This is proved by the form *išpukūšunu* (l. 8'), which is the only one derived from a sound verb. The consonant doubling in all other forms is due to the phonological rule of $V:C \rightarrow VCC$ discussed below, pp. 61-4.

[ittana]mḥerūni(m) is an Ntn form. This has been suggested by Berger (1970: 285). Nougayrol suggested *uštana]mḥerūnim* "ils (leur) sont tombés dessus"; Rainey proposed *us]eḥḥerūnim* "repulsed". *-tan-* forms are usually constrained from coming in the preterite (*AmAkk* §3.6.1). Both this and the other *-tan-* form which follows this sequence of sentences, namely *aštana"alšu* (l. 11'), are formed in the present-future pattern.

ušteššūni (l. 10') is a Št form, a derivation in the so-called Št₂ (= lexical Št) stem (*GAG*: §94c), meaning "they fought" (cf. *CAD*: A2: 383 s.v. *ašū* 11; *AHW*: 1480). This interpretation removes the difficulty of understanding the particle *ina* on l. 9 as ablative, which is unattested elsewhere in this dialect (pace Rainey; cf. *AmAkk* §4.5 s.v.). Also, the function of the enclitic *-ma* which follows *dannutti* is now clearer: it draws emphasis to the fact that the General's warriors succeeded in entering the enemy's fortress. That *dannutti* means "fortress" has been noted by both Rainey and Berger (1970: 285).

As for its form, *ušteššūni* is neutralized with regard to its inflectional pattern (*AmAkk* §2.4.2.8), and hence may make no exception with regard to the temporal narrative sequence, since it can be taken as an *iprus* form (i.e., ← *uštēšūni*, reflecting a compensatory consonant doubling as in the other weak verbal forms in this sequence). However, since this verb seems to denote a continuous situation, its form too, like the *-tan-* forms occurring in this passage, is formed in the present-future pattern (of the Št, not of the Štn), which is unmarked for tense, aspect or mood (see below, pp. 69-72, especially pp. 69-70); hence they do not belong to the narrative sequence. As for *ušteššūni*, there is another indication

that this verb does not belong to the narrative discourse. Note that, as against the regularity of verb-initial sentences forming the narrative here, an inverse word order indicates an interruption in that narrative. A verbal form denoting a non-narrative situation may hence be introduced. (Note that this interruption also triggers the switch towards an inverse order in the following sentence.)

(2) The first singular possessive pronominal suffix is *-ia* without regard to either number or case. This is a reduction of the system attested in Amurru Akkadian, as well as in other PA dialects (see above, pp. 31-2, in the commentary to l. 8; also *AmAkk* §2.1.1.2). Thus *awīlī(LÚ.MEŠ)-ia* on l. 6' is the direct object of the verb [*ittana*]*mḥerūni*. However, on l. 8' the same form is the subject of the verb *ibbukūšunu* (and by implication of the following verbs too). Both occurrences have hitherto been taken as subjects of the respective verbs, and hence it was believed that the General's men were the attackers rather than the attacked.

(3) The verb *šapāku* "to heap up" (*AHw*: 1168b) has as its complement *unūtēšunu u qaqqadšunu* "their equipment and their property". The third plural pronominal suffix attached to the verb is proleptic, anticipating the two objects. Resumptive pronouns are attested quite frequently in this letter, and they denote no special added sense. In effect, this trait is a salient feature of this scribe's language (see below, pp. 74-5).

For *qaqqadu* "property" see *AHw*: 900a; *CAD*: Q: 109b. For the transcription *qaqqadšunu* (rather than *qaqqassunu*) cf., e.g., *a-kaš-ša-ad-šu-nu* (l. 14). This transcription and transliteration indicate the actual pronunciation of such forms in Amurru Akkadian (*AmAkk* §1.4).

As implied sporadically above, this new interpretation of the passage not only removes linguistic difficulties, but also contributes towards a better understanding of the historical events.

Line 10': *LÚ-lum*: (Nougayrol's *LÚ.MEŠ-lum*, p. 72 n. 9, is a mistake.) This logogram is, in Nougayrol's term, an Akkadogram. So is the logogram *ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu* (ll. 15', 21'). See further the discussion below, p. 105.

iš-tu bi-ri-šu-nu: This combination, attested in core Akkadian only during the latest periods (*AHw*: 128a), possibly reflects West Semitic influence (corresponding West Semitic compound particles may be found in Jastrow 1903: 163a). Note, however, that the combination of two particles conforms to a general tendency of having a 1: 1 ratio between meaning and form, as the meanings of the two respective components do not change while forming the complex. Cf. also *ištu arki* (l. 14') and the commentary on that line below (this page).

Line 11': *aš-tá-na-²-al-šu*: For the transliteration with -²- here and in *li-wa-²-ir* (l. 15') see discussion below, p. 54.

Line 12': *za-ka₁-am*: Nougayrol has noted this rare usage of the adverbial form *zakâ(m)* instead of the more regular *rēqūta(m)*.

Line 13': The Eššešu-day mentioned must refer to the monthly feast, as noted by Nougayrol.

i-il-la-kam: Nougayrol noted that this usage of *alāku* is not regularly employed in Akkadian for the "coming" of time or of a specific date. Akkadian usually uses *erēbu* "to enter" for the time to come, (*w*)*ašû* "to go out" for the time that had passed. Nougayrol further compared the use of *alāku* here with the ventive, with the common usage of the BH etymon for "to come", namely $\sqrt{bw}^?$. However, *alāku* is used in Akkadian too in collocation with temporal expressions (*CAD*: A1: 311b-312a), so that a putative West Semitic substrate influence would be very hard to detect in this case even if it had existed.

i-nam-mu-šu-ni₇: For the passive rendering see p. 39 above, in the commentary to l. 24.

Line 14': *iš-tu arki(EGIR)*: In core Akkadian this composite is extremely rare (*AHw*: 1467a; 1469b). It is possible that this occurrence is a loan translation from a West Semitic substratum. Cf. BH *mē'ah^arē* "from behind" (separative), but also "behind" (locative) (*BDB*: 30a). This loan translation from West Semitic has already been noted by Cazelles (1970-71: 37). Cf. also *ištu biri* (l. 10') and the commentary to that line above (this page).

In this rendering of the sentence I follow Rainey and Ahl (1973: 330). Nougayrol, although giving (in n. 3 p. 73) the literal translation of this line as given here, terminated the quotation at the end of l. 13' and associated l. 14' with the following passage. He took *šarru* in this line as referring to the General's master. Note, however, that the particle *-mi* which is attached to the verb *uṣṣâm* at the end of l. 14' still marks the direct speech; in effect, it marks its end.

Line 15': *li-wa-²-ir* : For the notation *-²-* (instead of *á?*) see discussion below, p. 54. The same *aš-tá-na-²-al-šu* (l. 11').

For *ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu* as an Akkadogram (also l. 21') cf. above the commentary to l. 10', p. 43; see further the discussion below, p. 105. Rainey notes that the combination *šābu ù narkabātū* forms a standard expression denoting a combined military force.

Line 16': For the sign string *DI+DIŠ-ti* Nougayrol suggested the reading *te_x-diš-ti* (to be transliterated *te₁₀-diš-ti*, cf. *AS*: 7*, no. 266). This reading has been adopted by Rainey. This reading is, however, improbable with regard to both the syllabary and the case ending. As for the syllabary, the value *diš* for *DIŠ* is unattested in PA (*AS*: 54 no. 276; Jucquois 1966: 70 no. 480). As for the ending, the expected case, according to the sentence structure, should be accusative; hence an *-a* ending for the singular, as is inferred from the suggested form, should be expected. The suggested meaning, Nougayrol's "relève", Rainey's "replacements", also seems forced, as Nougayrol himself has remarked (p. 73 n. 5).

I cannot offer any better suggestion for this sign-string. It should be noted, though, that it is uncertain whether there are two signs preceding the sign *ti* or just one. Nougayrol himself was not sure about the identification of the sign he rendered as *DI* (p. 73 n. 5). What I would expect is a feminine plural noun in the oblique case, to comply with the ending *-ti* (cf. Rainey's translation). The cuneiform complex which precedes it may perhaps be rendered as logographic, and the *ti* sign as a phonetic complement. *DI.M<EŠ>-ti* for Akkadian *dīnātī* (from *dīnu* "lawsuit, (juridical) case, (justified) claim") might be suggested as a possibility. Similar spellings, with the *ti* sign (rather than the common spelling of plural

nouns with *-te*, cf. p. 68 below), are attested in Amurru Akkadian (cf. *AmAkk* §2.3.2.1). In that case, *dīnāti lišra* might be compared with the collocation *dīnī lišir* "may my case win" (*Maqlû* III 127, cited in *CAD*: D: 154). Vowel deletion is, however, not expected here, as against some analogical cases attested in the Amarna letters from Byblos (Izre'el, forthcoming b). This suggestion does not seem to fit the parallel text on l. 6, however.

li-iš-ra: Following *AHw* (p. 1220a s.v. *šerû* I), *lišra* should be derived from a *tertia infirma* verb. The meaning "to send" is conjectural, and is based mainly on the locative complement *ina Ḥalba* which follows this form on l. 6.

as-sur_x(ZUR)-ri (also l. 18'): This particle denotes apprehension; hence it is translated "heaven forbid" (*AHw*: 76a; von Soden 1949: 388ff; Held 1961: 20ff; Nougayrol 1968: 73 n. 6; *AmAkk* §4.1.1; the translation "heaven forbid" was suggested by Held). Note that this particle never occurs in dependent clauses, and thus any attempt to translate this particle as "peut-être" (Nougayrol; similarly Izre'el 1988: 165), "assuming that" (Rainey) is less coherent with what is implied by *assurri* here, as elsewhere in this period. The spelling with the sign *ZUR* is unattested anywhere in the Akkadian literature except in the Aziru letters from Amarna and here (see discussion below, p. 55; also p. 77). Rainey remarks that this spelling should be taken as indicating not a different pronunciation (cf. Nougayrol's transliteration *aš-šur-ri*), but rather a distinct spelling convention.

ḥa-mu-ut-tá-am: For the transliteration with *t* (rather than with *ṭ*) see *AHw*: 319b. *ḥamuttam* is attested in OB and especially in MB (*loc. cit.*; Aro 1955: 111). The contemporary Aziru letters use the adverbial *ḥamuttiš* instead (*AmAkk* §3.3.1.6).

Line 17': *i-kaš-ša-ad-mi*: Here and in ll. 18', 21', as well as in ll. 29 (twice) and 13' (in the form *-mē*), the enclitic particle *-mi* indicates some kind of emphasis rather than direct speech (see discussion below, pp. 72-3).

Line 19': The new translation and interpretation of the passage in ll. 16'-20' presented here not only confirms the translation of *assurri* as "heaven forbid" rather than a negative "perhaps" (cf. the commentary to l. 16' above), but also solves the old crux *uṣṣâm lā uṣṣâm*.

The word-string *uṣṣām lā uṣṣām* was formerly translated as an expression denoting "sortant sans sortir" (Nougayrol), "vacillates about coming forth" (Rainey), or "does not come himself" (Izre'el 1988). The translation given above, suggested to me by W.L. Moran (p.c.), separates this string into two units, the second conceived as denoting an unmarked conditional protasis. This certainly makes the passage much clearer.

ṣābi(ÉRIN.MEŠ) pī-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma (also, in a slightly different spelling, l. 24'): Egyptian *pdt* is the term for "archers". In the Amarna letters, as in the General's Letter, this term is preceded by the term for "troops", usually in the logographic writing *ÉRIN.MEŠ*, as in ll. 19' and 21' of our text. The reading of this Sumerogram as *ṣābi* is confirmed by a gloss in one of the Aziru letters (EA 166: 4). In Akkadian texts from the Amarna period the term *ṣābi piṭ(ṭ)ātē* serves to convey the meaning "troops of the regular (Egyptian) army" (Rainey 1978: 87 s.v. *piṭātu*; Moran 1987: 42-43 n. 97; for the rendering of *ÉRIN.MEŠ* as *ṣābi*, in the singular, cf. the commentary to l. 9, p. 33 above). It seems to me that it would be unsuitable to adhere to the original Egyptian meaning, i.e. "archers". However, I could not find a better general term in English to convey the actual meaning; hence, I have chosen to use the original Egyptian term in my translation.¹

Lines 19'-20': *-ma ṣu-ū-ut ṣa* (also l. 24'): Nougayrol maintains that this way of rendering emphasis seems more closely related to the West Semitic than to the Akkadian manner of expression.

Line 21': *li-ṣa-am-mi-id-mi*: As suggested by Rainey, the form *lišammad* (← *lišāmid*; cf. below, pp. 61-4) is a *Ṣ* form of *emēdu*, with a connotation closely related to BH *lha^amīd*, i.e., "to assign". Similar forms, both of the OAkk and of the LB period, all attest to an *a* vowel following the *ṣ* (cf. *CAD*: 145a). In our case, which is unique for the period, an early tradition might account for this form, and a possible Assyrian influence cannot be excluded (cf. *AmAkk* §6.1; see further below, p. 102). Nougayrol suggested a derivation from

¹ I thank Edmund Meltzer for discussing with me this issue.

ma'ādu "to increase, to enlarge". However, the assimilation of *'* to *m* (*lišammid* < *lišam'id*) is more difficult to explain than the doubling of *m* as a result of compensatory loss of vocalic length.

Line 25': *la-a la-ad-du-uk it-ti-šu*: As noted by Rainey, the collocation *dāku itti* means "to fight" rather than "to kill", as implied by Nougayrol's translation (cf. *CAD*: D: 42a). The base stem is not, however, a G preterite form (pace Rainey), nor is it a "perfect" *-t-* form (since it is formed as a precativ), but a Gt form of the verb (Berger, 1970: 285), probably to indicate reflexiveness (cf. *CAD*, *loc. cit.*, s.v. *dāku* 7; *AHW*: 152b; the latter cites similar Gt forms from the late dialects of Akkadian only). Nougayrol has noted similarity between the negated contracted precativ form in the present case and a negated uncontracted form occurring in an Amarna letter from Mittanni, namely *lā lū pašrā* "they should not be separated" (EA 20: 61; Adler 1976: 60). In both cases, in contrast to the more common way of expressing negative modal forms, the negation precedes the precativ particle (this interpretation of the Mittanni phrase has been rejected, however, by Moran, 1987: 120 with n. 14 on p. 121). The Assyrian way of construing this precativ form has been noted by Berger (*loc. cit.*). For the importance of this exceptional form in understanding the sociolinguistic setting of this letter see the discussion below, pp. 101-2.

Line 25': *i-de,-šu*: The pronominal suffix anticipates the object clauses which follow, rather than any specific individual subject. Cf. the discussion of resumptive pronouns below, pp. 74-5.

Line 26': *it-tā-nam-bal*: For the nasalization cf. the commentary to l. 5, pp. 29-30 above.

Line 28': *lu-ú ni-iš-bat*: As noted by Rainey, this phrase should be interpreted as a precativ rather than as an asseverative form, as suggested by Nougayrol. For the Assyrian-like formation, also noted by Rainey, see the discussion below, p. 100-2.

ši-im-qa-am: Following Nougayrol and Rainey, I take this form as derived from *sanāqu* (i.e., < *sinqam*). For the initial *š* see below, pp. 87-100. The literal meaning of this idiom would hence be "to seize an approach" or the like. Another possible rendering for the

idiom *šimqa(m) šabātu* is "to put pressure on" or the like (cf. *CAD*: S: 140b-141a, s.v. *sanāqu* 7b). For other suggestions see Nougayrol, p. 74 n. 2; Cazelles 1970-1: 35.

Line 29': *i-mar-ru-ur*: Nougayrol understood this form as denoting "être inquiet". However, Both Berger (1970: 286) and Rainey have noted that the pattern with *u* demands the meaning "to go forth" (cf. *AHW*: 609a s.v. *marāru* III). Thus, *imarrur* is an Akkadian-like formation for a West Semitic root. As for its *u* thematic vowel, it may be the result of an analogy with a putative *iprus* form (i.e., **imrur*), in itself formed according to a West Semitic pattern, i.e., **yamrur* (*AmAkk* §2.4.2.1.1 with further references).

Line 30': *ilānū(DINGIR.MEŠ)*: As already noted by Nougayrol, the reading in the plural is proved by EA 96: 4, where the Sumerogram has a phonetic complement which indicates the reading *ilānū (DINGIR.MEŠ-nu)*; the agreement of the verb is in the singular, as it is in our case. This syntactical feature, also attested elsewhere in PA (e.g., in Nuzi, cf. Draffkorn 1957, esp. p. 220), is to be interpreted as an indication that *ilānū* should be regarded as signifying a collective referent; in other words, it is a collective noun.

Line 31': The idiom used by the scribe has been and still is the most perplexing element in this text. While they agree about the general meaning conveyed by this idiom, scholars have differed substantially in their translation and interpretation of its individual constituents. I shall not endeavor a survey of the differing views (besides the suggestions of Nougayrol and Rainey, see Heltzer 1973, with an additional note by Nougayrol, 1974). In what follows I shall try to support the translation — although also no more than tentative — given above.

lu-ú ni-ra-aḥ-ḥi-iṣ: Comparing this form with the precative *lū nišbat* on l. 28', Rainey suggested that this form is to be interpreted here as an asseverative rather than precative form. It should be noted, though, that Amurru Akkadian does not make sharp distinction between asseverative and precative uses of the particle *lū* (*AmAkk* §3.6.5). For *raḥāšu* "smash, smite" see Rainey 1979: 159-160. A similar usage of this verb is attested in an Amarna letter from Beirut cited and discussed below, pp. 82-3, with n. 1 on p. 83.

abunnat(UZU.DUR)-šu: In the rendering of this complex I have now returned (as against what was suggested in Izre'el 1988: 168) to Nougayrol's proposal, i.e. to read *abunnatu* "belly" for *UZU.DUR* (for the meaning cf. *CAD*: A1: 89; for the Sumerogram cf. Labat 1976: 89 no. 108).

eršēti aḫīti (KI BAR): In Izre'el 1988 I offered the rendering "a foreign country" or "enemy's country" for this sign complex as "a highly speculative suggestion" (p. 168). I now tend to prefer this to any other understanding of this difficult, otherwise unattested expression (cf. Nougayrol, p. 74 n. 5, who raised the possibility of reading *KI.BAR* = *ašar* (*//eršet//qaqqar*) *mišli* (*//mišilti*) "zone mitoyenne(?) frontière(?) d'Amurru"). These signs may stand for either *eršētu aḫītu* "foreign country" or *eršēt aḫī* "enemy's country" (cf. *CAD*: A1: 191a s.v. *aḫītu*, and p. 213a s.v. *aḫū* respectively; for diverse expressions with similar meanings see the illuminating study of Steiner, 1987). This rendering would make perfect sense in the historical setting implied by this letter, as is suggested in Singer's evaluation which follows.

Line 32: *i-gām-me-ru-ni*; For the pattern with *e* see below, pp. 65-6. Cf. the precative *ligmurūni* in the parallel sentence on l. 30.

INVESTIGATION II THE LINGUISTIC SYSTEM: THE SCRIBE

INTRODUCTION

The Akkadian texts written by scribes of Amurru (on behalf of Amurrite personages) may be divided into several chronological subcorpora, and accordingly into several subdialects, sharply distinguished by many isoglosses.

Chronologically, the texts span about a century and a half. It thus includes four major reference groups: letters of Abdi-Aširta (4 texts); texts from the time of his son, Aziru (15 texts); the inventory of Queen Aḫatumalki¹, from the time of *DU*-Teššub (1 text); letters of Pendišenni (= Bentešina), king of Amurru, to Hatti (6 texts); and texts from the time of his son, Šauškamuwa (6 texts). There are a few other texts, which belong outside these major reference groups, yet may confidently be dated to the 13th century B.C.

When trying to make a linguistically oriented grouping of the Amurru Akkadian texts, we can discern four main reference groups: Abdi-Aširta letters EA 60 and EA 371; other texts from the Amarna period; the Pendišenni letters from Boghazköy; texts unearthed in Ugarit from the time of Šauškamuwa. In addition, there are a few texts which cannot be regarded as integrally related to any of these reference groups, e.g., the inventory of Queen Aḫatumalki (RS 16.146+161 = *PRU III*, p. 182ff.).

¹ For this reading of the name (rather than Aḫatmilku) see Huehnergard 1987: 105 s.v. *ḫ*; 147 s.v. *MLK*. In this text, her name is spelled with the Sumerogram *NIN.LUGAL* (RS 16.146+161: 1).

As mentioned, two of Abdi-Aširta letters, EA 60 and EA 371, were written in a significantly different language from the rest of the Amurru letters of the Amarna period, including Abdi-Aširta letter EA 62. EA 61, another letter of Abdi-Aširta, is too fragmentary to enable us to reach any decisive conclusions concerning its language.

A detailed discussion of this issue is offered in *AmAkk* §6.3.

Abdi-Aširta's letter EA 62 and the texts written by scribes of Aziru, his son, form the main corpus of 14th century Amurru Akkadian. It is to the subdialect in which these texts were written that I intend to show the attribution of the General's Letter. There are, indeed, striking similarities in script and in language between the General's Letter and these Amurru texts of the 14th century B.C.

WRITING AND SYLLABARY

As mentioned in the introduction, Nougayrol noted in his *editio princeps* that the physical characteristics and sign forms of the tablet on which the General's Letter was written resemble two other tablets of Amurru provenance discovered at Ugarit dating from the Amarna period or shortly afterwards (for some details see above, p. 12).

The syllabary used by the scribe of the General's Letter is also similar in many respects to that of 14th century Amurru texts. A signlist is supplied in the appendix, pp. 185-191 below.

The syllabary of the General's Letter is in some respects idiosyncratic, when compared to those used in the letters written by scribes of either Abdi-Aširta or Aziru that have reached us through the Amarna archive. For example, it seems more elaborated: the scribe of the General's Letter makes use of some *CVC* values for linguistic forms which are written in more simplistic ways in other Amurru Akkadian texts. Such is the use of *BI* for *kaš* in forms of *kašādu* "to arrive, to overpower" (e.g., l. 14), as against the spelling with *kà-aš* in letters of Aziru (e.g., EA 165: 31; EA 166: 16; etc.); *ni-pâṭ-ṭar* "we (do not) leave" (l. 22), yet in the Aziru letters: *a-pa-aṭ-ṭar* "I (shall not) depart" (e.g., EA 166: 8); etc. Also, it is the only text in the Amurru Akkadian corpus which uses the sign *NE* to distinguish between the syllables

ni and *ne* (cf. *i-te-ne-ep[-pu-u]š-šu-nu* "he has been doing", l. 4 vs. *lik-ta-an-ni-na* "they (f pl) should be assigned", l. 5). Another idiosyncrasy of this scribe is his apparent free alternation between different signs for the designation of identical values. A quick glance at the Signlist in the appendix and the examples cited there will clearly demonstrate this fact; e.g., /*ba*/ is spelled by either the *BA* or the *PA* signs (nos. 5/4 and 295/153 respectively); /*tu*/ is spelled by either *tu* or *DU* (nos. 58/30 and 206/135 respectively); etc. Note further the use of the sign *DA* (side by side with *TA*), which is very rare in Amurru Akkadian (note that for the designation of the string /*ta*/, the scribe used *TA* on the obverse, yet *DA* on the reverse). See further *AmAkk*, Appendix I: Signlist.

Idiosyncrasies are, of course, to be found everywhere, and should not be taken as counter-arguments for the attribution of a certain scribe to a specific scribal school or tradition, should significant correspondences between his linguistic and spelling usages be found with an otherwise more or less coherent group of texts. For example, although the use of the place postpositive determinative *KI* is unattested in the Aziru letters, it does occur in the General's Letter. As mentioned, this should not be used as an argument against the attribution of the latter to Amurru Akkadian within its early subcorpora, as the use of *KI* as a determinative is attested in the letters of Abdi-Aširta. The same can be said of the absence of the sign *GA* in the General's Letter, a sign used frequently (for *qá*, and especially *kà*, in the Aziru letters). The General's Letter shares its way of denoting velar consonants with the letters of Abdi-Aširta EA 60 and EA 371, where the sign *QA* is used for either *qa* or *ka*, (see further below).

As against these idiosyncrasies, there are significant correspondences between the syllabary used in the General's Letter and the one used in the other Amurru texts of the Amarna period. Especially noteworthy are the various signs and syllabic values for signs attested only in texts written in the earlier traditions of Amurru Akkadian and in the General's Letter.

The most significant indications for the attribution of the General's Letter to Amurru Akkadian, and more specifically to the Amurru Akkadian texts of the Amarna period, are:



The use of *QA* (= *SĪLA*) for both *qa* and *ka*, is unattested in the Aziru letters, but is attested in Abdi-Aširta letters EA 60 and EA 371, and in other Amurru Akkadian subcorpora. The

value ka_4 is attested exclusively in these Abdi-Aširta letters (note again that these two letters are written in a different dialect). It also occurs in the General's Letter: $za-ka_4-am$ "unaccompanied" (l. 12'), while ka (i.e., KA) occurs only in the formulaic $\dot{I}R-ka$ "your servant" in the opening address (l. 2).

DU is used for all dentals + u : $ik-šu-du-ni_7$, "they arrived" (l. 12), $la-ad-du-uk$ "I should fight" (l. 25'); $iṣ-bat-tù-ni_7$, "they captured" (l. 10'); $i-bal-]lu-ṣù-nim-me-e$ "they will live!" (l. 13). Cf. further below.

TU is used for $tú$: Although unattested as $tú$ elsewhere in Amurru Akkadian, this usage of the sign TU shares with the letters of Abdi-Aširta the feature of irrelevance of notation with regard to voicing (and emphasis), as TU is attested in these letters for $dú$ (*AmAkk*, Signlist no. 58/30). This tendency is attested for sign designation of stop consonants in all other earlier Amurru Akkadian texts, but not in the 13th century subcorpora (*AmAkk* §1.8). Cf. also DU above.

tu_4 is used in word medial position: $mi-tu_4-ni_7$, "they are dead" (l. 28). This value of TUM is common in the 14th century Amurru texts. There, however, this sign is used also for du_4 and $tú_4$ (*AmAkk*, Signlist no. 207/137; §1.8), while in the General's Letter the scribe uses the sign DU for both these values (see above). Note that the use of DU for $tù$ is attested in the Amarna Amurru letters side by side with TUM ; the use of TUM for $tù$ is unattested in Amurru Akkadian outside of the General's Letter.

$Aḫ$ is also used for v^2 (which I have transliterated $-^2_2-$). In Amurru Akkadian, the earlier texts do not distinguish between the h - and the 2 -signs as the contemporary core dialects of Akkadian do (cf. Jucquois 1966: 216; AS: 45 for no. 233; Borger 1978: 160-1). The form of this sign may vary according to the writing tradition used by each scribe, and be either  (EA 371 from Abdi-Aširta; EA 157 and EA 164-6 from Aziru) or  (EA 62 from Abdi-Aširta; EA 169 and EA 170 from Aziru's son and brother). The transliteration $-^2_2-$ stands for the more common $-á^2-$, and reflects the relationship with the denotation $-^2-$ for the latter cuneiform character (*AmAkk*, Signlist no. 398/234).

bí is used in the formulaic imperative *qí-bí-ma* "say" in the opening address (l. 1). For any other denotation of the syllable /bi/ the sign *BI* is used, as in *aq-bi* "I said" (l. 32); *bi-ri-šu-nu* "between/among them" (ll. 7', 10'). In later periods the common spelling of the imperative *qibīma* in opening formulae too is *qí-bí-ma*, i.e., with a *BI* sign.

NI is used in spellings of *bēlu* "lord": *be-lí(-ia)* "my lord" (*passim*). In later Amurru letters (apart from the Pendišenni letters from Boghazköy), the sign *LI* is used instead.

PI is used for *wa* (in common nouns) in Amurru Akkadian only in texts of the Amarna period. It also occurs in the General's Letter: *šu-wa-ti* "this" (l. 4); *li-wa-?-ir* "may he send" (l. 15'). In the later subcorpora of Amurru Akkadian this sign occurs only in PNs (*AmAkk* §1.6).

ĤÁ as a plural determinative is attested in Amurru Akkadian only in the Amarna period (*AmAkk* §1.1). It occurs in the General's Letter in the complex *ITI.5/9.ĤÁ* "5/9 months" (ll. 15, 27, 29).

BAD: for *bat*: *aš-bat-šu* "I captured(?)" (l. 4'), *iš-bat-tù-ni*, "they captured" (l. 10), *ni-iš-bat* "we (may) get (in contact)" (l. 28'); for *pát*: *ni-pát-ṭar* "we leave" (l. 22); for *til*: *til-la-ta* "auxiliary (troops)", ll. 9, 11, 25; cf. *til-la-tim* EA 60: 12). *CVC* syllabic values of this sign are unattested in 13th century Amurru Akkadian (*AmAkk*, Signlist no. 69/42).

The sign *AMAR* (*ZUR*) is used for the spelling of the adverb *assurri* "heaven forbid": *as-sur_x-ri* "heaven forbid" (ll. 16', 18'; see the commentary to l. 16', p. 46 above), which will be referred to later (p. 77). This spelling is of special importance as for the attribution of the General's Letter to the scribal tradition of Amurru Akkadian. The particle *assurri*, and the value *sur_x* attributed accordingly to the sign *AMAR*, is unattested in the Akkadian literature except for the letters of Aziru and the General's Letter (cf. Nougayrol 1968: 73 n. 6; Rainey 1971: 140; 1974a: 301; 1978: 65 with further references, to which add *CAD*: S: 410-1). Thus, the attestation of *as-ZUR-ri* in the General's Letter seems to be most significant to the attribution of this text to the earlier corpus of Amurru Akkadian.

To sum up: in the usage of many signs the syllabary of the General's Letter, although it exhibits several idiosyncrasies, is close to Amurru Akkadian. In many respects its usage resembles syllabary usages attested in 14th century texts, but not in (genuine) Amurru Akkadian texts of the 13th century.¹

PHONOLOGY

Archaic phonological features attested in the General's Letter are as follows:

(1) Attestation of a verbal form with medial *w*: *li-wa-²-ir* "may he send" (L. 15').

Nasalized intervocalic *w* (= *m*) is attested in Amurru Akkadian from the Aziru period on. In the Abdi-Aširta texts only intervocalic *w* is attested. In some of the Aziru letters there are still attestations of conservative spellings with *w*. For example, in the earlier Aziru letters the frequent word *āwatu*² "word" is spelled with a *PI* (= *wa*) sign. Yet, spellings with the *MA* sign occur as well. EA 158 and EA 171 attest spelling with *PI*, whereas EA 157, another of the early letters of Aziru, as well as other Aziru and later Amurru texts, attest spellings with *MA* (*AmAkk* §1.6).

EA 171, one of the earliest letters of Aziru, attests to intervocalic *w* in the form *ú-wa-ru* "they will send(?)" as well (l. 15, twice). If this interpretation is correct (Moran 1987: 411-2

¹ In some of the above-listed entries, similar values are attested not only in 14th century Amurru Akkadian texts, but also in letters sent by Pendišenni to Boghazköy. These texts form a distinct subcorpus of Amurru Akkadian, as its linguistic features are generally closer to Boghazköy Akkadian than to other Amurru Akkadian texts (*AmAkk* §6.3). These are: *DU*, *TUM* for *tu*, (in Boghazköy only in word-final position, but also in spellings of the PN Pḫašdu; *AmAkk*, Signlist no. 207/137), *NI* for *lí*; note further the *CVC* signs *BAL*, *TAR*.

² For this normalization of *āwatu* see *AmAkk* §2.3.2.1, the bibliographical section.

with n. 6 on p. 412 reads otherwise; cf. *AmAkk, loc. cit.*), then the above-mentioned form in the General's Letter has counterparts in this letter of Aziru.

(2) Historical spelling with mimation, especially following an *a*-vowel.

This feature of the General's Letter has been discussed in detail by Nougayrol (1968: 77-78), and also dealt with in Finley 1979: 89. It may serve us well to list all the forms of which their spelling reflect either the existence or the absence of mimation, as Nougayrol did, but with a slightly different arrangement: (The numbers in parentheses are line numbers; the sign + indicates further occurrences of the same form.)

final vowel of word	with mimation	without mimation
<i>u</i>	<i>šurrunna</i> (10+)	<i>mīnu</i> (3+), <i>mannu</i> (10), <i>annū</i> (15), <i>ullānu</i> (20), <i>kuppu</i> (21+), <i>kuššu</i> (27), <i>aššu</i> (11'), <i>šarru</i> (14'+),
<i>i</i> (statives and verbs)	<i>iballuṣūnimē</i> (13), [<i>ittana</i>]mḥerūnimma (6')	<i>ašbūni</i> (6), <i>šūšūrūni</i> (6), <i>illūni</i> (7), <i>uštēribūni</i> (9+), <i>ikšudūni</i> (12), <i>iṣturūni</i> (23), <i>šebrūni</i> (28), <i>mītūni</i> (28), <i>ligmurūni</i> (30), <i>ippušūni</i> (7'), <i>ušteššūni</i> (10'), <i>išbatūni</i> (10'), <i>inammušūni</i> (13'), <i>igammerūni</i> (32')
<i>i</i> (other forms)	<i>mūtīm</i> (12), <i>pāni pānimma</i> (31)	<i>šarri</i> (1), <i>annutti</i> (3+), <i>tūšari</i> (20), <i>ūmi</i> (22), <i>mūši</i> (6'), <i>dannuttīma</i> (9'), <i>šattīma</i> (26').
<i>a</i> (verbs)	<i>illakam</i> (13'), <i>uššāmmi</i> (14'), <i>uššām</i> (19'+), <i>ittanaššām</i> (26')	<i>lišra</i> (6+)
<i>a</i> (other forms)	<i>ayikīam</i> (13), <i>emuqqam</i> (14+), <i>ūmam</i> (16), <i>mūšam</i> (16), <i>kīam</i> (17), <i>annikīam</i> (26+), <i>tāḥāzam</i> (7'+), <i>zakām</i> (12'), <i>ḥamuttam</i> (16'), <i>ūmišamma</i> (27'), <i>šimqam</i> (28')	<i>tillata</i> (9+)

N.B. *LÚ-lum* "man" (l. 10') is irrelevant, as the sign *LUM* is an integral part of the logogram (see the commentary to l. 10', p. 43 above). The same applies to *ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu* "troops" (for *šāba*, ll. 15', 21'), although the logogram itself reflects a scribal tradition where mimation had already fallen. The form *našširūtē* "guards" (l. 23), which is included in Nougayrol's list, is excluded here as a result of my conclusion that this is a plural form, in which mimation had never existed (see in the commentary to l. 23, p. 39 above, and the discussion on p. 68 below). The same applies to *unūtē* "implements" (l. 14') and other forms with final *e* (cf. *AmAkk* §2.3.2.1).

It is interesting to note that mimation is preserved in writing mostly after *a*, but not after either *u* or *i* (for the exceptions see below). This feature has been observed in other Amurru Akkadian texts of the Amarna period as well. In word-final position there is strong evidence that mimation had already fallen before the time of our texts. The evidence is conclusive for words ending in the vowels *u* and *i*, but can also be positively deduced for words ending in *a* in most cases (*AmAkk* §1.7).¹

Evidence for the assumption that preservation of *m* in written forms is a feature of historical spelling can also be adduced from the General's Letter, as we find forms with open syllables in word-final position side by side with spellings which show preservation of mimation.

Falling of mimation is a phonetic feature, and had occurred in the core Akkadian dialects only in word-final position. This constraint is hardly attested in our text. We have *pānī pānīmma* "a long time ago (?)" (l. 31), spelled with an additional *-im-* sign to show the preservation of mimation, yet *dannuttīma* "fortress(+*ma*)" (9') and *šattīma* "year(+*ma*)" (26'), which — at least judging by their spelling — seem to have an open syllable preceding the enclitic. We also have *iballuṭūnimmē* "they will live!" (l. 13), and probably also *[ittana]mḫerūnimma?* "they were indeed? attacked over and over again", (l. 6') which might have been compared to other plural forms with the ending *-ni*, though the latter are spelled

¹ This difference in linguistic behavior between the high vowels and *a* is a common feature in many languages (Troubetzkoy 1976: 112-6), and has already been discerned as a salient Semitic trait (Bergsträsser 1983: 5).

by rote with the *NIM* sign as well (see further below). Perhaps we should see these two forms as reflecting rote spelling as well, and read them with a single, rather than with a double *m*.

Nougayrol (1968: 77) has noted that mimation never appears after *u*, but suggested that both *i* and *a* still preserved it.

As for final *u*, there is one form which might suggest the retention of its final *m*, i.e., *aš-šum* "about" (l. 11') (for *LÚ-lum* "man" see above, p. 58 top). Although it may well be that a formulaic particle like *aššum* would retain its older form, I tend to regard the falling of mimation as a general phonetic feature in this peripheral dialect as well (see further below), and my transliteration with *šum* reflects this perception (for MB spellings of this particle without mimation see Aro 1957: 16 top).

By the same token, I interpret all *NIM* signs in final position as indicating the pronunciation [ni] rather than [nim]. To support his view that mimation had been retained after the vowel *i*, Nougayrol cites evidence from the preservation of mimation in the *-a(m)* allomorph of the ventive (p. 78 n. 1). There are two main arguments to the contrary: (1) There is one verbal form which does attest the ventive allomorph *-a*, i.e., it is spelled without an additional *-am* sign. That is *lišra* "may he send (?)", which occurs not once, but twice in this text (ll. 6, 16'), and hence cannot be regarded as a scribal error, i.e., an erratic omission of this sign. (2) Falling of mimation is a phonetic change, and we have no evidence that it had followed a different course in verbs and statives than in nouns. Since we have enough evidence to conclude that mimation had already fallen after the vowel *i* before the time of our text (see table above), it is better to assume that the same occurred in plural verbs and statives too. We shall return later (pp. 66-8) to the meaning of this ending in Amurru Akkadian and in the General's Letter.

Apart from the forms *iballuṣūnimē* "they will live!" (l. 13) and *[ittana]mḥerūnimma?* "they were indeed? attacked over and over again" (l. 6') discussed above, two other words show preservation of mimation after the vowel *i*. These are *mūtīm* "death" (l. 12) and *pānīmma* (in *[ina? pānī pānīmma*, "a long time ago (?)", l. 31). Note that these two words are spelled with an additional *IM* sign in a sign string *Ci-i-im* rather than with a *Cim* sign. This

certainly shows intention on the part of our scribe to indicate the actual pronunciation as accurately as possible. Notice that the scribe has also added another (purely vocalic) *I* sign preceding the sign *IM*, which shows an intentional indication of vocalic length as well.

I would tentatively suggest that certain stress conditions may have to do with the retention of mimation in both these cases. It should be noted that this retention of mimation is found after a non-etymological long vowel of the form *mūtīm*, which should also be attributed to stress (cf. already Nougayrol 1968: 77 n. 1, who attributed these plene writings to "un accent d'insistance"). Indeed, the vocable *mūtīm* seems to occur in an exclamative (or interrogative?) sentence. A similar phenomenon may be attested in the formulaic *ištu ūmi annîm* "from this day" in other Amurru Akkadian texts and elsewhere in PA (*AmAkk* §1.7).

As for the words ending in *-am*, one can rightfully raise the question whether the abundance of forms which the scribe had written with an intentional *AM* sign at their endings does not lead us to the conclusion that *m* was still being preserved after an *a*-vowel at the time our text was written. Indeed, the so-called adverbial accusatives are open to question concerning the preservation of *m*, as there is some evidence that *m* was indeed preserved even much later in adverbs ending in *-am*. However, the situation is different with regard to direct objects having an accusative ending. Here we do have one noun, namely *tillata* "auxiliary (troops)", which does attest to the falling of mimation in the accusative by that period. As was the case with the verbal precative form *lišra* "may he send (?)", the fact that this form occurs more than once in our letter proves the validity of this supposition. It is hence possible to take also the other nouns with accusative endings spelled with additional *-am* signs as reflecting historical spelling. Other Amurru Akkadian texts of the Amarna period attest the same alternation of accusative nouns with and without a final *-am* sign, and thus can add support to this view (*AmAkk* §1.7). Another explanation may be that the forms with final *-am* are hypercorrections, hence a feature of the spoken (Akkadian) language.

13th century Amurru Akkadian texts never attest spellings which reflect standard usage of mimation, whether contemporary or historical. Their usage of *CVm* signs is also very scarce (cf. *AmAkk* §1.3).

(3) The *š>l* shift

The shift *š>l* before dentals had not yet reached the Amurru region by the time of Abdi-Aširta and Aziru (*AmAkk* §1.11). Similarly, there are no attestations of this shift in the General's Letter. Thus:

iš-tu "from" (ll. 4, 26, 27, 10', 14'), *aš-t[a-na]m-pár* "I have been writing" (l. 5), *uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni*, "they have introduced" (ll. 24, 4'), *uš-te-eš-šú-ni*, "they were fighting" (l. 10'), *aš-tá-na-²-al-šu* "I interrogated him" (l. 11').

This shift is attested throughout in 13th century Amurru Akkadian texts (*loc. cit.*).

(4) Consonant doubling

A salient feature of Amurru Akkadian, both of the 14th century and of the 13th century B.C., are spellings which reflect consonantal doubling instead of etymologically expected vowel lengthening.

Graphic doubling, which is a trait inherited from OB graphic tendencies, is usually related to specific verbal forms, where, as a rule, the last sign of the stem is a CVC sign (Borger 1956: x n. 2; Parpola 1972: 25 with n. 12; cf. also Borger 1978: no. 142). This type of apparent consonantal doubling is attested in the General's Letter in the form *iš-bat-tù-ni*, "they captured" (l. 10'). Thus, this graphemic string should be interpreted phonemically as */iṣbatūni/* rather than **/iṣbattūni/*.

Phonological consonant doubling is attested in Amurru Akkadian in all periods both in letters and in legal documents, and should be considered as reflecting a feature of the spoken language, whether Akkadian or the substrate dialects. Phonological consonant doubling occurs in various formations instead of an expected vocalic lengthening (*AmAkk* §1.12).

The General's Letter attests many spellings which reflect this feature. Even more than in any other Amurru Akkadian documents, our text attests this phonological trait not sporadically, but rather systematically.

Pronouns and nominal forms:

an-nu-ut-ti "these" (l. 3); *dan-nu-ut-ti-ma* "fortress" (l. 9'); but note *ú-nu-te.MEŠ* "implements" (l. 14'+) and other similar forms; *e-mu-uq-qa-am* "by force" (l. 14+), an adverb attested in Assyrian with a long *ū*; *na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ* (for *nāširūtē*) "guards" (l. 23'); *mu-uš-šú-ia* (for *mūšūya*) "my way out" (l. 26); *pi-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma* "(the) *pāt-* (troops)" (l. 19'), possibly for *pīṭātē*; also without doubling of the final *t*: *pi-iṭ-ṭa-te.MEŠ-ma* (l. 24'); cf. other spellings without similar doubling of the *t* like *ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu* "their entrances" (l. 17).

Verbal forms:

šu-uš-ší-šu-mi (for *šūšīšu+mi*) "send him forth" (l. 4); *uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni*, (for *uštēribūni*) "they have introduced" (ll. 19', 24, 4'); *i-i]p-pu-šu-ni*, (for *īpušūni*) "they did" (l. 7'); *i-ib-bu-ku-šu-nu* (for *ībukūšunu*) "they drove them out" (l. 8'); *li-ša-am-mi-id-mi* (for *lišāmid+mi*) "may he assign" (l. 21').

Note that non-designation of consonantal doubling in spelling should not necessarily be interpreted as indicating a single consonant, unless an overt designation of a vocalic length is in itself indicated by means of plene writing. As for word-medial plene writing, it seems that most occurrences of it in the General's Letter manifest conventional spellings of original (i.e., morphological) long vowels. The remaining forms are open to other explanations.

The General's Letter, then, exhibits a phonological reality in its spellings of consonant doubling. All these forms exhibit similar constraints on the occurrence of this irregular consonant doubling, namely its replacement of originally long vowels. Hence, the conclusion that this phenomenon exhibits a phonological feature in a common linguistic background seems logical.

Similar spellings also occur in Assyrian (Mayer 1971: 25, 47; also *GAG*: §20d). These, however, are usually restricted to specific words or morphemes, notably to the abstract noun morpheme *-utt-* and the nisbe feminine morpheme *-itt-* (= Babylonian *-ūt-* and *-īt-* respectively). From a typological point of view, the interchangeability of vowel length and double consonants is quite a common feature elsewhere, as these constructions are metrically equivalent (Reiner 1966: §4.1 2.5). As a matter of fact, this feature is not restricted to the Assyrian language, and similar forms are sporadically attested in other Akkadian dialects as

well (Reiner, *loc. cit.*). Even if some Assyrian formations might indeed have penetrated the linguistic system of the General's Letter or influenced it (cf. the discussion under Investigation III, pp. 85-111 below), I would rather assign the possibility of interference to the convenience of a pre-existing phonological trait. It is a well known contact phenomenon, that borrowing is more likely to take place whenever the borrowing language and the borrowed items exhibit some similarity in form (Weinreich 1953: §2.11). Note especially the adverbial form *e-mu-uq-qa-am* "by force", which reflects consonantal doubling, as contrasted with the parallel adverb *emūqa(m)*, attested in Assyrian (and in Nuzi). This adverbial form is, in effect, borrowed from Assyrian into the PA dialect of Amurru, and thus it is clear that the change of *emūqa*→*emuqqa* evolved under a phonological constraint of the language of this scribe rather than reflecting a simple borrowing of the form *emuqqa*, i.e., originally with a double *q*.

It should be noted that there must have been some restrictions or constraints on the operation of this phonological rule. For example, it is clear that the spelling *lu-ú-ul-lik* "I should go" (l. 13) is conventional, and stands for *lullik* (*AmAkk* §1.14). However, it is unclear whether the spelling *i-il-lu-ú-ni*, "they will? stand forth" (l. 7) reflects the vocalic length of the vowel *u* or a conventional spelling of a *tertia infirma* verbal form. I tend to assume that such a spelling stands for *illūni* rather than for *illunni*. The same applies to *a-ši-i-šu* "its sorties" (l. 29').

It seems that the phonological trait discussed here, namely $V:C \rightarrow VCC$, is very typical of the area of Amurru and its close vicinity. While there are attestations of similar spellings in Ugarit Akkadian as well, they are so few as to constitute only an insignificant amount of non-etymological consonant doubling in that dialect (Huehnergard 1989: 48-50). As far as I know, only the Amarna letters from Qatna share this feature with Amurru Akkadian. In the Akkadian of Qatna we have this doubling attested in a stative form (*pal-ḥa-ak-ku*, for *palḥāku*, "I am afraid", EA 53: 67), as is the case with two Amurru Akkadian texts from a later period, viz., *ḥa-dá-ak-ku* "I am glad" (RS 17.116: 7' = *PRU IV*, p. 132ff.); *aš-ba-ak-ku* "I sit" (RS 17.372A+: 8 = *PRU IV*, p. 139ff.) (*AmAkk* §1.12). Likewise, the spellings *pi-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma* and *pi-iṭ-ṭa-te.MEŠ-ma* "the *pdt* (troops)" (ll. 19' and 24'

respectively), both of which reflect consonantal doubling of the first consonant, are attested only in the General's Letter and in a letter from Qatna (EA 53: 47, 53, 67, 68) (cf. Ebeling in Knudtzon 1915: II: 1492; Rainey 1978: 87).

(5) Plene writing

A feature attested in some of the Aziru letters is plene writing, especially the one used at the beginning of forms of *primae aleph* and *primae waw* verbs. The following forms of the General's Letter should be considered:

Primae aleph verbs: *i-ib-bu-ku-šu-nu* "they drove them out" (l. 8'); *i-ik-kal-an-ni* "it has been gnawing me" (l. 27); *i-il-la-ak* "it overflows (lit: goes)" (l. 21); *i-il-la-kam* "he will come" (l. 13'); *i-il-lu-ú(-ni)* "they will stand forth" (ll. 7, 15'); *i-i]p-pu-šu-ni*, "they did" (l. 7').

Primae waw verbs: *ú-uš-ší-mi* "he is going forth" (ll. 12'^{x2}); *ú-uš-ša-am(-mi)* "he will come" or the like (ll. 14', 19', 20', 24').

Note further: *i-ir-ti* "front (lit: chest)" (l. 19).

Similar spellings for *Primae aleph* verbs are known to us from the OB period (Aro 1955: 4; Nougayrol 1968: 76-77; Reiner 1964: 172 n. 10; 1966: 87). Plene writing of the initial syllable of *Primae waw* verbs is a feature of Oakk, where similar spellings are attested also for the sound verb (Gelb 1961: 158; a discussion of this feature in PA, together with an analysis and possible interpretation of this phenomenon is offered by Wilhelm, 1971). OB attests only G *iparras* and D forms written plene; the General's Letter attests in addition similar spellings for G preterite forms, such as *i-ib-bu-ku-šu-nu* "they drove them out" and the restored *i-i]p-pu-šu-ni*, "they did". Note that preterite forms of *Primae aleph* verbs are not distinct from their present-future counterparts, due to the phonological rule of $V:C \rightarrow VCC$ discussed above (no. 4).

The importance of this orthographic trait for the attribution of the General's Letter to Amurru Akkadian of the Amarna period has already been stressed by Nougayrol (1968: 76-7), followed by Finley (1979: 89).

It should be noted that this feature also helps to achieve a more subtle chronological attribution of the General's Letter. The Aziru letters from Amarna can be divided into two chronological groups: EA 156-158 together with EA 171, and EA 159-161 together with EA 164-168. These two groups may be distinguished as two separate chronological groups on historical grounds (see below in Singer's evaluation, pp. 128-144; chart on p. 144). This is reflected in the outer form of these letters as well, at least in EA 161 and EA 164-168, since these texts exhibit a distinct writing tradition with regard to the plene spelling of *prmae aleph* and *prmae waw* verbs (*AmAkk* §§1.14; 6.3). (EA 169 and EA 170 are now dated before EA 161 and its contemporary texts, and form an intermediate group with regard to chronology. Linguistically, EA 170 is written in a different scribal tradition altogether, while EA 169 conforms to the rest of the Aziru letters, and share with the later group the habit of the plene spelling of *prmae aleph* and *prmae waw* verbs.)

MORPHOLOGY

In morphology, one may note the following traits:

(1) G present-future forms with thematic *i*-vowel

Amurru Akkadian of the Amarna period exhibits a conspicuous tendency to construe G present-future forms with a thematic *i*-vowel instead of an expected *a*. This feature reflects interference of a West Semitic substratum. The pattern *uCaCCiC*, which is the Akkadian D preterite pattern, is used in the West Semitic languages to indicate the non-past, or the "imperfect" of the *piel* conjugation. The West Semitic languages do not share with Akkadian (and with the South-Semitic languages) the doubling of the middle radical as an inflectional sign. Hence, a tendency to interpret G present-future formations as D might well be the reason for formulating G present-future forms with an *i* rather than with an *a* vowel (Rainey 1975: 417-424; *AmAkk* §2.4.2.1.1; it is interesting to note that Amurru Akkadian uses the pattern *uCaCCiC* in D present-future formations as well, *AmAkk* §2.4.2.4.1).

The General's Letter attests the following G present-future forms with *iparris* pattern:

i-za-an-ni-nu "(lit:) they are raining" (l. 21); *i-gám-me-ru-ni*, "(lit:) they will annihilate" (l. 32'); *ni-ra-aḥ-ḥi-iš* "we shall smash" (l. 31').

Standard Akkadian dialects have *izannan* or *izannun*, *igammar*, *iraḥḥiṣ*, *iraḥḥaṣ* or *iraḥḥuṣ* respectively (AHw: 1509-10; 276-7; 942-3).

Note that line 30 has the G precative *ligmurūni* in the same formula as *igammerūni* on line 32'. The vowel *e* (rather than *i*) in the latter form may be explained as a spelling convention drawn on the grounds of the standard Akkadian rule *i*→*e*/__*r* which would act (in normative standard Akkadian) on the D preterite form of this verb.

(2) The plural morpheme *-ūni*

A salient feature of early Amurru Akkadian is the morpheme which designates grammatical number in the 2nd and 3rd person of the plural in the verb and in the stative. That is the morpheme *-ūni*.

Standard Akkadian has *-ā* for the 2 pl (common to both genders) and for the 3 pl f, *-ū* for the 3 pl m (GAG: §75d); PA dialects tend to exhibit *-ū* for the 2 pl m (as in West Semitic). From a diachronic point of view, the ventive allomorph *-ni(m)* had joined the suffix *-ū* of the 2nd and 3rd person of the plural to form a new plural suffix, the innovative morpheme *-ūni*. This is the plural suffix of both verbal forms and of the stative, and the *-ni* ending adds no semantic or morphosyntactic connotation. This accounts for, e.g., verbal forms such as

i-kà-lu-ni, "they eat" (EA 161: 8); *i-du-ú-ni*, "they know" (EA 161: 33);
 'i'-[k]a-[a]z-zi-bu-ni, "they lie" (EA 62: 39); *i-dú-ku-ni*, "they killed" (EA 62: 33);
aš-bu-ni, "they sit" (EA 62: 25) (cf. *aš-bu*, same text, l. 24)

For further details see *AmAkk* §2.3.3.3.1, and especially §2.4.1.1; cf. Izre'el 1984.

While there are some forms which are exceptional in that they attest an *-ū* rather than *-ūni* for no overt reason, we may observe a complementary distribution between forms ending in *-ū* and forms ending in *-ūni*. The rule is that *-ū* occurs before pronominal suffixes, while

elsewhere *-ūni* occurs. In other words, the additional *-ni* syllable is deleted in the presence of a suffixed pronoun (*-ūni* → *-ū/* __ pronominal suffix).

This is exactly what we find in the language of the General's Letter. An excellent illustration of this complementary distribution of the ending *-ū* and *-ūni* can be found in the following paragraph from our text:

- 4' ... *u ušterribūni*
 5' [*an*]^a *idi ardat*
 6' [^u *ittana*]*mherūnimma*^a *awīliya ina qabal mūši*
 7' [*u i*]*ppušūni tāhāza(m) ina birišunu*
 8' *u ibbukūšunu awilūya u išpukūšunu*
 9' *unūtēšunu u qaqqadšunu ina dannuttima*
 10' *ušteššūni u ištēn awīla ištu birišunu išbatūni*
- 4'-5' ... [] have been introduced [in]to the vicinity of Ardat.
 6' My men [were] indeed? [atta]cked [over and over again] in the middle of the night,
 7' [and] a battle was [w]aged between them,
 8' and my men drove them out, and heaped up
 9' their equipment and their property. It was within the fortress that
 10' they were fighting; and one man among them was captured.

Otherwise, the General's Letter attests two forms which do not have an *-ūni* ending:

zi-i-nu i-za-an-ni-nu "rains are falling (lit: raining)" (l. 25).

This could perhaps be an idiom learned at school.

i-il-lu-ū "they will stand forth" (l. 15').

Cf. *ji-il-lu-ū-ni*, (l. 7), which seems to occur in a similar context.

All other forms in our text have the ending *-ūni*, including all statives. It is interesting that in Amurru Akkadian the tendency to use the ending *-ūni* with stative forms as well is most prominent in EA 62, a letter of Abdi-Aširta, i.e., one of the earliest letters of the Amurru corpus.

The morpheme *-ūni* is a prominent feature in Amurru Akkadian of the Amarna period. It also occurs in texts originating from the immediate Amurru region, as well as in some legal texts from Ugarit (Huehnergard 1989: 166-9). It may certainly be taken as definite proof for

an early dating of the General's Letter, and as significant support for a provenance in the Amurru region (so already Finley 1979: 89-90).

SYNTAX AND GRAMMATICAL SEMANTICS

As for the syntax and semantics of the grammatical features (as compared with lexical semantics), the following should be noted:

(1) Genitive constructions between human substantives and adjectives

Amurru Akkadian attests a special genitive construction between human substantives and substantivized adjectives used to denote titles of functionaries.

Likewise, the General's Letter attests one similar phrase, i.e., *awīlū našširūtē*, in the following sentence:

ù ip-tú-ru-ni, awīlū(LÚ.MEŠ) na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ

then the guardsmen will leave (l. 23)

Note that this phrase is the subject of the sentence. The adjective *našširūtē* (*našširuttē?*; ← *nāširūtē*, see above, pp. 61-4), which has the oblique case ending *-ē*, must be regarded as a substantivized adjective, functioning as the *nomen rectum*, whereas *LÚ.MEŠ* should be interpreted not as a semantic denominator, but as a logogram for *awīlū* "men", i.e., the *nomen regens* of this genitive phrase. *našširūtē* can hardly be interpreted as a plural abstract noun with the meaning "posts", as surmised by Finley (1979: 91). This is proved by comparing this genitive construct phrase with similarly construed phrases in Amurru Akkadian, such as *awīlū(LÚ.MEŠ) rabūtē(GAL-bu-te.MEŠ)* "the 'greats'" (EA 157: 11), where the *nomen rectum* can only be interpreted as a substantivized adjective.

This construction can be compared to BH phrases like *'anšē bnē blyā'al* "scoundrels" (*Judicum* 19: 22), lit: "people-of sons-of without-worth". Thus, this is probably a feature of a West Semitic substratum. For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon see *AmAkk* §§3.3.1.1.1; 3.3.3.2.

(2) The tense-mood-aspect system

The TMA (= Tense-Mood-Aspect) system of the General's Letter conforms in great detail to that of the Amarna Amurru letters, where the following TMA categories may be discerned:

	dynamism	tense	proximity	modality
stative	∅	∅	∅	∅
<i>iparras</i>	+	∅	∅	∅
<i>iprus</i>	+	+	∅	∅~+
<i>iptaras</i>	+	∅	+	∅
impv~ <i>lū</i> forms	+/∅	∅	∅	+

Note that the notation "+" implies markedness of the form with regard to the category indicated above that column. The notation "∅" implies unmarkedness of that category.

In the PA dialect of Amurru we have two formal inflected predicative categories which are unmarked as far as TMA is concerned. These are the stative and the *iparras* ("present-future") forms. The semantic difference between these forms is that the stative denotes stativity, while the second category, namely *iparras*, marks the semantic notion of activity or dynamism. This means that the formal category *iparras* is unmarked as far as tense, mood or any other such inflectional *signifiés* are concerned.

Further, there are three marked semantic categories of the verb: *iprus* ("preterite") is marked for (single past) tense; *iptaras* is marked for "aspect", or rather for a non-tense category which we may term "proximity"; the imperative and the *lū*-prefixed forms are marked for modality.

Derivational patterns which denote iterativity or continuousness, such as the *-tan-* affixed stems, may constrain the choice between *iparras* and *iprus* forms. Between these two forms, it is the first, namely *iparras*, that probably be chosen, and this is consistent with what has been said of the meaning of these two forms: since *iprus* marks a single action, it may be perceived as contradicting the meaning of these derivational patterns. It is the derivational pattern that is higher in rank in this situation, to master and constrain the choice between the marked and

the unmarked inflectional form, of which the latter may become the only available alternative.

This trend is exemplified very well in the following passage from the General's Letter:

- 6' [ù[?] i[?] -ta[?] -na]m[?] -h[?]e-ru-nim-ma[!]? awīlī(LÚ.MEŠ)-ia i-na qa-bal mu-ši
 7' [ù i-i]p-pu-šu-ni, tá-ḥa-za-am i-na bi-ri-šu-nu
 8' ù i-ib-bu-ku-šu-nu awīlū(LÚ.MEŠ)-ia ù iš-pu-ku-šu-nu
 9' ú-nu-te.MEŠ-šu-nu ù qaqqad(SAG.DU)-šu-nu i-na dan-nu-ut-ti-ma
 10' uš-te-eš-šú-ni, ù ištēn(1-en) awīla(LÚ-lum) iš-tu bi-ri-šu-nu iš-bat-tū-ni,
 11' ù aš-tá-na-[?]al-šu aš-šu,¹ šār māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI
- 6' My men [were] indeed? [atta]cked [over and over again] in the middle of the night,
 7' [and] a battle was [w]aged between them,
 8' and my men drove them out, and heaped up
 9' their equipment and their property. It was within the fortress that
 10' they were fighting; and one man among them was captured,
 11' and I interrogated him about the king of Egypt.

ippušūni, *ibbukūšunu*, *išpukūšunu* are *iprus* formations denoting narrative forms, and hence single past actions (doubling of consonants in forms of weak verbs reflects the rule of $V:C \rightarrow VCC$, for which see above, pp. 61-4). If the restoration on l. 6' is correct, then we have there a *-tan-* *iparras* form for the iterative past: *ittanamḥerūni(m)ma[?]*. In-between, the Št *iparras* form *ušteššūni*, interrupts the narrative sequence, to be followed later by another *iprus* form, *išbatūni*. Another Gtm form, *aštana[?]alšu*, comes last, and bears the durative connotation of interrogation. (See, for each of the respective forms, the commentary to the text, pp. 42-3 above).

As for the *iprus* modal form, note the following passage:

- 22 ... ù ki-i i-na-an-na 'i-nu¹-ma i-na 1-en u₁-mi
 23 ku-up-pu dá-a-an ù ip-šú-ru-ni, awīlū (LÚ.MEŠ) na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ
 24 ù la ni-i-de₁-šu-nu i-nu-ma uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni,
 25 ukullā (ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ) ù šāba (ÉRIN.MEŠ) til-la-ta
- 22 ... But if, now, one day
 23 the pond overflows, then the guardsmen will leave,
 24 and we shall not know whether supplies and auxiliary troops
 25 will have been introduced.

It may seem that the passage which follows recounts actions subsequent to the entering (of forces?) into Ardat, so that we would tend to interpret this *-t-* form as denoting a past-perfect action. However, this is by no means certain. Moreover, if we accept that *iptaras* may imply either relational or spatial proximity, rather than mere temporal nearness, then *uštēribūni* in its occurrence here, and in its former occurrence as well, may well fit into this category.

For detailed discussions of the TMA system of Amurru Akkadian see *AmAkk* §§3.5-3.6.

(3) Enclitic *-mi*

The General's Letter attests an enclitic particle with emphasizing force *-mi*:

- 27 *i-nu-ma iš-tu 5 arḥē(ITI.5.HÁ) ku-uš-šú i-ik-kal-an-ni*
 28 [*narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)-i*]a 'še-eb¹-ru-ni, sīsī(ANŠE.MEŠ.KURRA)-ia
mi-tu₄-ni, ù šābī(ÉRIN.MEŠ)-ia ḥa-liq
 29 [*ù a-na-ku an[?]-ni[?]-k*]i-'a¹-am lu-ú aš-bá-ku-mi lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi 9 arḥē(ITI.9.HÁ)
 30 [*lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi(?) ša*]tta(M)U.KAM) ù li-ig-mu-ru-ni, ištēn(1-en)-ma zé-ra-ni-ia
- 27 Now, for 5 months the cold has been gnawing me,
 28 m[y chariots] are broken, my horses are dead, and my troops are lost;
 29 [still, I] insist on staying [he]re[?]. I wish I had completed 9 months(' term),
 30 [I wish I had completed (?) a y]ear('s term), so that my enemies would be once and
 for all annihilated.

- 16' ... *as-sur_x(ZUR)-ri ḥa-mu-ut-tá-am*
 17' *šār māt(KUR) mi-iš-ri.KI i-kaš-ša-ad-mi ù 'e¹[-mu-u]q-qa-am*
 18' *la ni-kaš-ša-ad-mi as-sur_x(ZUR)-ri šār māt(KUR) mi-iš[-ri].KI*
 19' *ú-uš-ša-am la ú-uš-ša-am ù šābī(ÉRIN.MEŠ) pí-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma šu-ú-ut*
 20' *ša ú-uš-ša-am ù a-kaš-ša-ad e-mu-uq<-qa>-am*
 21' *ù li-ša-am-mi-id-mi šār-ru šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu) ù narkabātē(GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ)*
 22' *ki-i-me-e [ni-]ip-pu-uš it-ti-šu tá-ḥa-za-am*
 23' *ù ni-kaš-ša-ad e-mu-uq-qa-am*

- 16' Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt
 17' should arrive quickly; then we shall not (be able to) overpower (him)
 18' by force. Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt
 19' should come forth! Should he not come forth, and it is the *pdt*-troops
 20' that come forth, then I shall (be able to) overpower (them) by force.
 21' So, may the king assign troops and chariots,
 22' in order that [we] (can) fight against them
 23' and (will be able to) overpower (them) by force.

Note that *-mi* comes annexed to verbs denoting warning, fear, excitement or request.

Note further the following form:

- 12 ... *a[-na]mu-ti-i-im*
 13 [*i-bal-]lu-ṭù-nim-me-e ù a-i-ki-a-am lu-ú-ul-lik*
 12 For death
 13 [*]*they [will I]live! So where am I to go?

This is evidently the same particle, yet with a long vowel which has caused the change of its timbre to *e*. This change in timbre is a phonological trait of Amurru Akkadian which can be attributed to the influence of a West Semitic substratum. This form of the enclitic particle *-mi* is also attested elsewhere in Amurru Akkadian, as well as sporadically also in other Akkadian dialects. It is notably found in exclamations and questions, i.e., under the influence of sentence-accentual prominence. The significance of the change in timbre has been discussed in *AmAkk* §1.15; see also Izre'el 1987.

It has been noted above that all the occurrences of *-mi* in the General's Letter come attached to verbs (once a stative form) which have a special importance within the discourse that the scribe would like to convey. The same holds true for occurrences of this particle in Amurru Akkadian (attested in EA 62 of Abdi-Aširta and EA 170, a letter sent to Aziru while he was staying in Egypt). This trait should probably be regarded as reflecting West Semitic interference (*AmAkk* §4.7.2.3; cf. Moran 1950: 9-10).

(4) Word order

The unmarked sentence constituent order ("word order") of the General's Letter is similar to that of the earlier Amurru letters. In the corpus of Amurru Akkadian letters one can observe a clear tendency to replace an older PSO (= Predicate-Subject-Object) simplex (= unmarked order) with an SOP simplex in the later letters. ("P" here marks any inflected predicate; "O", which usually stands for "object", marks the position of complements and peripherals. The simplex of nominal sentences with non-inflected predicates is SP throughout the whole corpus of Amurru Akkadian).

In EA 62, a letter of Abdi-Aširta, a PSO order is predominant in sentences with all kinds of inflected precatives. However, in other letters of the earliest period the order PSO is regularly confined to sentences with precative predicates or other modal constructions. The same applies to the General's Letter (e.g., ll. 24'-32'). The General's Letter attests sentences with either verb final position or with verb initial position. It seems that the order PSO is less marked than the order SOP, the latter being dependent on either semantic emphasis or syntactic movement constraints. See further Finley 1979: 90-93; *AmAkk* §5.2.1.

(5) Resumptive pronouns

A salient feature attested in some of the earliest texts of Amurru Akkadian is some (sometimes even extensive) usage of unmarked extrapositions where a morphological entity forms a kernel of the sentence and the explicit subject and object are extraposed to that kernel. The occurring extrapositional types are:

(1) {V+Pron_{accusative} Obj}

(2) {Obj V+Pron_{accusative}}

In these constructions, the Obj(ect) can be either a noun or an object clause. In the latter case the resumptive pronoun can stand for the subject of the object clause (*AmAkk* §5.2.2.3).

This phenomenon is prominent in the General's Letter, where it represents either a special style or a special grammatical feature of its scribe's language (see already Nougayrol 1968: 78). Examples:

17 *ù ki-a-am a-na-aš-ša-ar-šu-nu ḥarrānī(KASKAL-ni)-šu-nu ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu*
18 *a-na-aš-ša¹-ar-šu-nu*

17 Their roads and their entrances

18 I guard.

24 *ù la ni-i-de-šu-nu i-nu-ma uš-te-er-ri-bu-ni,*
25 *ukullâ(ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ) ù šāba(ÉRIN.MEŠ) til-la-ta*

24 and we shall not know whether supplies and auxiliary troops

25 will have been introduced.

- 8' ... ù *iš-pu-ku-šū-nu*
 9' *ú-nu-te.MEŠ-šū-nu* ù *SAG.DU-šū-nu*
- 8' ... And they heaped up
 9' their equipment and their property.

While a substratal influence as the originating power of this feature is indeed possible, the existence of such constructions could — theoretically — have emerged in PA dialects independent of any of its substrata.

As for substratal influence, one should note that a West Semitic interference is especially noticeable in the language of the earlier texts of Amurru, as it is in the General's Letter (see below, pp. 78-9). Extrapositional constructions with a {V+Pron} kernel are particularly attested in Aramaic, notably in Syriac (Nöldeke 189: §222; also §288 under b/3). This similarity in structure is, however, not to be regarded as a specific West Semitic (or common Semitic) trait. Note that Syriac too has absorbed many interferences of other languages, notably Greek. As a limited strategy, extrapositional constructions of similar types are also found in BH (Jollon 140a: §146) and, under some constrictions, in Phoenician too (Friedrich 1970: §287c).

It should be stressed that extrapositional constructions with a {V+Pron} kernel are notably found in contact languages, which is probably a universal strategy (cf. Mühlhäusler 1986: 154; cf. n. 16 on p. 293; further p. 293 n. 15). Hence, in spite of the structural similarity between West Semitic tongues or dialects and the earlier subcorpora of Amurru Akkadian, nothing can be said of the possibility of an actual interference between the substrate languages and Akkadian which may have brought about the usage of extrapositional constructions by scribes of Amurru. (Nougayrol, 1955: XXXVI, has already noted this feature in the Akkadian texts from Ugarit.)

(6) Case ending attraction

A minor trait, which nevertheless may be significant, is a similar occurrence of syntactic attraction of a case ending between EA 62 of Abdi-Aširta and the General's Letter (*AmAkk* §§3.3.1.1.1; 3.3.1.1.2). First note the following sentence from the General's Letter:

- 3 *mi-i-nu i-na-an-n[a -]te.MEŠ an-nu-ut-ti ša be-lí-ia*
 4 *ša i-te-ne-ep[-pu-u]š-šu-nu*
 3 What, now, are these []s of my lord,
 4 that he has been do[i]ng?

Note that the kernel of the nominal predicate (...-]te.MEŠ) has an oblique case marking instead of a nominative one, which agrees with the syntactical status of the resumptive pronoun suffixed to the verb in the relative clause which follows

If the restoration in the following passage is exact, it too reflects a syntactic attraction to the resumptive pronoun on the part of the antecedent, i.e.:

- 4 [*mi-]i-nu a-wa-te.MEŠ-¹ka¹ b[e[?]-l[?]]*
 5 [*ša[?] ta[?]-dá*]b-bu-ub-šu-nu
 4 [wh]at are your words[, my lord,(?)]
 5 [which you] have been [s]aying?
 (EA 62: 4-5)

LEXICON AND PHRASEOLOGY

The lexicon used by our scribe also attests to several ancient lexemes, or forms of lexemes which are absent in the contemporary Akkadian dialects. These may hint at an early date of the General's Letter within the overall sphere of PA in general, and Amurru Akkadian in particular. Note the following:

ayyikiam "where" (l. 13); cf. MB *ayyikâ* (Aro 1955: 170).

annikiam "here" (l. 26); cf. MB *annikâ* (Aro 1955: 170).

arḫiṣ "promptly" (l. 7). This adverb, although attested in Assyrian in all periods, is lacking in the contemporary Babylonian dialect, i.e., MB (*CAD*: A2: 255b; *AHw*: 67b). Apart from its occurrence in the General's Letter, this adverb occurs in two of the letters of the Amurru Amarna corpus (EA 169: 14; EA 170: 32), as well as in other Amarna letters (Ebeling in Knudtzon 1915: II: 1379; Rainey 1978: 64). *arḫiṣ* is unattested in the later Amurru Akkadian corpus (*AmAkk* §3.3.1.6). Its occurrence in our text should be attributed to older stages of the language (*AmAkk* §6.1).

assurri "Heaven forbid" (ll. 16', 18') is a modal particle which denotes apprehension. It is attested spelled with the *AMAR* sign (i.e., *zur*, or *ṣur*): *as-sur_x-ri*. With this form, i.e., *assurri*, this particle is attested in the older dialects of Akkadian and in the Amarna corpus (*AHw*: 76a; von Soden 1949: 388-391; Held 1961: 20-21; *CAD*: S: 412). The spelling of *assurri* with the *AMAR* sign is unattested in the Akkadian literature outside the Aziru letters and the General's Letter. Hence, this form may well serve as strong support for the assumption of an intimate connection between the scribal school of the Aziru letters and the one exhibited in the General's Letter (cf. Rainey 1971: 140; 1978: 65; 1974: 301; Nougayrol 1968: 73 transliterated the *AMAR* sign as *ṣur*; the same *CAD*: S: 410-1).

inūma "when", "as", "now" (ll. 11, 15, 22, 24, 27, 26', 27'), as compared with later *enūma* (cf. *AHw*: 383a).

nīribātu "entrances" (for standard Akkadian *nērebētu*; for this transliteration see *AmAkk* §1.15) in the feminine (attested in the plural oblique case: *ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ*, l. 17) is also probably an inheritance from older times, as it is unattested in nonliterary texts of the core Akkadian dialects following the OB period (*CAD*: N2: 174-6; *AHw*: 780a).

šurrumma "surely" occurs following *inanna* "now" a few times in the General's Letter (ll. 10, 14', 28'), presumably for special emphasis (Nougayrol 1968: 69 n. 3). Apart from sporadic occurrences in PA, this adverb is attested in core Akkadian only in the OB dialect (*AHw*: 1286a).

SUBSTRATAL INFLUENCE

A salient feature of the earlier Amurru Akkadian corpus is the West Semitic influence which its language reflects. West Semitic influence is stronger in Amurru Akkadian the earlier a text is; it is especially prominent in the Abdi-Aširta letters (*AmAkk* §6.2).

West Semitic interference in the General's Letter can be discerned in both its lexicon and its grammar. The following are the most conspicuous substratal influences, to be regarded in the majority of cases as West Semitic ones:

- (1) *awīlū(LÚ.MEŠ) na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ* "guards" (l. 23). We have already discussed this phrase above, p. 68. Compared with similar phrases in BH, it stands to reason that the emergence of such a construction in this dialect is a result of West Semitic influence.
 - (2) Perhaps the abundant usage of resumptive pronouns. See above, pp. 74-5.
 - (3) G present-future patterning with a thematic *i* vowel (*iparris*). See above, pp. 65-6.
 - (4) Modal *iprus*. Substratal influence is probable here, but is not necessarily the only factor for the emergence of this feature (*AmAkk* §3.6.2). See above, pp. 70-1.
 - (5) *annū* as a presentational particle (l. 15). See above, p. 35.
 - (6) *inūma* introducing object clauses. See the commentary to l. 11, pp. 33-4 above.
 - (7) *ištēn* "one" used as an adverb with the meaning "once and for all" (ll. 30, 32'; the first occurrence has an enclitic *-ma*).
 - (8) *ištu biri* "from among" (l. 10'). See above p. 44, the commentary to l. 10'.
 - (9) *ištu arki* "after" (l. 14'). See above p. 44, the commentary to l. 14'.
 - (10) The enclitic particle *-mi* with emphasizing force. See above, pp. 72-3. Further, the change of timbre to *e* in one occurrence of this particle (p. 73).
-

(11) The abundant usage of the conjunction *u* (*AmAkk* §4.6.1).

(12) Sentence constituent order PSO. See above, pp. 73-4.

(13) *imarrur* (l. 29') as a verbal formation of a West Semitic root \sqrt{mrr} "to go out". See commentary to l. 29', p. 49 above.

(14) The lexeme *raḥāṣu* "to smash", used in the obscure idiom *ù lu-ú ni-ra-aḥ-ḥi-iṣ abunnat(UZU.DUR)-šu i-na erṣēti aḥīti(KI BAR)* "we shall smash his belly? in the enemy's? country?" (l. 31'), may be of West Semitic origin (Rainey 1979: 159-160; cf. the commentary to l. 31', p. 49 above).

LINGUISTIC CONCLUSIONS

As against the abundance of isoglosses which the General's Letter shares with Amurru Akkadian of the 14th century B.C., 13th century traits are definitely missing. As against the characteristics discussed at length above, no particularly late features are attested. Amurru Akkadian features which may hint towards the attribution of a text to the 13th century are the $\text{š} > l$ shift before dentals, the change of intervocalic *w* to *m*, total absence of mimation, the complementary distribution of *iptaras* and *iprus* for the denotation of single past actions, SOP word order, systemic Assyrianisms (cf. below, pp. 100-4 for non-systemic Assyrianisms), etc.

One may further raise the question of the attribution of the General's letter specifically to Amurru Akkadian as compared with the other PA dialects in its close vicinity. Indeed, the dialect of Akkadian written by scribes of Amurru during the 14th century B.C. shares some important isoglosses with its neighboring PA dialects. I have earlier (pp. 63-4) mentioned that Qatna Akkadian shares with Amurru Akkadian the phonological rule of $V:C \rightarrow VCC$. Two other important features these two dialects share are the 3 pl person morpheme *-ūni* (pp. 66-8) and constructions with resumptive pronouns (pp. 74-5). Evidently, there are other isoglosses these two dialects have in common, which are not so important as to be mentioned here. It is quite clear that dialects in the same vicinity would share many linguistic isoglosses, be it morphological (as in the case of the plural morpheme *-ūni*, which is a feature of the

lingua franca only), syntactical (e.g., the resumptive pronoun constructions), or phonological (as in the case of the consonant doubling, which undoubtedly reflects a phonological feature of the substratum).

Nevertheless, it is clear that the General's Letter is linguistically much closer to Amurru Akkadian than to any of the other neighboring dialects. Besides minor differences in script and language (e.g., the spelling *e-nu-ma* in Qaṭna, EA 55: 7, as against *i-nu-ma* in Amurru Akkadian and in the General's Letter; more extensive usage of *iptaras* forms; etc.), it is evident that both the Qaṭna scribes and the scribe who wrote EA 59 from Tunip were Hurrian-speaking. Their Hurrian substratum is manifest both in many glosses in Hurrian (in both the dialects of Qaṭna and Tunip) and in ergative constructions (in EA 53 and EA 55 from Qaṭna; for EA 55 cf. Moran 1987: 228 n. 4).¹ As for the General's Letter, its scribe was undoubtedly a native speaker of a West Semitic dialect, as one can tell from the many instances where West Semitic interference manifests itself in his Akkadian writing (above, pp. 78-9). Its Akkadian writing thus manifests itself as a lect² distinct from those written by the Hurrian-speaking scribes of Qaṭna and Tunip.³

The evidence for relating the General's Letter to early Amurru Akkadian, with regard to both its date and its scholarly tradition, should be conclusive. The scribe who wrote this letter

¹ It is a well known fact that linguistic borrowings may cut through languages of different families, and even of different types. This is especially so with phonetic and phonological traits. Thus, two distinct languages like Hurrian and West Semitic "Amurrite" may share the mentioned phonological feature of consonant doubling, or constructions with resumptive pronouns.

² For this term see below, p. 86.

³ There is one text among the 14th century Amurru Akkadian texts which was written by a Hurrian speaking scribe, namely EA 170. However, its Akkadian lect differs in many respects from that of Qaṭna and Tunip, and resembles the Akkadian of the Amarna Mittanni letters (*AmAkk* §6.3).

for General Šumi[- belonged to the same school as the scribes who served Abdi-Aširta¹ and Aziru, rulers of Amurru.² As far as a linguist can judge, this scribe who was at the service of General Šumi[- for the writing of this letter was indeed a scribe of Amurru.

A POSSIBLE EXTRALINGUISTIC SETTING

The historical implications of this theory are not for me to draw. Yet, it is usually unwise, even risky, to put forward a hypothesis or a theory without trying to outline a possible background to match it.

This was indeed the fate of Nougayrol's first insight concerning the dating of our text (see above, p. 19). Thus, if one insists, on purely linguistic grounds, that a text is to be dated to a specific period, it would be better to support this theory by suggesting a plausible extralinguistic setting. That is indeed what I shall try to do in the ensuing few remarks, which may serve as a preliminary for the detailed study offered below by Itamar Singer.

Many Amarna letters attest preparations made by local Canaanite and Syrian rulers for the planned arrival of an Egyptian military expedition. The mention of the expected military expedition almost always refers to the so-called *pdt*-troops, a term which, in the Amarna letters, denotes a unit of the regular Egyptian army (see the commentary to l. 19', p. 47 above). As we have seen, the *pdt*-troops are mentioned in the General's Letter too (ll. 19',

¹ As for the Abdi-Aširta letters, we have already noted above that EA 62 (and possibly also EA 61) is indeed written in a tradition very similar to that of the Aziru letters. EA 60 and EA 371 are written in a different dialect (*AmAkk* §6.3).

² In Izre'el 1988 I associated the linguistic features of the General's Letter with what I termed "the early Aziru letters". I can now see that there was no point in making any chronological subdivision of the Aziru letters on linguistic grounds, apart from the minor point of plene spelling discussed above (p. 65). A reevaluation of the order of the Aziru letters is given by Singer (pp. 128-144 below; summarizing chart on p. 144).

24'). Just to quote one of these Amarna letters, here is a passage from a letter from Beirut, whose ruler writes in response to the Pharaoh's orders:

18 *ša-ni-tam i-nu-ma ša-pa-ar LUGAL-ru*
 19 *EN-ia ^dUTU-ia a-na ĪR-šu*
 20 *ù i-pí-ri ša ĠĪR.MEŠ-šu*
 21 *šu-ši-ir-mi a-na [p]a-ni*
 22 *ÉRIN.ĤÁ pí-tá-at ša LUGAL EN-ka,*
 23 *iš-te-mi ma-gal ma-gal*
 24 *ù a->na-<nu-um-ma šu-ši-ra-ku*
 25 *qa-du ANŠE.KUR.RA-ia.ĤÁ ù*
 26 *qa-du ĠIŠ.GIGIR.ĤÁ-ia ù qa-du*
 27 *gáb-bi mi-im-mi-ia.ĤÁ*
 28 *ša i-ba-aš-ša it-ti*
 29 *ĪR ša LUGAL EN-ia a-na*
 30 *pa-ni ÉRIN.ĤÁ pí-tá-at ša LUGAL EN<-ia>*
 31 *ù lu-ú ti-ra-ḥa-aš ÉRIN.Ĥ<Á> pí-tá-<at->šu*
 32 *ša LUGAL EN-ia ^dUTU-ia DINGIR.MEŠ-ia*
 33 *UZU.SAG.DU LÚ.MEŠ a-ia-bi-šu ...*

18 Furthermore: That the king,
 19 my lord, my Sun-God, has written to his servant,
 20 the dust under his feet,
 21 "Prepare for
 22 the *pdt*-troops of the king, your lord",
 23 I have heard very well,
 24 and now I am prepared
 25 with my horses and
 26 with my chariots and with
 27 all the property
 28 that there is with
 29 the servant of the king, my lord, for
 30 the *pdt*-troops of the king, <my> lord.
 31 May the *pdt*-troops
 32 of the king, my lord, my Sun-God, my divinity,
 33 smash the head of his enemies ...

(EA 141: 18-33)

Note the use of the verb *raḥāṣu* in this context (l. 31), which is similar to its use in the idiom in l. 31' of the General's Letter (cf. the commentary to that line, p. 49 above).¹

Similar evidence is attested in letters from other cities on the Phoenician coastal plain, from the Lebanese Baqa', from the Damascus region and from many cities in Palestine (see further discussion by Singer, pp. 162-9, with many references there).

In recent years, scholars have tended to associate this intended Egyptian campaign with Šuppiluliuma's activities in Syria, and have related it to the treason of Aziru, when that ruler of Amurru renounced his allegiance to Egypt and became a vassal of the Hittite empire (Kitchen 1962: 17; Campbell 1964: 88-89; Na'aman 1975: 208-9, 215-6; and others).

This might well serve as a sound historical ground for the General's Letter. The data in this text attest the presence of a hostile military unit during the General's stay in Amurru. The captive interrogated by General Šumi[- seems to have belonged to a military unit which must have had first hand contact with the Egyptians.

General Šumi[- did not have direct access to the source of rumors about the coming of the *pdt*-troops or about the arrival of the Pharaoh himself. He learned this news from his captive, and found it important enough to send in this letter to his lord, the king. Attention should be paid to the fact that this information did not reach the General directly.

While the historical implications of the old, yet new dating of the General's Letter will be dealt with extensively in Singer's study, I hope to have offered at least a historical setting

¹ Moran (1987: 371 n. 4, following *AHW*: 959) has suggested reading *ti-ra-'a₄-as*, i.e., with an *s* rather than with a *ṣ*, deriving this verb from *rāsu* "smash". This suggestion, however, is impossible as far as the syllabary is concerned: *H₄A* for '*a₄*' is hardly attested in PA, and when attested, it occurs only in literary or scholarly texts (cf. *AS*: no. 317; Huehnergard 1989: 410 no. 589; also Durham 1976: 281-2 n. 2). Our passage here too suggests that a derivation from $\sqrt{rḥṣ}$ rather than from $\sqrt{r'ṣ}$ is to be preferred.

which may serve as support for both the 14th century date of our letter and the Amurru provenance of the scribe who wrote it. Being a linguist, it was my intention to draw attention to the great importance that linguistic data and a thorough linguistic analysis of a text have for any sound historical evaluation of that text.

Let us return, then, to the domain of linguistics. In what follows, I shall offer some further notes concerning the linguistic aspects of the General's letter. By doing so, I hope to advance the discussion of the identity of the General and, by implication, of the king who is the addressee.

INVESTIGATION III

EXTRALINGUISTIC FEATURES: THE GENERAL AND HIS KING

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

It has been emphasized above that the scribe who wrote this letter for General Šumi[- was a scribe of Amurru. I submit that the abundance of linguistic data suggesting a connection between the Amurru scribal tradition and the scribe of the General's Letter cannot be refuted. There are many linguistic isoglosses, some of them unique to the Amarna Amurru corpus, which make the linguistic affiliation of the General's Letter to the Amurru letters incontrovertible.

Nevertheless, it is possible to discern some signs of non-systemic variations in the language used by the scribe who wrote the General's Letter. The language he uses reveals some glosses which are suspected of having been borrowed from a different PA dialect — one which appears to be very closely related to those attested in the Akkadian scribal traditions of Boghazköy.

Before investigating these glosses, however, I wish to discuss the notion of "system" in the context of a PA text, and to lay stress on the significance of deviations from a relatively coherent system.

THE NOTION OF SYSTEM. DEVIATIONS FROM THE SYSTEM AND NON-SYSTEMIC AFFINITIES

The notion of system has been recognized as an intrinsic characteristic of language. Any utterance can be understood only as part of a linguistic system, and understanding the relationship between diverse elements of that system is a *sine qua non* for understanding the overall structure of that particular language.

We all know that no language is a uniform system without variation. This is not to say, however, that language is incoherent. Linguistic research, especially in the last three decades, has discovered that variation is also an inherent and innate characteristic of language, and that it too, like any other linguistic trait, is subject to structural rules.

Peripheral Akkadian, being an offshoot of the Akkadian language of Mesopotamia, consists of many dialects and subdialects. Most, or even all of these subdialects were confined to just a small group of speakers. These were scribes of a certain school or of a specific scholarly tradition, and possibly also diplomats, administrators, and other officials. Being a second language, PA is subject to variation more than any of the Akkadian dialects of the core. This is a result of the diversity of scholarly traditions, varying degrees of knowledge, the abundance of substratal interferences, the borrowing of traits from different genuine Akkadian languages (namely, Babylonian and Assyrian), the absorbance of different kinds of formulaic chunks, and so forth.

Each scribe had his own idiolect, which may sometimes have been very different from the language used in the writing of some of his colleagues. Moreover, a single scribe may have wound up producing texts among which the differences in language were considerable. It is hence worth studying the language used in each text separately. Each text thus exhibits a single linguistic system. The term "lect" is convenient to refer to a single linguistic system, whether of a single scribe or of a single text reflecting a unique linguistic system of its own, even from among a choice of texts written by one and the same scribe (for a more general outlook on this term one may consult, e.g., Berrendonner, Guern and Puech 1983: ch. 1).

A linguistic system of a single lect is coherent. Yet, a scribe may sometimes lapse into other lects in the course of writing. Such lapses might be the usage of a formulaic chunk which is usually used in (any kind of) literature, a word from his mother tongue which he admits when he lacks an Akkadian term ("a gloss"), epistolographic opening addresses (where he uses a different word order and sometimes also different verbal forms than in the rest of the letter), and so on.

Many such deviations from the system are subject to rules, whether linguistic or extralinguistic. E.g., the usage of an SOP word order (for the formulation see above, p. 73) in a letter's opening address by a scribe who otherwise uses an SPO order is constrained by the very fact that the former order is used in the opening formula. Another example is that in many Amarna letters from Canaan, reference to the Pharaoh constrains usage of a verbal form which is closer to standard Akkadian than are the other verbs, the latter formed according to a mixed Canaano-Akkadian system (Izre'el, forthcoming b). And there are many other examples.

There are, however, deviations from the system which cannot be accounted for by such rules. A good example would be the glosses mentioned above, which are obviously borrowed from a different system. E.g., a lot can be learned from such glosses about the mother tongue of the scribes who wrote them. Thus, a student of PA, when encountering such a form, should ask himself about the reasons for the occurrence of that form which deviates from the norm. Important insights may thus be gained.

ANOMALIES IN THE LINGUISTIC SYSTEM OF THE GENERAL'S LETTER

Let us now return to the General's Letter, and take a closer look at some linguistic features attested in it which are alien to the scribal traditions of the Amurru texts of the Amarna period.

There are three words in this large tablet which reflect a deviation in the use of syllabic signs including a sibilant. These are:

ši-ma-an "(the month of) Sivan" (l. 4).

ši-im-qa-am "contact" (< approach) (l. 28').

tu-ša₁₀(SA)-ri "plain" (l. 20).

The spelling *ši-ma-an* for the month name *simān* is a peculiarity attested for this word only here. In addition, I know of four other occurrences of the cognate common noun *simānu* spelled with a *ŠI* sign. In all four, this form seems to have the meaning "the proper time"

rather than being a designation of the month's name (cf. *AHw*: 1237b s.v. *simānu* II; ; *CAD*: S: 268-270; cf. *AHw*: 1044b). All these occurrences of this spelling for *simān-* are from texts unearthed in Ugarit.

The first two occurrences come in two copies of a treaty between King Niqmepa of Ugarit and the Hittite emperor Muršili II, the text of which can be restored thus:

ù i-na ši-ma-ni a-na LUGAL a-šap-pa-ra-ak-ku a-na muḥ-ḥi LUGAL al-kà

At the proper time that¹ the king, I, write to you, come to the king.

(RS 17.353: 10-11 = *PRU IV*, p. 89 and RS 17.407: 9' = *PRU IV*, p. 91; see Del Monte 1986: 14; Kestemont 1974a: 96; Kühne 1975: 242)

Both texts are regarded as originating in Hatti (Kühne 1974: 144,145; van Soldt 1986: 194, 195; cf. Kestemont 1974a: 86-7).

The other two occurrences come in literary texts:

ī-na? ši-i-ma-ni¹¹ ardatu lem[uttu

at the proper time in which the ev[il] female-servant ...

(RS 22.439: III: 10'-11' = *Ugaritica V*, no. 163, p. 279)

ummī^{mi} ša-mu-tù ši-ma-an | me-e zēri m[a]ḥ-ru-ú

My mother is rains at the proper time, the first water for seed(s)

(Nougayrol: *Ma mère est une pluie au bon moment, la première eau des semis*)

(RS 25.421: 32'-33' = *Ugaritica V*, no. 169, p. 313)

Formal features suggest that both these texts are either imports from Boghazköy or duplicates of Hittite-Akkadian texts originating in Hatti. The second of these texts is trilingual, and is composed of four columns: Sumerian, "phonetic" Sumerian, Akkadian and Hittite. The accepted view is that RS 22.439, was written in Ugarit proper, and that RS 25.421, was imported from Hatti (as suggested and discussed by Nougayrol, 1968: 276-7; 310; also van Soldt 1986: 247 and 260; cf. Huehnergard 1989: 310). It can be safely assumed that the direct source of both texts was Hatti.

It seems then that although all four texts were found at Ugarit, they either originated in Boghazköy proper and were imported to Ugarit from Hatti, or they are duplicates of Hittito-Akkadian texts imported from Hatti.

The origin of the usage of the sign *IGI* (*š*i) for a supposedly phonemic string /*si*/ of an Akkadian word can be attributed to a Hittito-Akkadian scribal tradition. In fact, this usage may have had its origin in the cuneiform writing of the Hittite language. The Hittite scribes used the *š*-series of signs for their own writing in the Hittite language (Friedrich 1960: 32, §27; Gamkrelidze 1961: 409), and accordingly when writing Akkadian, tended to replace the Akkadian *s* signs with *š* signs (cf. Jucquois 1966: §39; Durham 1976: 356-9).

The set of signs which in contemporary Akkadian represented /*š*/ are hence widely attested in Akkadian texts written in Boghazköy. Durham states that "in contrast to ... spellings familiar in OBab, stand a large number of exx. employing *sa*₇ ('ŠA'), *sI*₁₇ ('IGI'), *su*_x ('ŠU'), and their counterparts *āZ* ('AŠ'), *ēZ* ('EŠ'), and *īZ* ('IŠ')" (p. 357). These spellings are not necessarily restricted to specific roots or lexemes, as we shall see below for similar attestations in other PA dialects. They occur in all environments (except in pronominal suffixes which are subject to assimilations as in standard Akkadian) (*op. cit.*, p. 358; see examples both in Durham's dissertation and in Labat 1932: 33-37).

Hence, Durham concludes (pp. 58-9) that the possible alternative hypotheses for the phonological origins of this spelling tradition¹, namely an intrusion of non-Babylonian orthography, or true phonological merger of /*s*/ and /*š*/, are not mutually exclusive. Regarding the usage by the Hittite scribes of the *š*-series signs in writing their own language, Durham's suggestion that Hittite phonology has to do with the evolvement of this spelling tradition does, indeed, rest on solid grounds (cf. already Jucquois 1966: 267-8; also Labat

¹ I have not touched upon the difference in the spelling of the pronominal suffixes here, for which see Durham's discussion, *loc. cit.*

1932: 36-7). We will return in a short while to the implications of this assessment for our discussion here.

The tendency to replace *s* signs with *š* signs is definitively a salient trait of Akkadian texts of Hittito-Akkadian scribal traditions, as no other scribal tradition attests this feature inherently (cf. Durham's comparative notes, pp. 359-362). For example, among the special features which may disclose a Hurro-Akkadian tradition, one may include the possibility of confusion between *s* and *š* in a way which runs counter to the Hittito-Akkadian tradition discussed above, namely a tendency to replace *š* signs with *s* signs (Adler 1976: 6-8; cf. Bush 1965: §2.1.1.3). The latter tendency is, in fact, also reflected in the spelling of the noun *tūšaru* "plain" in our text (see further below, p. 96-8).

I have already referred to the fact that unlike the Akkadian of Boghazköy, where the usage of *š* signs for /*s*/ syllables is rather widespread and relatively indiscriminate throughout the whole range of the lexicon, other scribal traditions where this trait is attested confine it to specific lexemes.

Take, for instance, the occurrences of this phenomenon in the Akkadian of Ugarit. Huehnergard, who discussed what he had termed "confusion of sibilants" (1989: 111-114), noticed that "several of the examples, especially in the non-canonical texts, such as the forms of *rakāsu* and *samāhu*, have close parallels elsewhere in WPA (i.e., Western Peripheral Akkadian) and are probably derived from a common WPA tradition, where the confusion of *s* and *š* is attributable to orthographic conventions harking back to Oakk practice and to the influence of Hurrian and/or Hittite phonology" (p. 113).

This is no doubt correct. However, one has to distinguish between spellings of /*s*/ syllables with *š* signs and of /*š*/ syllables with *s* signs. The latter, as we have seen (and shall return to further below), has to be attributed to a Hurro-Akkadian origin, while the former is to be regarded as a feature of a Hittito-Akkadian tradition.

Compared to Boghazköy Akkadian, the distribution of the usage of *š* signs for forms of lexemes of which a phonemic /*s*/ is expected is rather limited in other PA dialects, and is

confined to a small definable group of lexemes. These are the lexemes attested outside Boghazköy and reflecting the same phenomenon:

ḥasāsu "think, be mindful" (Egypt, EA, Alalakh), *kasāpu* "chip, break off" (in the form *kasip*, Emar), *nakāsu* "cut" (EA), *rakāsu* "bind", usually with legal connotation (PA), *salāmu* "make peace" (PA), *samāḥu* "unite, mix" (Ugarit), *sanāqu* "arrive, approach" (Carchemish).¹

¹ There are some other sporadic cases which attest similar phenomena in other lexemes, yet they are rather idiosyncratic: *ma-ši-ik-tú* for *masiktu* "something bad" (*Idrimi* 1. 4), *tùk-tá-aš-ši* for *tuktassi* "you bound" (Ugarit, doubtful, see Huehnergard 1989: 112 with n. 54); *na-aš-ru* for *našrū* "they are guarded" (EA 230: 19).

For the text *MSL X: 37ff/107ff*, where similar non-etymological spellings with š signs are also attested, see Huehnergard 1989: 113. Cf. further p. 99 n. 1 below.

The formulaic *kabāšika*, from *kabāsu* "to step", is almost always spelled in Amarna with ŠI (Ebeling in Knudtzon 1915: II: 1431 s.v.). This, however, should better be attributed to a West Semitic influence (cf. BH $\sqrt{kbš}$, Baumgartner 1974: 439a; cf. *AHW*: 415).

Derivatives from *mesû* "to wash" are attested with /š/ signs in both Ugarit and Alalakh. The Alalakh occurrence is, however, dated to the OB period. The originating force of the emergence of $\sqrt{mšv}$ out of \sqrt{msv} requires a special treatment, other than that given the rest of the material. It should be remembered that alternation between *s* and *š* is also attested sporadically in core Akkadian dialects. This, of course, is far beyond the scope of the present investigation.

The ensuing thesis is put forward in order to achieve a plausible explanation for the occurrences of the lexemes *šimān* and *šimqa(m)* in the General's Letter, and aims only at achieving this specific goal. An elaboration of the specifics dealt with below is certainly needed, and should be a part of a further elaborated investigation into the orthographic and phonological distribution of the alternating roots with sibilants in PA, as well as their diffusion in the western periphery.

Data from: Alalah: Smith 1949: 28; Dietrich and Loretz 1981: 224 Aro 1956: 362; Giacomakis 1970; Greenstein and Marcus 1976: 60-62. Amarna: Ebeling 1910: 41 and Böhl 1909: §10; Ebeling in Knudtzon 1915, vol. II s.v.; Rainey 1978 s.v.; cf. Adler 1976: 7. Boghazköy: Labat 1932: 34-37; Durham 1976: 356-359. Carchemish: Huehnergard 1979: 28. Egypt: Cochavi-Rainey 1988: §1.14; Emar: Arnaud 1985, 1986; Ugarit: Huehnergard 1989: 111-114. Various PA dialects: Jucquois 1966: 267-8; Greenstein and Marcus 1976: 60-62; Durham 1976: 356-359; also, the dictionaries under the respective entries. In Nuzi the sibilants are usually spelled expectedly; in rare cases the rules are different than those adduced for the western dialects (Berkooz 1937: 60-63).

It is clear from the above list that the diffusion of these spellings can be described in terms of the relationship between the lexicon, spelling habits, geography, direction of diffusion, and cultural proximity.

Take, for instance, the etymon *rakāsu* "to bind" (usually in legal connotations). Derivatives from this etymon are attested all over the periphery, spelled with either *s* or *š* signs. Examples:

ri-ik-ši (KBo I, 1 = Weidner 1923, no. 1, l. r58 = the Šuppiluliuma-Mattiwaza treaty); but: *ri-ik-sà ir-ku-sú* (l. 2 of the same tablet); *ri-ik-si* (in the duplicate, KBo I, 2 = Weidner 1923, no. 1B, ll. r34, r35).

ri-ik-ša (KBo I, 3 = Weidner 1923, no. 2, l. r35 = The Mattiwaza-Šuppiluliuma treaty); but *ri-ik-si* (ll. r26, r44, etc.), *ri-ik-si-šu* (l. r63).

That in the Akkadian of Boghazköy this is an orthographic rather than a phonetic feature is suggested not only by the existence of variant spellings of similar forms in a single tablet, but also by a comparison of the spellings of the lexemes *hasīsi* "intelligence, knowledge" (in the epithet for Ea, lord of wisdom) in these respective tablets:

ha-sí-[sí] (KBo I, 1 = Weidner 1923, no. 1, l. r55); *ha-si-si* (KBo I, 2 = Weidner 1923, no. 1B, l. r31) *ha-ši-ši* (KBo I 3 = Weidner 1923, no. 2, l. r40).

The scribes of Anatolia indeed confused the Akkadian phonemes /*s*/ and /*š*/, and one can conclude that it is their innate phonological structure and their orthographic habits in writing Hittite that caused this variation in the spelling of the respective sibilants in Akkadian.

Whether the two treaties were actually inscribed by scribes of the respective rulers is irrelevant for this specific question. Even if that was indeed the case, spelling features, as well as features of language and style, may easily have been transferred between the composing authorities and their executors. We do have evidence that this is indeed possible. The scribe who inscribed the Aziru-Niqmaddu treaty was definitely a scribe of Amurru, yet some of his expressions reflect the words of the Ugaritic king (Nougayrol 1956: 285 n. 1; *AmAkk*: §0.2; for some methodological notes concerning the attribution of other treaties see, e.g., Kestemont 1974b: 116-124; cf. in application Kestemont 1974a: 86-7; further Wilhelm 1988a, especially pp. 362-3).

Another illustration of this latter observation is the occurrence of the very term *riksu* "(legal) binding, treaty" in a tablet from Alalah, namely the Pilliya treaty:

ri-ik-ši (AT 3: 1), *ri-ik-ša* (AT 3: 4).

As for Alalah, this specific treaty-term might have been borrowed together with its spelling. It should be noted that the treaty in which this spelling occurs was found in Alalah, yet it was probably written by a scribe of Kizzuwatna. Thus, this feature should be attributed to Kizzuwatna rather than to Alalah.

Spelling with *š* signs of derivatives from *rakāsu* are indeed attested in the Šunaššura treaty from Kizzuwatna (for the provenance see Wilhelm 1988a):

ri-ik-ša-am ... ir-ku-šu (KBo I, 5 = Weidner 1923, no. 7, col. i, l. 4)

Here, and elsewhere in PA outside the Akkadian of Boghazköy, it may well be more accurate to regard this term, namely *riksu*, as interchangeable with *rikšu* on a phonological-lexical basis rather than regarding these spellings as a mere orthographical feature (cf. *AHW*: 985b s.v. *rikšu*; 985a s.v. *riksu* C2ab; from Alalah von Soden has only the reference mentioned above; similarly Giacumakis 1970: 98). The borrowing of this term and its derivatives from Hittite treaties seems reasonable, and where scribes learned Akkadian terms

from written versions, it may well happen that a phonological change took place on the basis of reading "misspelled" words.¹ Thus the spread of a new etymon, *rakāšu*, i.e., with a /š/ phoneme, became possible.

Moreover, it may well be that the Hittite phoneme written in the cuneiform š signs was acoustically, if not articulatorily, close to the auditory features of the Akkadian phoneme which we usually transliterate as /š/. As for Akkadian, we may assume that this phoneme was a voiceless lateral sound, related to the West Semitic and Proto-Semitic phoneme /š/ (Steiner 1977: chapter XIX; Diakonoff 1980: 10-11). As for Hittite, transcriptions of Hittite names in other scripts (Egyptian and Ugaritic) suggest that their own phoneme /š/ was acoustically closer to [š] than to either [s] or [ʃ] (cf. Rainey 1974b: 185a;² for transcriptions of Egyptian names in texts from Boghazköy see further Edel 1948: 26ff; cf. also Albright 1934: 54-56).³

An important term like *riksu* and its derivatives, used in treaties between the Hittites and their neighbors, might hence be transmitted, either orally or through the medium of writing, to many scribal schools. In effect, a situation where scribes of two countries sit and draw up a treaty or the like together is fertile ground for such borrowings, not only in writing, but orally as well.

¹ Israeli Hebrew, spoken after many years of literary existence, knows several neologisms like that, e.g., *šdera* "boulevard" (for *sdera*, originating root \sqrt{sdr} "(be in) order", spelled with an unpointed ψ [for ψ , i.e., original \dot{s}]).

² For a different view see van Soldt 1986: II: 68 n. 117.

³ By the way, this may also explain why the Hittite had borrowed the š signs from the Akkadians rather than the s or the z signs for the denotation of syllables containing their respective sibilant phonemes. The reason is clear and simple: the Hittite phoneme was acoustically closer to the Akkadian phoneme /š/ than to any of the other Akkadian sibilants (with Held, Schmalstieg and Gertz 1987: 7-8; pace Friedrich 1960: §27; Gamkrelidze 1961: 410-11).

Some other examples of derivatives from this etymon are:

ri-ik-ša ir-ku-uš RS 17.230: 3 = *PRU IV*, p. 153f. (Carchemish; see Huehnergard 1979: 28); *ri-ik-sa ir-ku-uš* (Arnaud 1986, no. 202: 4), *ri-ik-ša ir-ku-uš* (*loc. cit.*, no. 201: 24-25) (Emar); *ir-ku-uš-šu* (RS 15.92: 6 = *PRU III*, p. 54ff., cf. on l. 5 *ir-ta-ku-us* (Ugarit; see Huehnergard 1989: 111); *ra-ak-ša-šu* EA 116: 28; *ra-ak-šu-nu* EA 109: 27 (EA; see Rainey 1978: 88).

The data indeed suggest that the etymon which had spread in the Mesopotamian periphery had /š/ in its consonantal root skeleton, and would be spelled accordingly in various PA scribal schools. Spellings with *s* signs may be the result of a better knowledge of the Akkadian origin of this root resulting from a different wave of linguistic spread. It may also happen, theoretically and for some cases, that a spelling with an *s* sign may be the result of inverted spellings, according to the Hurro-Akkadian tradition (i.e., with *s* signs for /š/ syllables).¹

The borrowing can take various directions and make recourse to diverse means. A legal term may follow a different route than a literary one; an economic term may spread altogether differently. Thus, *ḥasāsu* "think, be mindful" may be transferred in a form having two /š/ phonemes through either epistles or texts written in a literary genre, and also through treaties (cf. the mention of "Ea, lord of wisdom" in the Boghazköy treaties quoted above, p. 92, for this word). *kasip* "be sliced", a ritual term, may have been transferred through ritual texts, but also through legal texts.

The medium of written legal texts (to include treaties etc.) is indeed a plausible vehicle for the transference of such terms from the Hittite core southwards. Thus, spellings like *ri-ik-šu* or *ka-ši-ip* might have been transferred to Emar through texts written in and brought from Carchemish. Indeed, both texts from which examples have been brought above from Emar

¹ The evidence from Ugarit perhaps suggests an actual pronunciation of the form *ir-ku-uš-šu* with a double š as a result of assimilation of the š of the pronominal suffix.

are texts written "in front of Ini-Teššub, King of Carchemish" (Arnaud 1986, no. 201: 1 and no. 202: 1).

This brings us back to the question of the two lexemes attested in the General's Letter, namely *šimān* and *šimqa(m)*. We have seen that *šimān(i)* is attested only in texts which have a close relationship with the Akkadian dialect written in Boghazköy. Cf. further *ši-im-at* for standard Akkadian *simat* "proper appearance" (*status constructus*) and the like (in the idiom *simat pānīšu* "complexion") in KBo I, 12: r13 (Šamaš Hymn; cf. Ebeling 1954: 216; CAD: S: 283a), another derivative of the same root as $\sqrt{\text{š}}/smn$.

As for *šimqa(m)* "contact" (< approach), if this rendering and etymology are correct (see commentary to l. 28', pp. 48-9), it should be noted that, interestingly, the only attestations of the lexeme *sanāqu* "arrive, approach" with a *š* sign occur, to the best of my knowledge, in texts from Carchemish, and, of course, in texts from Hatti. There are two forms attested:

iš-ni-qu (RS 17.229: 8 = PRU IV, p. 106, and another one text from Hatti; RS 17.346: 2 = PRU IV, p. 176, and passim in texts from Carchemish); *na-aš-ša-ni-iq-mi* (RS 17.346: 7 = PRU IV, p. 176).

(For the second form see Huehnergard 1979: 66-67; cf. CAD: S: 133b.)

Thus, for the two extra-systemic spellings with the sign *ši* in our text, we have correspondences either in texts the source of which is attested as being in Hatti, or in texts from Carchemish, a principal Hittite administrative center.

How did our scribe acquire these words? We shall return to this question again below, after we discuss the third word reflecting an idiosyncratic spelling in this letter.

This word is *tu-ša₁₀-ri* "plain", where the sign *SA* is used for etymological /*ša*/. Note that the sign *ŠA* is used extensively throughout this text. This spelling seems to be unique for the noun *tūšaru* in extant Akkadian literature (AHw: 1374). Thus, while there are no other /*si*/ syllables in this letter with which to compare the spelling of this vocable, it nevertheless suggests a systemic deviation, i.e., it is alien to the system used by this scribe.

Are we dealing with two aspects of the same linguistic phenomenon, or should we look for different explanations for these spelling peculiarities?

Nougayrol assumed that the scribe who wrote this text "écrit, *et prononce sans doute, assez mal les sifflantes*" (1968: 78, my emphasis). He, however, based this conclusion on assumed mistakes in the spelling of other sibilants as well, which are by no means exceptional for this scribal tradition. These are the morphophonemic spellings of the 3rd person pronominal suffixes, the spelling of the particle *assurri* "heaven forbid", and the substantive *zērāni(ya)* "(my) enemies", also dealt with below. This other *prima facie* aberrant use of the sibilants is, in fact, part of the linguistic system of 14th century Amurru Akkadian (cf. *AmAkk* §§1.4; 1.9; 1.15 respectively). The three words with which we are dealing here are the only exceptional ones.

Exceptional spellings attached to a single word or to a single morpheme are not uniquely attested in this text; they can be found elsewhere in PA. Also, there are other words which may be linked to a specific peculiar spelling. An example of this, somewhat related to the present discussion, is the peculiar and rather idiosyncratic spelling of the word for "heaven", namely *šamû*, written with a *SA* sign in most of its occurrences in the Amarna letters from Canaan. There can be no phonological explanation for this spelling based on the influence of either the Akkadian superstratum or any of the known Canaanite substrata (Izre'eI 1978: 29 n. 72; cf. further Moran 1975: 163 n. 51). Another illustration of a traditionally adopted spelling attached to one etymon is the spelling with the sign *ZÉ* for derivatives of *zêru* "to hate", which is attested in our text too (*zé-ra-ni-ia* "my enemies", ll. 30, 32'; see discussion in *AmAkk* §1.15).

It is, however, most difficult to trace the origin of each such spelling idiosyncrasy. Nevertheless, when it comes to the vocables discussed here, I have tried to trace the primary origin of this practice, and have reached the conclusion that it must be traced back to Hittite influence. Can the same be said of the spelling of *tūšari*? Here the same conclusion is much more problematic, and seems inconceivable. In effect, the usage of the sign *SA* for /sa/ is unattested in Boghazköy Akkadian (Durham 1976: 258). However, the spelling of *SA* for

/ša/ (i.e., *ša₁₀*) is widely attested elsewhere in PA dialects, and an idiosyncratic spelling like the one discussed above is perfectly admissible as an explanation for this unique spelling of *tūšaru*.¹

Returning now to *ši-ma-an* and *ši-im-qa-am*, one may justly raise the question whether these spellings reflect an actual pronunciation of these lexemes with a phone similar to the pronunciation of the corresponding graphemic */š/* or, like *tu-ša₁₀-ri*, a mere spelling idiosyncrasy.

The scribe who wrote the General's Letter was using a language and scribal tradition very similar to those of EA 62 and the Aziru letters. Hence I have reached the firm conclusion that this scribe was a scribe of Amurru. To account for sporadic glosses from Hittito-Akkadian, one may refer again to the suggestion raised above concerning the historical setting of this letter, namely, that it is connected with the apostasy of Aziru, when he renounced his allegiance to Egypt and became a vassal of the Hittite emperor. Since the General notes in this letter that he had learned about a possible Egyptian campaign to that area, it may be assumed that he is someone connected with a Hittite imperial force sent to safeguard the area.

In such a setting, the spelling of *ši-ma-an* and *ši-im-qa-am* fits nicely, suggesting as it does the use of sporadic forms of Hittito-Akkadian by this Amurrite scribe.

A scribe whose writing language reflects a scribal tradition of Amurru must have had contact with another Akkadian dialect from which he could have borrowed these terms. It is suggested that our scribe indeed had this opportunity.

A preliminary hypothetical scenario that one may draw for this borrowing would have a scribe of Amurru writing this letter on behalf of a foreign General. He is trying his best to do his job, yet, being in a foreign social milieu, and perhaps also lacking experience in working

¹ For a possible origin of inconsistencies in the spelling of *š* and *s* signs in PA see Wilhelm 1988b: 49 with n. 34 on p. 64.

in that situation, he may find himself lacking some Akkadian words which he needs for accomplishing his mission. Either a colleague scribe or another official who knows Akkadian may be of help. Either one of them must be connected directly with the foreign military force. In the first case, i.e., a hypothetical fellow scribe, the Amurrite scribe might have learned the required words together with their spelling. Otherwise, he would acquire them orally. In the former case, the question of whether the spelling of these two vocables reflects an actual pronunciation of /s/ or /š/ cannot be answered positively, although, for the reasons discussed above, I would be inclined to regard these forms as reflecting an underlying /š/ (i.e., [š] in pronunciation), rather than /s/. In the second case, however, the answer must be that what our scribe heard was a sound that he would usually spell with a *š*i sign, since had he heard a pronunciation with [s], he would undoubtedly have written these words either with *si* or with a *ZI* sign (i.e., *sī*). His native phonological system, most probably a West Semitic one (see above, pp. 78-80), did distinguish between the phonemes /š/ and /s/. Recall that throughout the whole letter these two sibilants are indeed carefully distinguished.¹

Regarding the analysis offered above, I suggest that in both cases our scribe actually acquired two words with a phonological /š/. The transliteration by *š*i in both cases reflects my view that a phonological feature is indeed the case here (as against my former view of this subject, disclosed by the transliteration of the month name with *si*, in Izre'el 1988: 162). In the case of *šimān*, we know of similar spellings for cognate lexemes only from texts which either originated in Boghazköy, i.e., were imported from Hatti, or were copied from Hittito-Akkadian texts. As for *šimqa(m)*, the root $\sqrt{šnq}$ (< \sqrt{snq}) "arrive, approach" is attested with /š/ only in texts from Boghazköy and Carchemish, the seat of the Hittite viceroy. To the best of

¹ An illuminating example of how Akkadian words in non-etymological forms may have been acquired in the periphery (Ugarit) is the educational text *MSL X: 37ff/107ff*, already mentioned above (p. 91 n. 1), as they exhibit spellings with *š* signs for etymological /s/. This text further exhibits spellings reflecting epenthetic vowels, which may indicate dictation from an original Hittito-Akkadian copy of this lexical text (cf. Huehnergard 1989: 115).

my knowledge, there are no attestations of these two lexemes with spellings reflecting /s/ outside the limited area of Hatti and Carchemish, and evidently not in 14th century texts of the Amurru region. The same can be said of other aberrant spellings which reflect /š/ for what is expected to be spelled with either s or z signs.

Besides the idiosyncrasies hitherto described, there are other features which one might argue had been borrowed from Hittite-Akkadian. These features are, however, more conjectural, in that they must be regarded as reflecting secondhand borrowing. These are features which may, in fact, reflect Assyrian influence.

Amurru Akkadian attests to infiltration of contemporary (middle) Akkadian dialectal traits, of which the ones from Assyrian occur only in its later texts. The latter include the texts from the time of Šauškamuwa, whose Assyrianisms may have resulted from a scribal tradition introduced into Amurru after Pendišenni had returned from Boghazköy. It should be noted that the Pendišenni letters unearthed in Boghazköy are quite exceptional as far as their language is concerned. They lack, in general, the salient traits of Amurru Akkadian; in a way, their language is closer to standard core Akkadian of that period. More than that, it shows close affinities to the northern branch of PA, of which Boghazköy Akkadian is an important offshoot. Assyrianized forms are quite widespread in the Pendišenni letters. Northern PA exhibits Assyrian influence throughout, and the Pendišenni letters from Amurru may well reflect a subdialect of the Boghazköy PA dialectal continuum (cf. *AmAkk* §§6.1; 6.3).

Now, the Amurru texts of the Amarna period do not show direct Assyrian influence (*AmAkk* §§6.1; 6.3). However, an indirect influence of the Assyrian language is nevertheless attested in the General's Letter. Note the following Assyrian-like forms:

- (1) *e-mu-uq-qa-am* "by force" (ll. 14, 17', 20', 23').
la-ad-du-uk "I may fight" (l. 25').
lu-ú ni-iš-bat "we must get (in contact)" (l. 28').
lu-ú ni-ra-aḥ-ḥi-iš "we shall smash" (l. 31').
-

Other apparent Assyrianisms are:

- (2) *li-ša-am-mi-id(-mi)* "may he assign" (l. 21').
šū-ú-ut "he" (ll. 19', 24').

One should also pay attention to:

- (3) *zi-i-nu* "rains" (l. 21).
an-nu-ut-ti "these" (l. 5).
dan-nu-ut-ti(-ma) "fortress"(l. 9').

The four forms of the first group may be regarded as Assyrian formations *par excellence*. *emuqqa(m)* "by force" is attested only in MA and Nuzi besides here (*CAD*: E: 156b; *AHW*: 215b). The three precatives exhibit the Assyrian way of adjoining the precativ-person morphemes.

As for *laddūk*, its formation reminds us of the Assyrian rules of vowel deletion in the precativ morpheme preceding a verbal form (cf. Izre'el, forthcoming a). The vowel *a* following the consonantal allomorph of the precativ particle *lū*, namely *l*, is, of course, that of the 1 sg person-morpheme. It is important to note that there are two other 1 sg precativ forms in this letter, but they are formed according to the Babylonian basic paradigm: *lu-ú-ul-lik* "I should go" (l. 13); *lu-ú-ma-al-li-mi* "may I complete" (l. 29).

It is possible to say that Assyrian influence in the Amarna Amurru texts, if it exists at all, is both idiosyncratic and unpredictable. To explain it, we can resort to either of two hypotheses. On the one hand, these precativ forms here and in other Amarna Amurru texts (for which see *AmAkk* §§2.4.1.3; 6.1) may be regarded as a simplification of the system, i.e., as an independent creation of this PA dialect. This is especially manifest in the formation of the 1 pl precativ forms listed above, which may have evolved as a result of an analogical process, thus avoiding the difficulty of introducing the Babylonian precativ allomorph *i* in forms like *i nišbat*.

On the other hand, these precativ forms in the General's Letter could be understood as reflecting Assyrian interference.

Of the two hypotheses, the first, based on structural simplification, might better account for the isolated occurrence of the 1 pl precativ forms. However, when taking into consideration the 1 sg form *ladduk* in the context of the other 1 sg precatives which show a Babylonian form, one has stronger grounds for positing a trait transferred from a different linguistic system. Recalling the nature and the significance of extra-systemic forms discussed above, it should be noted that these Assyrian-like borrowings, alien to the overall system of this letter, might perhaps be regarded as another sign of Hittito-Akkadian contact by our scribe. After all, northern dialects of PA, as well as the Pendišenni letters from Amurru, are notable for their Assyrian influence.

Concerning the two forms in the second list: *lišammid* may be regarded as an Assyrianism as far as its pattern is concerned. Its precativ construction, however, exhibits the Babylonian way of adjoining the person morpheme. Note, however, that both the stem of this verbal form and the personal pronoun *šūt* are also attested in OAkk; *šūt* is further attested in early OB as well.

The form *lišammid* is a Š form from *emēdu* (see the commentary to l. 21', pp. 47-8 above). It is the only attestation of this form in that period. Similar forms, both from the OAkk and from the LB periods, all show an *a* vowel following the š (*CAD*: E: 145a). In our case, an early tradition should account for this form, since it is well known that PA has preserved old features from ancient periods (cf. *AmAkk* §6.1). Nevertheless, Assyrian influence is not to be ruled out as a possible source of this trait in the General's Letter.

šūt is the regular Assyrian independent 3 sg m nominative pronoun, but it occurs in early (archaic) OB as well (*AHW*: 1290b s.v. *šūt* II; *GAG*: §41i; Hecker 1968: §48; Mayer 1971: §24; Whiting 1987: 9, 75-6). Besides its occurrences in the General's Letter, *šūt* occurs in EA 164 (l. 20), a letter of Aziru. *šū* occurs in the Amurru corpus only in the General's Letter, in

the formulaic sentence *umma šūma* "He (said) thus: " (l. 11'). Both *šūt* (masculine) and *šit* (feminine) are the standard nominative personal pronouns of Amurru Akkadian (*AmAkk* §2.1.1.1), and it is unknown whether these may also reflect Assyrian influence.

As for the third group listed above, the case for Assyrian influence is even less strong. *zīnū* is a simplified plural form of the singular *zīnu* (Nougayrol 1968: 71 n. 8; Rainey 1971: 138; *AHW*: 1529b; *CAD*: K: 551a, s.v. *kuppu*. For the Amurru plural formation see *AmAkk* §2.3.2.1). *zīnu* (rather than *zinnu*) may be an Assyrianized form, since Assyrian forms may reflect a compensatory lengthening in penultimate syllables (Mayer 1971: §22). The General's Letter, however, is notable in reflecting a contradictory phonological trend, namely, many forms where an expected vocalic length is represented in writing by a double consonant (see above, pp. 61-4). It is hence possible that if an isolated form exhibits an opposite feature, alien to the regular spelling trends of this text, it may have been borrowed from a different writing tradition. If that feature recalls an Assyrian linguistic tendency, then this form too might reflect an Assyrianism.

I have mentioned above the Amurru Akkadian phonological feature of consonant doubling, which is a particularly salient feature of the General's Letter. Similar spellings occur in Assyrian as well. These, however, are usually restricted to specific words or morphemes. The last two forms listed above as possible reflections of Assyrian influence, namely *annutti* and *dannuttī(ma)*, are the only two examples of this feature which match similar spellings attested in Assyrian (Mayer 1971: 25, 47). All other forms with consonantal doubling represent a unique feature of the dialect of Amurru and its vicinity (*AmAkk* §1.12). Hence, if some Assyrian feature had indeed penetrated the system or influenced it, I would rather think of a pre-existing phonological feature which might make this interference either possible or even plausible. Such a background may have affected borrowed spelling peculiarities. However, since the tendency to reflect compensatory consonant doubling in spelling is attested throughout this text, one should be reluctant to reach any conclusions from such apparent similarities in spelling traditions for only some of the attested glosses. See further comments on pp. 61-4 above.

One should also note at this juncture that consonant doubling in Amurru Akkadian is different from a similar phenomenon of consonant doubling attested in Boghazköy Akkadian. Whereas in Amurru Akkadian the attested forms exhibit a tendency to reflect compensatory consonantal doubling for an expected vocalic length (*AmAkk* §1.12), Boghazköy Akkadian shows consonantal doubling closing the first syllable of a word, independent of etymological vocalic length (Durham 1976: §29e, pp. 381-2).¹ We have already seen above (pp. 61-4) that the phonological trait of $V:C \rightarrow VCC$ is very typical of the area of Amurru and its surroundings. That the conditioning of consonantal doubling is different in Amurru Akkadian from that of Boghazköy Akkadian lends yet further support to the view that the scribe who wrote this letter did not have a Hittito-Akkadian background himself.

We have seen that many of the forms dealt with above are open to other explanations. Such forms could have been created independently, since the system is capable of productivity, especially of analogic simplified forms (cf. *AmAkk* §6.1). Nevertheless, in all these forms one may suspect Assyrian influence not just because they exhibit Assyrian-like features, but also because they occur in an accumulation of similar traits in one specific text, some of whose other features reflect a scribal tradition close to the Hittito-Akkadian realm, i.e., the extra-systemic introduction of the glosses *šimān* "(the month of) Sivan" and *šimqa(m)* "contact" (< approach).

¹ It is interesting to note the spellings of the Egyptian term *pdt*, which mark consonant doubling in the second consonant (*t*) in both its occurrences in the General's Letter (ll. 19', 24'). I have mentioned above (p. 64) that similar spellings of this term occur in an Amarna letter from Qatna (EA 53: 47, 53, 67, 68), where the language shows some similarities to Amurru Akkadian, especially with respect to this very feature of compensatory consonantal lengthening (e.g., *an-nu-ut-ti* "these", l. 43; *la pal-ḥa-ak-ku* "I am not afraid", l. 67). I cannot tell whether the doubling of the *t* in *piṭṭātē* in both cases has anything to do with the phenomenon of consonantal doubling in Boghazköy Akkadian here mentioned.

Another feature which might remind us of Hittito-Akkadian is the existence of Akkadogram-like forms in the General's Letter. These are:

LÚ-lum "man" (l. 10'); *ÉRIN.MEŠ-bu* "troops" (ll. 15', 21').

In all three occurrences the case ending reflected by the phonetic complement of the Sumerogram is the nominative rather than the expected accusative.

These occurrences are better interpreted as having the nominative as absolutive rather than as a scribal error. This practice may be termed — after Nougayrol — Akkadograms. Its attribution to a Hittito-Akkadian origin, even if possible, may be misleading in this case, since this practice can also be found elsewhere in PA. (For similar practice in other PA dialects see, e.g., Huehnergard 1989: 80 with n. 173. For Akkadograms in Boghazköy Akkadian see Durham 1976: 492–493.) In fact, we have one other certain case of this phenomenon in a letter of Aziru:

11 *ù pa-ni-ia a-na LÚ.MEŠ.İR-tum*

12 *ša LUGAL EN-ia i-na šul-mi*

11 My concern is with the service

12 of the king, my lord, in peace.

(EA 165: 11-12)

Here we have an apparent nominative, i.e., an absolutive-nominative, or an Akkadogram, instead of the expected genitive.

Note further *LÚ.İR-du,-ti* (EA 171: 13, also l. 4), where another possible reading would be *LÚ.İR-TUM-ti* (Moran 1984: 298).

The last trait I would like to cite as conjectural evidence of a Hittito-Akkadian interference in our text is the use of *abāku* to convey the meaning "to drive away, to drive out":

ibbukūšunu "they drove them out" (l. 8').

CAD (A1: 5b s.v. *abāku* 2c) notes that the meaning "to drive away" is used instead of *ṣarādu* in Boghazköy and in NA. For Amurru Akkadian, note the use of *ṣarādu* in Abdi-

Aširta letter EA 62 (l. 38). I would not take this as decisive evidence for a linkage to Boghazköy Akkadian for two reasons: (1) This usage is attested in NA besides its attestations in the Akkadian of Boghazköy, so that its absence in PA or core Akkadian texts in earlier periods may be incidental. More important is the fact that (2) lexemes and meanings are easily transferred among dialects including even those with no direct access, so that, again, its occurrence in another PA dialect besides that of Boghazköy should not serve as conclusive evidence for a direct borrowing, unless some support for this borrowing can be adduced from other domains of the language as well (like the phonological trait cited as evidence in the case of *šimān* and *šimqa(m)*). However, this usage of *abāku* may be added to the other Assyrian-like features already alluded to as cumulative evidence of extra-systemic traits linking our text to Hittito-Akkadian.

All this is not to deny that the scribe of the General's Letter received his primary cuneiform education in a school close (or identical) to that of the Amarna Amurru scribes. The evidence for the attribution of this text to Amurru Akkadian of the 14th century B.C. should, as I have suggested above, be conclusive. There are indeed many isoglosses which support this view. Shared isoglosses with salient features of 14th century B.C. Amurru Akkadian also make the case of Amurru Akkadian, including the General's Letter, distinct from the Akkadian dialect of Boghazköy. Moreover, there are many differences between the Amurru Akkadian of that period and the northern PA dialects, like that of Carchemish, to which the attribution of the root *šnq* (for *snq*) has been made (above, p. 96).

As in any linguistic continuum, space and time are interrelated in the Akkadian of the periphery in general, and in Amurru Akkadian in particular. The notion "northern" equals the notion of lateness as far as Amurru Akkadian is concerned, and this rule can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Mediterranean dialects of PA in general. Thus, the later we proceed in time, and the further north we go, the more features of the middle core Akkadian dialects (i.e., MB and MA) may be discerned in the texts (cf. *AmAkk* §§6.1; 6.3). E.g., the relationship between the mutual 14th century (northern) Akkadian dialect of Carchemish and the (southern) Akkadian dialect of Amurru of the same period, indeed underlines this difference. Carchemish Akkadian is much closer to contemporary core Akkadian than is Amurru

Akkadian of that time, which, as we have seen, shares many isoglosses with OB. As for Amurru Akkadian, it has already been mentioned above that the later we proceed in time, the more shared isoglosses with contemporary Akkadian we discover (for the Akkadian of Carchemish see Huehnergard 1979: 17-163).

Nevertheless, our scribe's language as reflected in this text absorbed some peculiarities which look as though they had been borrowed from a different dialect, assumed to be either from Hatti or from the vicinity of Carchemish. These traits are either sporadically scattered in the text, or else they fit into (sometimes preexisting or simplified) paradigms. My conclusion that they were not part of the primary education of the scribe relies on the sporadic nature of some of these features, especially when these conflict with other forms that are similar in their (grammatical) meaning. In other words, the conclusion that these features are alien to our scribe's Akkadian dialect rests upon the analysis presented above, which has shown, so I hope, that these are extra-systemic elements.

THE GENERAL AND HIS SOVEREIGN

How does all this fit into the historical setting suggested above concerning the apostasy of Aziru?

The extralinguistic setting offered above (pp. 81-4) points towards the conclusion that General Šumi[- was a commander of troops sent to safeguard the Amurru region against a possible threat from the Egyptian side.

Taking the linguistic data as a whole, obtained from both the systemic and the extra-systemic observations of the General's Letter, I would conjecture that it was written by a scribe of Amurru who had been borrowed by General Šumi[- to serve on his staff. This scribe, whose primary education and background lay in the court of Aziru, would have been settled in the plain of Amurru at the headquarters of General Šumi[-. The General might have had another scribe (or scribes) at his headquarters, whom he had brought with him, and whose primary cuneiform education would have been Hittite-Akkadian. If that be the case,

one might assume that it is from that scribe that the Amurrite colleague would have absorbed various linguistic traits or graphemic features.

However, an alternative, preferable scenario would be that the extra-systemic features attested in the General's Letter would reflect a 1:1 application of these words aurally, i.e., by means of dictation. This alternative scenario is to be preferred because of the accumulation of "northern" features which seem to be rather simple, i.e., regular and common lexemes or grammatical patterns (e.g., pronouns, precatives). As we have seen, such borrowings occur in this letter in addition to the month name *šimān* "Sivan" and the noun *šimqa(m)* "contact" (< approach), the latter within the hapax idiom *šimqa(m) šabātu* "get in contact" (see the commentary to l. 28', pp. 48-9 above). Further support to the assumption that the letter was dictated can be adduced from the fact that this accumulation of borrowed linguistic traits tends to be more dense towards the end of the tablet (e.g., the Assyrian-like precative *laddūk* "I may fight", l. 25'; cf. the list on pp. 100-1 above, to which add the lexeme *ibbukūšunu* "they drove them out", l. 8', see above pp. 105-6). A scribe, while listening to an Akkadian dialect different from his own, very probably pronounced in a different accent, would tend to be less conscious to the differences between this dialect and his own the longer the dictation goes. He would thus produce in his writing forms which he hears rather than adhering to his own linguistic system.¹

Can we go a little further with this speculation, and suggest that it was General Šumi[-himself] who dictated this letter to the Amurrite scribe? Moreover, is it possible to hazard a further guess on these lines, and speculate that Akkadian was the only means of communication between the General and the scribe? (Cf. Singer's comments, pp. 178-9 below.)

¹ It has been noted above (p. 53) that for the designation of the string /ta/, the scribe used the sign *TA* on the obverse, yet *DA* on the reverse. Can this also be attributed to the scenario surmised here? Note that otherwise there are no significant differences between the obverse and the reverse.

The above proposal is admittedly speculative, but the underlying point is clear: the scribe who wrote this specific letter was a scribe of Amurru, whose language had nevertheless absorbed some foreign features that appear to reflect a Hittito-Akkadian background. Thus, a further step along these lines may yield the possibility, even the probability, that General Šumi[- was sent to the Amurru region on behalf of the Hittites.

Who, then, is the addressee of this letter? Is it the Hittite monarch himself, or should we look for another king, who was acting on behalf of the Hittite emperor?

The linguistic data point to a Hittito-Akkadian influence which reflects either the dialect attested in the written traditions of Boghazköy proper or the one attested in texts from Carchemish. The question of the addressee — whether it was the Hittite monarch himself or perhaps the Hittite viceroy in Carchemish — is very difficult to solve. While a discussion of the problem will be given in Singer's historical analysis (pp. 171-2), a few linguistic notes are nevertheless in order here.

The Hittite king is usually referred to by his subordinates as "the Sun" (for references see Singer's discussion). This is not the case, however, with the General's Letter. If indeed it is the Hittite monarch who was the addressee of this letter, we might perhaps explain this fact — again — by the origin and educational background of our scribe. For a scribe of Amurru at this early date, the pattern of addressing a king should conform with that in the Amarna letters addressed to the Egyptian Pharaoh. And this, in fact, is what we have in this letter.¹

¹ Although the Amurru letters of the Amarna period do not exactly attest this very same opening address, a similar one is very probably attested in EA 157 of Aziru (Knudtzon 1915: I: 639 n. e).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study of the General's Letter advanced in this chapter has concentrated on the philological, and especially the linguistic aspects of this text. In the first two parts of my inquiry (Investigations I and II) I have endeavored to put forward a thesis with regard to both its dating and the scholarly attribution of its scribe. Many isoglosses, some of them of unique value and significance, have proved, I hope beyond doubt, that the General's Letter was inscribed by a scribe whose cuneiform education was similar to that of scribes of Amurru at the time of Abdi-Aširta and Aziru. This inquiry had also been instrumental in determining the dating of this text, which was found to have been written in the 14th century B.C., contemporary with the time of the above-mentioned Amurrite rulers. Texts written by scribes of Amurru in the 13th century B.C. differ greatly in their orthographic and linguistic tradition from texts written by Amurru scribes of the Amarna period. The linguistic analysis forwarded in Investigation II has further yielded some improvements in the interpretation of the text itself, with some implications for the historical and geographical setting of the General's Letter (Investigation I) as well.

In the second part of the linguistic inquiry (Investigation III), it has been shown that several forms can be discerned which do not match the systemic structure of the language of that text, which had previously been established as closely related to 14th century Amurru Akkadian. Most of these forms were shown to be Assyrianisms either in fact or conjecturally, thus giving us a clue pointing towards a possible influence of northern PA. One of the extra-systemic features, namely the existence of forms written with the sign *ši* for an expected *si*, have been interpreted as evidence which links them to a Hittito-Akkadian scribal tradition, and more specifically to a tradition which had Carchemish as its southernmost border.

In order to interpret the nature of these features as interference of a Hittito-Akkadian tradition, two theses have been advanced. The first dealt with the nature of the above-

mentioned orthographic trait as reflecting a phonological reality, in conjunction with a theory concerning a lexically conditioned grammatical spread. This theory argues that a grammatical component, namely a root, can be borrowed and spread to a specific (geographical or other) degree after absorbing phonetic and phonological changes in a certain language contact area. The second thesis dealt with the nature and significance of extra-systemic linguistic forms, and strove to prove that such components within an otherwise coherent linguistic structure may point towards its interpretation as an ad hoc and distinctive effect rather than a more general structural change.

The conclusions of the investigation into the systemic character of the General's Letter, and the theses developed in order to explain the exceptional forms, have yielded the theory that the scribe who wrote this letter was a scribe of Amurru, whose language had absorbed some foreign features that appeared to reflect a Hittito-Akkadian background. Further, it was conjectured that the Amurrite scribe who actually wrote this letter for General Šumi[- had been influenced in his writing by either a colleague scribe who had belonged to the original staff of the General, or — preferably — by listening to the actual, northern Akkadian dialect in which this letter was dictated to him for putting down on clay.

The door is now open for the historian to study the history of the Amurrite kingdom in the 14th century B.C. and to provide a persuasive historical setting for the General's Letter, to conform with the conclusions of the linguistic analysis forwarded above. As for me, apart from the modest benefits of the philological and linguistic contemplation which I have tried to advance here, what I wanted to emphasize in this and my earlier studies of the General's Letter, is the great importance of linguistic data and thorough linguistic analyses in providing solid grounds for a sound historical interpretation.

PART TWO
AZIRU'S APOSTASY AND THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE
GENERAL'S LETTER

Itamar Singer

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1. METHODOLOGY

The methodological premise on which this historical study is based maintains that in dating a text paleographical and linguistic criteria should, as a rule, be given preference over historical considerations.

For anyone whose philological training has been in the field of Hittitology, this premise hardly needs any further justification. In the sixties and seventies, an amazed scholarly community gradually realized that a large group of Hittite texts of crucial historical importance was, for a long time, misdated by nearly two centuries (for a survey see, e.g., Kořak 1980, with previous bibliography). At a time when linguistic and especially paleographical dating tools had not yet been developed, these so-called "Middle Hittite" texts (*inter alia*, the Indictment of Madduwata and the Annals of Tudḫaliya) were found to fit perfectly into the historical setting of the late 13th century B.C. Later, when most Hittitologists had come to accept the redating based on criteria of script, spelling habits and grammatical forms, it was soon realized that the events mentioned in these texts could be "accomodated" at least as smoothly within the historical setting of the late 15th century B.C. In fact, it was observed that some disturbing "anachronisms" should have led to the right track long before.¹

This last observation, however, cannot be generalized. There are certainly texts containing historical clues that may fit perfectly well within more than one chronological setting, or, as the popular saying has it, "history repeats itself." Of course, history never repeats itself

¹ E.g., the mention of a king of Hurri in the alleged Annals of Tudḫaliya IV, an observation first made by Edmund Gordon (see Gurney 1973: 677 n. 2).

exactly, but the similarity of circumstances may be sufficient to mislead the historian who is dealing with a text of undefined dating.

Such may be the case with the General's Letter. Although Nougayrol has clearly indicated an Amarna Age dating, based on linguistic and paleographical grounds, he did not put forward a fitting historical setting, and many commentators have felt free to move forward on the chronological scale (see Introduction). This has been all the more easy, since the proposed historical interpretations fall only about half a century later, into the age of the Qedeš campaign. Unlike the "Middle Hittite" precedent, this is not a very drastic aberration from the dating established by Nougayrol, especially if it can be ascribed to dialectal "archaisms," rather than chronological evolution. Indeed, some of the historical settings suggested, around the Battle of Qedeš (1275 B.C.), are historically quite plausible.

Nevertheless, in conformity with the methodological principle defined above, the point of departure for an historical interpretation should be Nougayrol's original 14th century dating, now firmly corroborated by Izre'el's detailed linguistic examination. The aim of the following study is not to disprove the plausibility of other suggested historical settings (which in some cases may prove to be difficult), but rather to show that an appropriate historical setting is found exactly within the period defined by the linguistic analyses, and is therefore superior to all others. There is no need to assume any accidental or deliberate "archaizing."

Needless to mention, that the General's Letter gave an impetus to the reexamination of many other texts and historical hypotheses concerning the history of Amurru. The results of these examinations may prove to be more significant and lasting than those pertaining to the intriguing text which stimulated this study.¹

¹ I wish to thank Anson F. Rainey, Peter Machinist, Ya'akov Davidor and Masamichi Yamada for reading the manuscript and offering valuable criticism.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

In his military report the General provides an illustrative description of the region in which his troops were stationed (RS 20.33 obv. 17-20): Half of his chariots were near the coastline (*ina aḫi A.AB.BA*), the other half were located at the foot of the Lebanon mountains (*ina irti ḪUR.SAG Liblani*), while he himself was encamped on the plain inbetween guarding "their roads and their entrances" (l. 17). Obviously, he had carefully chosen a strategic pass where he could effectively carry out his mission.

There are several commanding passes in the region north of Tripoli that would fit this description, e.g., the narrow passes on both sides of Jebel Terbul, east of Tripoli (see map on p. 121). The letter, however, provides a more significant clue as to the General's position. He asks for the reinforcements to be sent to Ḫalba (l. 6: *Ḫal-bá^{KI}*).

This name has been identified by Schaeffer (1968: 678 ff.) as the town of Ḫalbā, some 27 kms. northeast of Tripoli (for the correct rendering of the name see Rainey 1971: 137). At the same time, Schaeffer has also provided a detailed description of the region and of its archaeological sites (ib.: 681 ff.; for a survey of the region see also Sapin 1978-1979). Present day Ḫalbā is located at the site of Alba of the Crusaders (see references cited in Dussaud 1927: 80 n. 3). There is no evidence, so far, of any pre-Hellenistic remains, and therefore Kuschke (1979: 23) has questioned the validity of identifying this site with the Ḫalba of the General's Letter. The name could, of course, have migrated from the large *tell* situated nearby. However, this imposing mound, Tell 'Arqa, has no doubt preserved the name of ancient A/Irqata (see Klengel 1970: 11f.; cf. the gentilicon 'arqī in Gen. 10, 17 and Arca of Classical and Medieval sources).

Although Kuschke (1979: 23 ff.) is certainly correct in dissociating Ḫalbā of the 'Akkar district from "the land of Ḫalab north of Tunip" in Ramses II's report, there is supporting

evidence for Schaeffer's localization of the Ḫalba mentioned in RS 20.33. Rainey (1971: 142 f.) has already adduced the important evidence from the so-called "Satirical Letter," Papyrus Anastasi I, where Ḫal[ba] is located between Ṣumur and Qidši. Moreover, this Egyptian geographical composition specifically refers to the ford of Ḫalba, which may very well be one of the passes or fords guarded by the General (line 17. Cf. also "the pond" in line 23; for *kuppu* see Rainey 1971: 138; Izre'el, p. 38 above).

It is perhaps significant to note that, unlike the other place-names mentioned in the General's Letter (l. 15: KUR MAR.TU^{KI}; l. 19: ḪUR.SAG *Liblani*; l. 5': URU *Ardat*^{KI}), Ḫalba (l. 6: *Ḫal-bá*^{KI}) does not carry any prepositioned determinative. Unless this is a simple omission, could it possibly indicate that Ḫalba was not the name of a specific town, but perhaps the name of the region of which 'Arqa was the main town? The local inhabitants still refer to the large *tell* by the double name 'Arqa-Ḫalab (Schaeffer 1968: 682).

At a distance of less than 4 kms. southwest of Ḫalbā, on the road winding along the foothills of the Lebanon mountain, lies the large mound of Tell 'Arqa (see photographs in Schaeffer 1968: Pl. VIII). It is strategically situated near the southern tip of the large triangle formed by the flat and fertile 'Akkar Plain (see photograph in de Vaumas 1954 III: pl. I). Reaching an altitude of some 150 m., it provides an excellent view over the entire coastline of Amurru, from the region of Tripoli in the south to Ṣumur (Tell Kazel¹), and even further to the north (Dussaud 1927: 80 f.; Schaeffer 1968: 682 n. 1). The *tell* is located on the northern bank of Nahr el 'Arqa, which cuts a deep ravine at this point. Although the stream is none too strong during most of the year, the winter rains and the melting snows of the Lebanon may cause a considerable flooding of its riverbed and the adjacent low plain. This could be the "pond" described by the General, the overflow of which may cause his men to abandon their guard posts (ll. 21, 23). Today the river can be crossed by means of a new

¹ For the history of Ṣumur and its location see Klengel 1984. Cf. also Kestemont 1971: 49. For the excavations at Tell Kazel see Dunand and Saliby 1957; Dunand, Bounni and Saliby 1964.

bridge west of Tell 'Arqa. Slightly more upstream are the remains of a medieval bridge, over which passed the old road which curved for a short distance around the contour of the mound (see photograph in Starcky 1971-1972: 110).

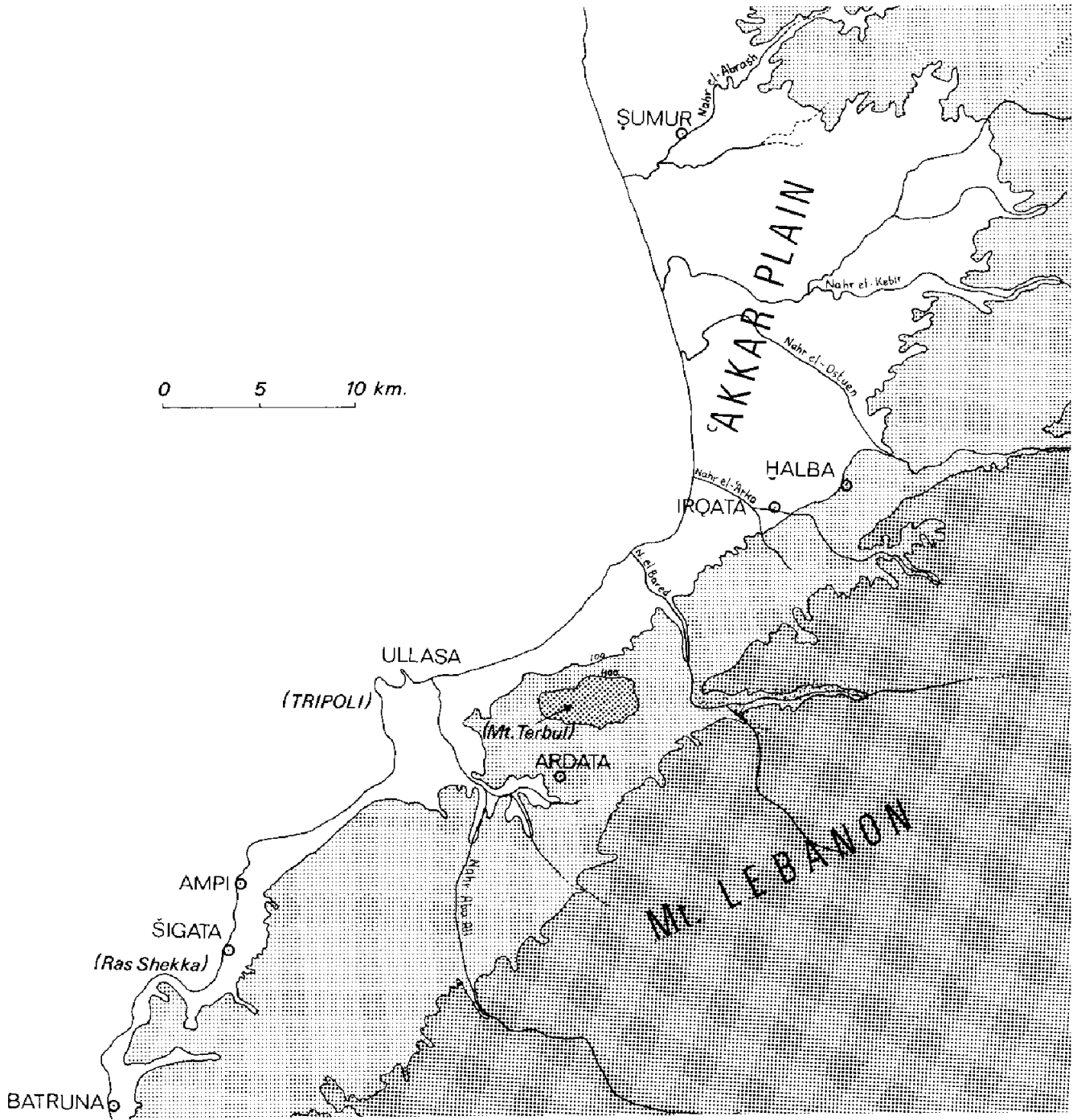
Schaeffer emphasized the importance of the site, undoubtedly the main center between Šumur and Ullasa, and expressed his hope of excavating it (1968: 679 n. 8, 686 n. 1). This was accomplished a few years later by the French Archaeological Institute at Beirut, which carried out a total of five excavation seasons (1972-1974, 1978-1979; for preliminary reports see Will 1975; Thalmann 1978a; 1978b; 1983). With a long and turbulent history extending from the second millennium B.C. through Phoenician, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Medieval times (see Dussaud 1927: 80 ff.; Starcky 1971-72), the early levels of the mound were only exposed over a limited area. Nevertheless, the preliminary results have enabled the excavators to discern a large, probably fortified Middle Bronze Age city, the heavy destruction of which may be attributed to Tuthmosis III's campaign in this region in his 42nd year (Thalmann 1978a: 102; 1978b: 67; 1983: 217). After a short hiatus, the city was rebuilt, but, as in many parts of Canaan, on a much smaller scale.

The General's main troops were probably encamped in the neighborhood of Ḥalba/'Arqa. Stretched over a distance of some 8 kms. between the foothills of the mountains and the sea, they could effectively ward off any passage into the 'Akkar Plain. It seems that from this firm base they were able to conduct military operations into more southerly regions. Unfortunately, the description, in the General's Letter, of the main defense line is followed by a large gap of approximately 30 lines. The text resumes with a description of a military incident which took place in Ardat and its vicinity (rev. 4'-10').

Ardat(a) of the Amarna letters has been located on the basis of name resemblance either at Ardé or at Ardat, two neighboring villages north of Zgharta, about 8 kms. from the coast. The choice between these two possibilities has been settled, for Ardé, by chance finds of second millennium B.C., pottery and metal objects collected by the villagers of Ardé, coupled with a short trial excavation (Salamé-Sarkis 1972; 1973). The village of Ardé actually sits on a large *tell* of c. 35 acres (see photograph, 1972: 128) commanding the region

which extends east of Tripoli. It provides an ideal location for guarding the access to the narrow passes on both sides of Jebel Terbul. West of the mountain runs the road along the narrow coastline (near the oil refineries of Tripoli). Between the southeastern slopes of Jebel Terbul and the slopes of Mount Lebanon passes the road that connects Ardé with the fords on Nahr el Bared (see photograph in Tallon 1972: Pl. I A, showing the small dam near the confluence of Nahr el Mussa and Nahr el Bared). As pointed out in the excellent topographical description of the region by de Vaumas (1970: 55), an observation post located on top of Jebel Terbul (681 m.) would command a view extending as far as Ras Chekka, the difficult pass which must be crossed by any force advancing northwards (see de Vaumas 1954 III: pl. XXXVI B-C for photographs taken from the top of the mountain). At a time of good visibility, this would provide the great advantage of an early warning to the force commissioned to bar the passages into Amurru.

As suggested by Cazelles (1970: 45), it is quite conceivable that the General had placed an advance post in the vicinity of Ardat(a), at a distance of some 20 kms. (as the crow flies) from 'Arqa/Ḥalba. I would hesitate, however, to locate the General's headquarters in this southern stretch (as suggested by Nougayrol 1963: 119), since he explicitly asks that the reinforcements be sent to Ḥalba. Perhaps the large gap between the two sides of the tablet contained some information on the exact military disposition of the General's forces. The force located in the region of Ardat had failed to prevent the infiltration of the enemy, perhaps carried out under cover of darkness. The text does not suffice to establish with certainty whether the fortress of Ardat, where the ensuing battle took place (rev. 9'), was manned by the General's forces, or by the enemy, having received reinforcements from the outside. The latter possibility seems to me more likely (but cf. Cazelles 1970: 45), since it is nowhere stated that the General's forces were stationed inside a fortress. On the contrary, the general impression conveyed by the text is that the troops were encamped in the open, exposed to the rigours of the weather. In any case, the General's forces managed to drive the enemy from the fortress and to capture one of his men. His interrogation provided some crucial military intelligence, which has also proved useful to us in reconstructing the historical setting of the letter.



Map I: The Plain of Amurru

3. HISTORICAL SETTING: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HITTITE - AMURRITE RELATIONS

Any sensible historical interpretation of the text must have recourse to three basic data: (1) The scene takes place on the coastal plain of Amurru. (2) The General posted there is a subject of a king who has the capacity to challenge an Egyptian army. (3) The letter was found in Ugarit. We will thus attempt to find a historical situation within the period defined by the linguistic analysis, i.e., in the 14th century B.C., in which all three elements most plausibly harmonize.

The first element has been investigated in the previous chapter, in which topographical and archaeological data have been adduced to establish, as accurately as possible, the geographical setting of the General's mission.

The second and the third elements may appear, *prima facie*, to be contradictory. The findplace of the tablet seems to indicate that the addressee was a king of Ugarit. This premise has indeed been accepted by several scholars (e.g., Schaeffer 1968: 671 ff.; Klengel 1984: 12; Schulman 1988: 61). However, it stands to reason that only a rival great power would have the incentive and the ability to challenge an Egyptian army in the open field. Although it is not impossible that a rebellious vassal kingdom could attempt such an ambitious military undertaking, still it is hard to imagine that a lesser state would run the risk without at least the backing of a stronger power. A case in point is Amurru, whose kings rebelled twice (Aziru and Bentešina) against their suzerains, but not without the incentive or pressure of the rival great power.

The mercantile kingdom of Ugarit seems a very unlikely candidate for a military adventure against an Egyptian army, even under the political umbrella of the Hittite Empire. First, its geographical position did not dictate the intricate political maneuvering between great powers so typical of Amurru. And second, throughout its history Ugarit emerges as a wealthy state,

which preferred to pay heavy ransom for its autonomy and protection, rather than involve itself in far-flung military ventures.¹ Therefore, after reconstructing the historical setting, we will attempt to suggest some other explanation for the circumstances of the tablet's arrival in Ugarit.

Unless the General's Letter relates to some extraordinary historical circumstances, the most logical assumption is that the letter was addressed to the king of a great power. The choice is practically reduced to one option only, Hatti. To be sure, Mittanni was still a major force in this age of upheavals and sweeping changes, but since it was in its best interest to maintain its alliance with Egypt in face of the growing Hittite menace, it is hardly possible to envision it taking a military initiative against the Egyptians in Amurru. Indeed, most of the suggested historical reconstructions² have identified the Hittites as the principal behind the General, either as his direct lords³ or at least as the ones who 'pulled the strings.'⁴

¹ The following examples may demonstrate this: (1) A stipulation in the accord between Aziru and Niqmaddu fixes the considerable sum of 5000 silver shekels to be paid by Ugarit to its southern neighbor for future military aid (RS 19.68 = *PRU* IV, pp. 284 ff.). (2) A verdict of Tudḫaliya IV, signed before Ini-Teššub, exempts Ugarit from her military obligations against Aššur, in return for 50 minas of gold (RS 17.59 = *PRU* IV, pp. 150 f.). It appears that when the military situation of Hatti went for the worse this exemption was abrogated (RS 17.289 = *PRU* IV, p. 192; see Singer 1985: 108. Cf. also RS 20.238 = *Ugaritica* V, no. 24).

² Except for Schaeffer's far-fetched theory on the collaboration between the "Sea Peoples" and Ugarit against Ramses III (1968: 671-673).

³ Nougayrol (1957: 82; 1963: 120), followed by all those who have related the document to the age of the Battle of Qedeš (see Introduction).

⁴ Recently Schulman (1988: 61) has suggested associating the letter with the insurgent activities of Abdi-Aširta, who was merely acting as a Hittite surrogate. The sender of the letter, according to Schulman, may have been an Ugaritic general reporting to the king of

In the following, we will endeavour to reconstruct the earliest stages of Hittite-Amurrite relation, with the aim of detecting the most plausible period for an anti-Egyptian military undertaking, plotted by the Hittites within the territory of Amurru.

3.1. ABDI-AŠIRTA

The first period to be considered is the age of Abdi-Aširta, the first known ruler of Amurru.¹ It has often been claimed that Abdi-Aširta made overtures to the Hittites, thus anticipating his son's shrewd political tactics (Kitchen 1962: 20 n. 8; Houwink ten Cate 1963: 273 n. 21; Waterhouse 1965: 2 f.; Astour 1969: 391; Spalinger 1979: 75, 81; Schulman 1988: 60 f.).

This view is based by and large on an allegation of Rib-Addi in EA 75, which needs to be reexamined. The passage is fragmentary and contains several obscure expressions. The more-or-less literal translation given below avoids the various tentative interpretations and restorations suggested.²

Ugarit (probably Niqmaddu II). For Abdi-Aširta's alleged submission to the Hittites see below.

¹ Not much is known on the earlier history of Amurru (see e.g., Klengel 1969a: 182 f.; Liverani 1979: 14 ff.), and in any case, it can hardly be of any relevance for the issue examined here.

² Following are several of the suggested translations of this difficult passage:

Knudtzon 1915: 379: "Es erfahre der König, mein Herr, dass der König von Ḫati erobert hat alle Länder, *welche Besitztum* des Königs von Mitta (etwa = Mittani) oder des Königs von Naḫma (etwa = Naḫrima) *waren*. [Und] das Land Könige hat Abdi-aširt[a, *der Knecht,*] der Hund, [*an sich*] genom[men.]"

35 *li-ilṣ-[m]a-ad šarru(LUGAL) be-li*
 36 *i-nu-ma iṣ-[ṣ]a-bat šar(LUGAL) Ḫa-ti*
 37 *ka-li mātāri(KUR.KUR) KU TI TI*
 38 *šar(LUGAL) māt(KUR) Mi-it-ta šum'-ma*
 39 *šar(LUGAL) māt(KUR) Na-aḥ-<ri->ma [ù(?)]*
 40 *māt(KUR) šarrāni(LUGAL.LUGAL) ra-bu[-ti(?)]*
 41 *ʾAbdi(ĪR)-A-ši-ir-t[a ardu(ĪR)](?)*
 42 *kalbu(UR.GI7) yi-il(AN)-[qī(?)] ...*

35 The king, my lord, should be informed
 36 that the king of Hatti has captured
 37 all the lands ... ¹
 38 the king of Mita<nni>. Behold(!?),
 39 the king of Naḥ<ri>ma [and(?)]
 40 the land of the gre[at(?)] kings
 41 Abdi-Aširta, [the servant(?)]
 42 the dog, [is(?)] ta[king(?)]²

Youngblood 1961: 159: "The king, my lord, should be in[fo]rmed that the king of Ḫatti has seized all of the trustworthy lands of the king of Mitanni, (namely) the king of Naḥ<ri>ma. [But the lan]d of the gre[at] kings shall ʿAbdi-Ashir[ta, *the slave*,] the dog, ta[*ke for himself*]?"

Goetze 1975: 8: "The king, my lord, should be advised that the Hittite king has taken over all the countries affiliated(?) with the king of the Mita(nni) land, i.e.(?), the king of Nakh(ri)ma."

Moran 1987: 253 f. (see also Murnane 1985: 185 n. 13, quoting Moran): "Que le roi, mon seigneur, apprenne que le roi de Ḫatti s'est emparé de tous les pays *qui étaient vassaux*⁷ du roi de Mita<nni>⁸. *Vois, [il] est roi de Naḥ<ri>ma [et] du pays des gran[ds] rois, [et] ʿAbdi-Aširta, [le serviteur] et chien, est en train de pren[dre le pays du roi]."*

¹ For tentative renderings of the obscure combination KU TI TI see Moran 1987: 254 n. 7.

² Knudtson, followed by other commentators (Youngblood, Moran), have restored a verbal form from *leqû*, "take," followed either by a direct object (Moran: "the land of the king"), or by a reflexive pronoun (Youngblood: "for himself").

The statement referring to the achievements of the Hittite king is relatively clear. Even if Rib-Addi's judgement of the conclusiveness of the Hittite victory is somewhat exaggerated,¹ his statement seems to indicate that the balance of power in Syria had already begun to tilt in favour of the Hittites.² Since these tidings must have reached Abdi-Aširta's ears as well, one may justly raise the question of his reaction in face of the momentous developments that were taking place not far from his own land.

A reference in this vein has been sought in lines 40-42 of the above Rib-Addi letter, which mention Abdi-Aširta in a fragmentary context. Kitchen (1962: 20) confidently concluded from these fragmentary lines that "Abdi-aširta of Amurru has gone over to the Hittite." In an explanatory note he added (*ib.*, n. 8): "This reference suggests that Abdi-aširta (for self-preservation) made nominal submission to the Hittite king, as Aziru likewise probably did later during Šuppiluliuma's 'First' Syrian War, but subsequently maintained relations with Egypt." Kitchen's conclusion was adopted by others, who have accepted Abdi-Aširta's nominal submission to the Hittites as a proven fact (see references above).

A different restoration was put forward by Ungnad (1916: 185), who took the fragmentary verb from *alāku*, "go": " 'A., der Hund, ist [mit ihm] geg[angen]' = *jil[lik ittišū]*." This restoration, however, has not been accepted by later commentators.

- ¹ The question of which Hittite campaign is referred to by Rib-Addi depends on the general chronology of Šuppiluliuma, which cannot be tackled in this study; see Wilhelm and Boese 1987: 84f. and Bryce 1989: 23. See further §5.2.3. below.
 - ² It is interesting to follow the shift of power in Rib-Addi's letters. Whereas in EA 76: 14 f. he sarcastically compares Abdi-Aširta only to the king of Mittanni and the king of the Kassites, in EA 116: 70 f. and in EA 129: 74 ff. (see Moran 1987: 347, n. 27) he already adds the king of Hatti to the list of great powers.
-

A careful, unbiased examination of the relevant passage leads to the conclusion that, in fact, it contains no evidence of Abdi-Aširta's alleged shift of allegiance. In juxtaposing the achievements of the Hittite king and the mischief of Abdi-Aširta, Rib-Addi indeed seeks to convey the notion that both are enemies of Egypt, but this still in no way proves any co-operation between them (cf. also Youngblood 1961: 166;¹ Klengel 1964a: 71 n. 79). To base far-reaching historical reconstructions on this obscure hyperbole is quite unwarranted. What is more, there are no additional references in Rib-Addi's letters, or elsewhere in the Amarna correspondence, in which Abdi-Aširta is in any way associated with the Hittites. On the contrary, Rib-Addi seems to have been more interested in incriminating Abdi-Aširta for conspiring with Mittanni.²

In this respect, a no less indicative observation is the fact that the Hittite sources have nothing to say about Abdi-Aširta. It is well-known that the historical preambles to Hittite vassal treaties tend to trace the contacts between the two contracting parties as far back as possible, especially if this was in the interests of official Hittite propaganda. In all the extant treaties with Amurru, and notably in the Šuppiluliuma - Aziru treaty, the earliest reference is to Aziru's request for Hittite patronage, no hint being given of any earlier overture (see detailed discussion below).

The weight of this argument may be demonstrated by a comparison with another contemporary treaty, the one between Šuppiluliuma and Tette of Nuḫašši (Weidner 1923: 58 ff.; Del Monte 1986: 142 ff.). The historical prologue opens with an account of Šarrupši's

¹ "Rib-Haddi appears to be contrasting the exploits of Shuppiluliuma(s), which he feels are justified because of the latter's greatness as the ruler of the Hittite empire, with the plundering confiscations of the despicable 'Abdi-ashirta.'"

² EA 95: 27-30; EA 90: 20-22; EA 86: 8-12; EA 101: 7-10 and especially EA 85: 51-55. The exact nature of Abdi-Aširta's contacts with Mittanni is beyond the scope of this study. On this issue see, e.g., Kestemont 1978 and Murnane 1985: 185 f., 237 f.

appeal to the Hittite king to rescue him from the approaching king of Mittanni (CTH 53 I 2-11):

- 2-3 When the king of Mittanni sought to kill Šarrupši,
 4 the king of Mittanni entered with his *hurādu*-troops
 5 and his chariots into Nuḫašši. As he
 6 attacked him, Šarrupši sent his messenger
 7 to the king of Hatti (saying): "I (am) a servant
 8 of the king of Hatti. Thus, save me!"
 9 So I, the Sun, sent troops (and) horses to his rescue,
 10 and the king of Mittanni, together with his troops
 11 (and) his chariots, was driven out from the land of Nuḫašši.

Without dwelling on the exact historical circumstances of this incident (for which see, e.g., Klengel 1969a: 39 f.; Altman 1984: 67 f.), we may note the relevant point here, that an early political contact with Abdi-Aširta would surely not have been left unmentioned by the Hittite state chancellery, especially in view of the emphatic description of Aziru's defection (see below).

To sum up: although the possibility of an early contact between Abdi-Aširta and the Hittites cannot be entirely ruled out, there is absolutely no evidence of it, not even in the notoriously polemical rhetoric of Rib-Addi. On the contrary, from all that we have in the extant material, it appears that such a shift in Amurru's allegiance did not occur before Aziru's times.

3.2. AZIRU: AMARNA EVIDENCE

The first recorded encounters between Hittite and Amurrite representatives occurred after Abdi-Aširta's disappearance from the political scene. The exact reconstruction of the course of events depends, first of all, on establishing a plausible chronological order of Aziru's letters, and of other letters relating directly to Amurru.¹ This is a notoriously complicated and controversial matter, sometimes depending on the correct understanding of a certain verb —

¹ The most detailed studies of Aziru's career are still Klengel's (1964a, revised in 1969a: 264-299). Cf. also Helck 1971: 174 ff.; Krauss 1978: 59-62; Mumane 1985: 186 ff.

whether it refers to past, present or future events. Izre'el's correction of some traditional interpretations (in *AmAkk*) has had a snowball effect upon the reordering of the course of Aziru's career. But first let us briefly sum up the currently accepted order of the letters.

3.2.1. The currently accepted order of Aziru's correspondence

It is agreed by all that the first letters in Aziru's correspondence are those in which he is striving to be recognized as an official 'mayor' (*ḫazannu*) of the Egyptian king. These include: EA 171, protesting that Yanḫamu has captured his envoys to Egypt; EA 156, where Aziru apparently sends his two sons to the king of Egypt; EA 157, complaining that the 'greats' of Şumur have not allowed him to enter the city; and possibly the last letter in this group, EA 158, where Aziru attempts to gain acceptance through the mediation of Tuttu, a leading official at the Pharaoh's court. To be noted is a first reference to the king of Hatti, who according to the letter may attack Amurru, and therefore military aid is requested from the Pharaoh (EA 157:28).

Concurrently with these apparently calm pleadings of Aziru runs Rib-Addi's prolific correspondence (the second series), in which he reveals the real on-the-spot situation, namely, Aziru's gradually tightening siege on Şumur and its eventual takeover, which must have caused considerable damage to the city.¹ The Egyptians seem to have tacitly consented to this state of affairs. Aziru, for his part, promised to rebuild the city, as soon as circumstances permitted (EA 159-160).

According to the generally accepted reconstruction, these letters were followed by Aziru's sojourn in Tunip, situated at the eastern end of his realm. To this phase belong letters, EA 161 and EA 164-168, in which he repeatedly mentions the arrival of the Hittite king in neighboring Nuḫašše. Time and again Aziru reports that he is summoned to Egypt, but the journey is postponed under the pretext that he must defend the king's lands in the event of a Hittite invasion. On the other hand, in EA 161 Aziru admits to having met a Hittite

¹ For the relative dating of Şumur's and Tunip's takeover see below pp. 137f.

representative. This has traditionally been taken as a reference to an earlier overture, possibly even as an indication of a preliminary agreement with the Hittites, *before* his journey to Egypt (Klengel 1964a: 72 f.; 1969a: 274; Goetze 1975: 12; Liverani 1983: 111; Murnane 1985: 16 ff.; Moran 1987: 402 n. 6). Eventually, Aziru gave in to Egyptian pressure and presented himself to the Pharaoh. In his absence his brother and his son held fort, reported to Aziru in Egypt about recent developments (EA 170), and appealed to Egyptian officials for his urgent release (EA 169). Usually, none of Aziru's letters is assigned to the period after his return from Egypt,¹ when he finally defected to the Hittite side and signed his vassal treaty with Šuppiluliuma.

This, in brief, has been the traditional sequence of the letters since Knudtzon, with minor deviations within each group. To the best of my knowledge, all agree that after repeatedly postponing his trip on various pretexts, Aziru finally presented himself before the Pharaoh *after* his stay in Tunip and his first encounters with the Hittites.

3.2.2. EA 161 and Aziru's journey to Egypt

That Aziru indeed went to Egypt is evident from the letters written from Amurru during his absence (EA 169-170) and from an allusion in a letter from Byblos (EA 140: 20 ff.). The question is: when exactly did this visit take place? The starting point is the crucial evidence contained in EA 161. In this important letter Aziru defends himself against the accusation that he avoided the Egyptian envoy, Ḫan'i, and met a Hittite envoy instead. The explanation he offers both for this and for his failure to rebuild Šumur is the necessity of staying in Tunip and waging war against Nuḫašše. According to the accepted interpretation of the text, Aziru, while insisting on the groundlessness of the accusations against him, expresses his confidence that when he *does* arrive in Egypt he *will* reaffirm his loyalty to the king, and Ḫan'i, whom he allegedly avoided, *will* treat him "like a mother, like a father." The *t*-form *aqtabi* in l. 5

¹ Klengel 1969a: 273; but cf. Helck 1971: 178, who places letters 159-161 after the sojourn in Egypt (cf. also Murnane 1985: 191 n. 23; 215). See pp. 132f. n. 2 below.

has hitherto been rendered in the future tense,¹ in the sense that Aziru is portraying a potential situation upon his arrival in Egypt. This interpretation appeared to be consistent with all the other letters in which Aziru promises to come.

Departing from a strictly linguistic approach, Izre'el strongly argues against this interpretation and insists upon a past tense rendering of *aqtabi*, "I said,"² with the

¹ Suffice it to refer to Knudtzon (1915: 651 ff.) and Moran (1987: 397 f.). A notable exception is Finley 1979: 151, who translated *aqtabi* in the past tense.

² A note from Shlomo Izre'el:

In the earlier subdialects of Amurru Akkadian, i.e., in texts from the Amarna period, the formal category which may be conveniently termed *iptaras* marks the semantic category of proximity. By using the notion "proximity," I wish to stress that the inflectional category *iptaras* marks nearness in time, possibly nearness in space, and also proximity of relation, i.e., showing a certain degree of involvement on the part of the speaker. For our purposes suffice it to say that *iptaras* forms in some subdialects of Amurru Akkadian (to one of which EA 161 is attributed) mark proximity in time, so that they would not be used to mark either the past perfect, or the regular future. Rather, whenever a sequence of situations was to be expressed, the *iptaras* category would be used to mark the less remote one, namely either a present-perfect, an after-past, or a future-in-the-past situation on one hand, or a future-perfect, a before-future, or a past-in-the-future situation on the other.

Now, *aqtabi* in EA 161: 4 designates an act which occurs after the arrival of Aziru in the presence of the Pharaoh. Therefore, in this case it cannot mark a future situation. The only possible temporal denotations of this form are either after-past or future-in-the-past. It is clear that an after-past temporal situation is indeed what is implied by the form under discussion. Hence, Aziru had already visited Egypt by the time he wrote this letter.

For a detailed discussion of the *iptaras* inflectional category in Amurru Akkadian, as well as for proofs of the statements presented above, see *AmAkk*, §3.6.3. Cf. also my forthcoming review of Moran 1987 in *Bibliotheca Orientalis*.

unavoidable implication that Aziru is recalling here an already completed visit in the *past*. This amendment, if accepted, has far-reaching implications for the reconstruction of Aziru's career. But before we endeavor to follow up some of these results, it should be pointed out that the rectified translation in fact makes much more sense within the letter itself. Considering it without the burden of previous assumptions based on other letters, one has to admit that a quotation from an earlier self-justification before the king, and even more, a reference to Ḥan'i's hospitality when Aziru was in Egypt,¹ contribute to a far smoother understanding of the letter than does an overly confident prediction of his reception during a visit yet to take place in the future. For the sake of clarity I reproduce below Izre'el's translation of the two respective passages from EA 161:

My lord, I am your servant. When I arrived in the presence of the king, my lord, I said (*aqtabi*) all my words in the presence of the king, my lord: "My lord, do not listen to the treacherous people who denounce me in the presence of the king, my lord. I am your servant forever" (ll. 4-10).

May the king, my lord, hear my words: When I came to the king, my lord, Ḥan'i met me; he took care of me like a mother, like a father. Now my lord says: "You concealed yourself from Ḥan'i." Your gods and the Sun-god be my witnesses if I am not staying in Tunip (ll. 24-34).

If, as argued above, Aziru had already been to Egypt when he wrote EA 161, it follows that he either went there for a second time in compliance with the Pharaoh's wish,² or that he

¹ A note from Shlomo Izre'el: Although here (ll. 27 and 28) *iparras* forms are used, their past time implication is readily admissible (cf. ll. 12-16, where the past is evident). For the full argumentation see *AmAkk*, §3.6.1.

² As already mentioned, Helck (1971: 178 followed by Murnane 1985: 191 n. 23) has also dated this letter, together with EA 159-160, after Aziru's return from Egypt. He reached this conclusion on the grounds that all three deal with the rebuilding of Šumur. On the other hand, when dealing with later letters, such as EA 162, Helck agrees with all the other commentators that after repeatedly postponing his trip, Aziru eventually journeyed to

never kept his promise and never risked another visit to Egypt. As I shall attempt to show, the second option seems far more likely.

3.2.3. Reordering Aziru's correspondence

The reinterpretation of EA 161 leads to an overall reordering of the Amurru letters. Since EA 161 is closely related in its subject matter to EA 164-167 (and probably also to the very fragmentary EA 168), it follows that these too were written *after* Aziru's visit to Egypt. All were written from Tunip (as is most clearly stated in EA 165:25 ff.) and describe Aziru's fears of the kings of Nuḫašše (EA 161:36 f.) and of the king of Hatti who is in Nuḫašše (EA 164:21 f.; 165:34 ff.; 166:21 ff.; 167:20 ff.). Another connecting link is the mention of the Egyptian official Ḥatip. On the other hand, EA 161 is linked with EA 159-160 by its reference to the rebuilding of Šumur. Whether this indicates that these letters were also written after Aziru's return is less evident, but in any case, Aziru undoubtedly occupied Šumur before his visit to Egypt (see below). We are thus left with only four letters (EA 156, 157, 158 and 171) which may quite confidently be dated before the trip to Egypt.

A further result of this reordering is the relative placing of EA 169-170 before the 'Tunip-group.' These letters, sent to Egypt by Aziru's relatives, have so far been regarded as the latest letters from Amurru. Their new placing in the general sequence of the Amurru letters provides a more plausible course of events. In EA 169, a son of Aziru writes to the Egyptian high-official Tuttu that the kings of Nuḫašše are taunting him for having sold his father to the king of Egypt. He implores that his father be sent back soon to restore order and to repel the aggression of Amurru's neighbors. In EA 170:14 ff., Ba'aluya and Beti'ilu report to Aziru¹

Egypt. The inevitable conclusion, however, that according to this reconstruction there must have been two trips to Egypt, is nowhere explicitly stated by Helck (or Murnane).

¹ For the identification of the addressee of this letter see the references quoted in Murnane 1985: 216 n. 56. It is assumed that the letter was captured by the Egyptian authorities and

that the Hittite general Lupakku, assisted by Aitakama of Qedeš, has captured cities in Amqi, while another general, Zitana, is about to arrive in Nuḫašše at the head of a large contingent. They still have to verify the latter report, and if it proves to be correct Beti'ilu will be sent to meet the Hittite general.

In the 'Tunip-group' (EA 161, 164-167), written after Aziru's return, the presence of the king of Hatti in Nuḫašše is already stated as a matter of fact, and a meeting with him is being arranged (see below). The reordering indeed provides a progressive development of the military scene east of Amurru, beginning with the arrival of Hittite generals in the area while Aziru was still in Egypt, and culminating in his meeting with the envoys of the Hittite king.

The reordering of Aziru's correspondence brings into focus the overall strategy of this influential personality, who played a central role on the international scene of Syria. A brief political biography is outlined in the ensuing section (see chart on p. 144).

3.2.4. A Reappraisal of Aziru's career

The first letters and the takeover of Šumur

The letters that may safely be dated before Aziru's journey to Egypt are EA 171, EA 156-158. Their common theme is Aziru's efforts to be recognized as an official "mayor" (*ḫazannu*) and as the protector of Šumur (see recently Liverani 1983: 111 ff.).

In EA 171 Aziru complains that the Egyptian commissioner Yanḫamu had captured his messengers, who had been sent to Egypt to receive orders from the Pharaoh. Here Aziru announces, apparently for the first time, "I have entered into the service of the king (...), but Yanḫamu does not permit me" (ll. 12-13).

was placed in the state archives, but probably not before Aziru himself had a chance to read it (Helck 1971: 178).

In EA 156 Aziru sends his two sons to Egypt, in compliance with the Pharaoh's request. This may be regarded as a first sign of the Pharaoh's willingness to accept Aziru's submission, despite the opposition of some Egyptian officials in Şumur. Aziru explicitly asks to be assigned to the land of Amurru (ll. 13-14), i.e., to become its official ruler.

In EA 157 Aziru protests again that his willingness to enter into the service of Egypt is opposed by the "great ones" of Şumur. To underline his potential contribution to Egyptian interests in Syria, he warns against a possible Hittite attack on Amurru (l. 28); he would guard the land of the king but towards this end he needs reinforcements of troops and chariots.

As a further means of ensuring his nomination as the *ḥazannu* of Amurru, in EA 158 Aziru asks for the intervention on his behalf of Tuttu, a leading official at the Egyptian court.

The concerted effort eventually achieved its results. Obviously, these diplomatic maneuvers were coupled with various more drastic means, including a lengthy siege of Şumur. This, of course, is not learned from Aziru's letters, but from Abimilki of Tyre (EA 149: 37 ff.; 67 ff.) and especially from Rib-Addi of Byblos, who provides lengthy and dramatic descriptions of the siege of Şumur in the second series of his prolific correspondence.¹

The town of Şumur must have suffered considerably during its capture by Aziru, and its rebuilding becomes a recurring theme in the subsequent correspondence of Aziru.² Despite, or rather through this violent transgression against an Egyptian garrison, Aziru finally

¹ For the circumstances of Şumur's takeover see Murnane 1985: 187 with previous references. For the various datings suggested for the fall of Şumur see Krauss 1978: 59 n. 2 with references; 61.

² The archaeological record at Tell Kazel could probably demonstrate more exactly the nature of these upheavals, but the excavations have not reached below the extremely rich 13th century level ("Couche V"). See Dunand, Bounni, Saliby 1964: 12.

manages to force himself upon the Egyptians and to receive official recognition as an Egyptian vassal.

The journey to Egypt

Aziru's nomination as a *ḫazannu* (clearly referred to in EA 161: 52 f. and EA 162: 7 ff., 33 ff.) must have been granted to him at the court of the Egyptian king. That the trip to Egypt followed the takeover of Şumur is confirmed by EA 140, a letter of Rib-Addi's successor Ili-Rapiḫ, which contains a rare retrospective account of Aziru's misdemeanors. A list of political assassinations initiated by Aziru, including that of an Egyptian commissioner ("great one"; Moran 1987: 369 n. 1), is followed by the takeover of the Egyptian bases of Şumur and Ullasa, and then by Aziru's being summoned to the king. Ili-Rapiḫ further maintains that even during his stay in Egypt Aziru continued to plot with Itakama of Qedeš, and together they commissioned an attack on Amqa. The kings of Hatti and Narima (Mittanni) are also mentioned but the context is not clear.

Aziru himself recalls his visit to Egypt in EA 161. According to the new interpretation of lines 4 ff. (see above), he reminds the Pharaoh how he defended himself at the court against the accusations of his enemies. He also recalls the hospitable attitude of Ḫan'i who took care of him "like a mother, like a father" (l. 28 f.).

How long Aziru was detained in Egypt is difficult to tell (see Krauss 1978: 62 for the various estimates, ranging from a few months to two years). In any case he was there long enough to receive a letter from his kin in Amurru, who kept him informed about recent developments in the region (EA 170¹). Another letter, probably written at the same time, was sent by a son of Aziru's to the high official Tuttu, imploring him to intervene for the release of his father (EA 169: 16 ff.).

¹ There is no clue in the letter to provide an absolute dating within the reign of Akhenaten. Krauss's assertion (1978: 62) that it was written in June/July of Akhenaten's 17th (last) year rests solely on his general reconstruction of the Hittite takeover of Syria.

Aziru's return and the takeover of Tunip

During Aziru's absence from Amurru, his brother Ba'aluya and son Beti'ilu stood guard and established first contacts with the Hittites (see above). The news about the advancing Hittite armies caused Aziru to return home. His Egyptian overlords were still confident that the energetic Syrian ruler would play an active role in warding off the Hittite danger. Aziru, however, soon realized the significance of the new developments in the Syrian political scene and the great potential they offered for furthering his own interests. Having had the opportunity to become closely acquainted with the internal situation in Egypt, he quickly understood that there was not much he could expect from the "the broken reed of Egypt," and that his ambitions stood a better chance of fulfillment if he threw in his lot with the rising power of the Hittites. He soon opened negotiations with them and eventually joined their camp.

Another Hittite recruit was Aitakama, who was probably reinstated by the Hittites on the throne of Qedeš shortly afterwards, or perhaps still in the wake of the First Syrian War of Šuppiluliuma (Klengel 1969a: 163). The two resourceful rulers, Aziru and Aitakama, joined forces "fishing in the troubled waters" of central Syria, which at that time was still split between the camps of the rival great powers. Various reports kept the Pharaoh informed of how the two ran afoul of the pro-Egyptian states of Niya (EA 59: 25 ff.), Qatna (EA 55: 16-27), Upe (EA 151: 59-63) and the Amqi region (EA 174-176).

Tunip was the most significant and lasting gain of Aziru's expansionism. Tucked between the Egyptian and the Mittannian spheres of influence¹ and lacking a ruling dynasty of its own, it soon acquired Aziru as its self-appointed protector of the city, despite the protests of its citizens (EA 59). I can find no evidence for the view which maintains that EA 59 was written *before* the takeover of Šumur (Helck 1971: 176 n. 61; see also Murnane 1985: 205).

¹ For the location of Tunip west of the middle Orontes see Klengel 1969a: 75 ff.; 1984: 10 n. 17; Astour 1969: 388 ff.; Kuschke 1979: 23 ff. (cf. Helck 1973, who locates it at the mouth of the Eleutheros, not far from Ullasa).

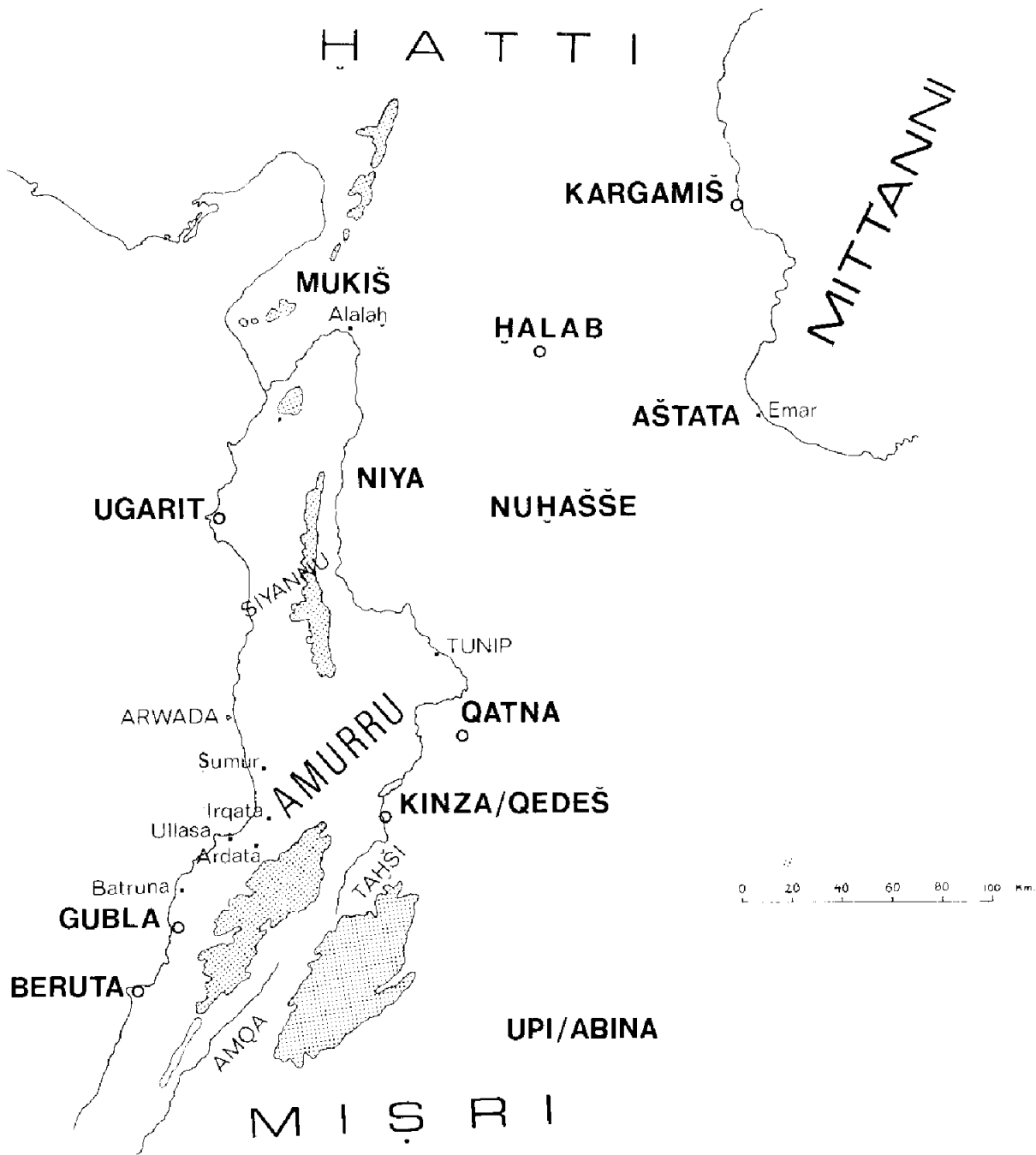
The letter clearly refers to the capture of Šumur as an event of the past (for the translation of lines 34 ff. see Moran 1987: 232; see also Krauss 1978: 59). From Tunip, Aziru continued to write conciliatory letters to Egypt (EA 161, 164-168), reporting on the movements of the Hittites. He promised to present himself before the Pharaoh as soon as the situation permitted.

Aziru's double game

The Egyptians must have realized pretty soon, through the complaints of their surrogates and through their own officials in Syria, that Aziru, after his return from Egypt, had begun to play a double game, which was becoming increasingly suspicious.

First to come up was the issue of Šumur's rebuilding, which Aziru failed to complete despite his promises (see recently Liverani 1983: 100 ff.). This matter occurs in three letters, EA 159, 160 and 161, which were probably written after Aziru's return from Egypt. The pretext given for the delay is the war against the kings of Nuḫašše (EA 160: 24 f.; EA 161: 35 ff.; EA 159 is too fragmentary), a conflict which probably flared up during Aziru's absence from Amurru (EA 169: 17).

Although Aziru maintained a facade of loyalty vis-a-vis the Egyptians, and apparently even kept sending tribute (e.g., EA 160: 14 ff.), his political and military maneuvering soon became transparent and he was repeatedly summoned to Egypt to respond to charges. In no fewer than five or six letters (EA 161, 164-167; probably also the fragmentary EA 168) Aziru kept promising the Pharaoh and other Egyptian officials that he would come to Egypt as soon as the danger of a Hittite attack passed (for the formulation of these letters see Liverani 1983). He postponed this second trip for at least one year until the Pharaoh sent him an ultimatum (EA 162: 42 ff.). Aziru must have been quite worried over the treatment awaiting him in Egypt, since he frankly admits his fears and even dares to ask for written assurances of his personal safety (EA 164). As put in a nutshell by Liverani (1983: 94), Aziru writes "I will come," but means "I will not come."



Map II: Syria in the Amarna Age

Meanwhile, Aziru consolidates his regional alliances with Aitakama of Qedeš and Niqmaddu of Ugarit,¹ and opens negotiations with the king of Hatti, who has meanwhile arrived in Nuḥašše. In his letters to the Pharaoh he overtly admits his contacts with the Hittites. In EA 165: 28 ff. he writes that he will first "come" to the king of Hatti and will then "come" to see the king of Egypt.² In EA 161: 47 ff. he admits to having met the envoy of the king of Hatti, who, according to the Pharaoh's reproach, received a warmer reception than did the Egyptian envoy Ḫan'i. Although these meetings are naturally portrayed as actions aimed at assuring Amurru's security, Aziru's frank account of them is nevertheless noteworthy, and it may indicate that by that time he had already made up his mind to cross lines. His final defection was drawing near.

The final rupture with Egypt

EA 162 is a copy left at Amarna of the ultimatum sent to Aziru from Egypt.³ The long letter contains several serious accusations against Aziru and a categorical demand to present himself immediately before the Pharaoh, or at least to send his son (lines 42-54).

The first reprimand concerns Aziru's conduct towards Rib-Addi of Byblos, when the latter, compelled to flee his hometown, turned in his despair to his old enemy for protection and promised him a heavy payment if he, namely, Rib-Addi, ever returned to Byblos. Aziru apparently agreed to take him as a vassal, without even reporting to Egypt, a gesture

¹ RS 19.68 = *PRU* IV, pp. 283 ff. The question of the dating of the accord between Aziru and Niqmaddu, in relation to the Šuppiluliuma - Niqmaddu treaty and the Šuppiluliuma - Aziru treaty, cannot be dealt with here (see Houwink ten Cate 1963: 273 n. 22).

² The same verbal form (*kašdāku*) is used for both actions. For the instantaneous sense conveyed in the use of this verb by Aziru, see Liverani 1983: 96, 98 n. 7, 111 n. 21.

³ For EA 163 see p. 144 n. 1 below.

considered illegal in the eyes of the Pharaoh (see McCarter 1973).¹ What follows is a direct reproach about Aziru's co-operation with the Man of Qedeš, and an oblique accusation about his contacts with the Hittites (ll. 22 ff.). The Pharaoh was apparently still hoping to intimidate his disloyal vassal and, towards this end, threatened to put him and his family to death. Finally, Aziru was ordered to extradite some enemies of the crown and deliver them into the hands of the Egyptian envoy Ḥanni (ll. 55 ff.).²

EA 162 may be the last letter in the Egyptian correspondence of Aziru.³ Considering its threatening tone and the fears already expressed by Aziru in his earlier responses, it would be very hard to imagine him about to risk another trip to Egypt. With good reason Murnane (1985: 213) concludes that "the whole background of Aziru's journey to Egypt, in fact —

¹ Incidentally, the traditional view according to which Aziru then handed over Rib-Addi to hostile mayors (lines 12-14) must now be discarded. Izre'el (*AmAkk*, §2.3.2.1) has demonstrated a clear distinction between the plural ending, denoted with the TE sign, and the abstract noun, denoted with TI. Both are attested in EA 162; thus LÚ.MEŠ *ḥa-za-nu-te*^{MEŠ} in line 8 designates "mayors," whereas LÚ.MEŠ *ḥa-za-nu-ú-ti* in line 13 should be rendered as an abstract noun, i.e., "mayoralty." In other words, Aziru is not reprimanded for the cruel treatment of Rib-Addi, but for appointing him as "mayor," a prerogative kept only for the Pharaoh. What eventually happened to Rib-Addi is another question, which is beyond the subject of this study.

² This is most probably the same envoy who according to EA 161 (there spelled *Ḥa-an-i*) came to Šumur, but Aziru failed to meet him there. If so, EA 162 must refer to a second trip of this envoy, thus placing this letter after EA 161. For this important Egyptian envoy see Edel 1948: 13; Helck 1971: 437 f. He could well be identical with the Egyptian diplomat Ḥani (spelled *Ḥa-a-ni*), who pleaded before Šuppiliuma on behalf of the Egyptian widow queen (Güterbock 1956: 96 ff., 122).

³ Rather than the first one, as maintained by Krauss 1978: 60.

how often he was asked, how long he delayed, and when he actually went — is all fog and speculation.”

The fog may now be dispelled. The journey occurred at an early stage of his career and there is no evidence whatsoever, either in the Amarna material or in the Hittite sources (see below), of the generally accepted view that he did eventually keep his promise and go again to Egypt after his sojourn in Tunip and his first contacts with the Hittites. At this stage, he had already shown his true colors, and it had become too dangerous for him to continue playing the role of "the servant of two masters" (see Liverani 1983, esp. pp. 119 ff.). With the memory of the ill fate of his father (see Altman 1979 with earlier literature; Schulman 1988: 78 n. 119) still fresh in his mind, he had every reason to take the Egyptian threats seriously and to prepare a proper defense for himself and his land, in close co-operation with his new overlords.

3.2.5. Summary

This revised profile of Aziru's career seems more plausible than the current reconstructions involving some intricate and dangerous shifts in his allegiance. In other words, the suggested reconstruction resolves at least two difficult questions. First, why would Aziru risk a second visit to Egypt and "beard the lion in his den," if, as generally agreed, he had already achieved some understanding with the Hittites. Second, why would the Egyptians, who, according to EA 162, were already aware of Aziru's conspiratorial intentions, allow him to return to Amurru, instead of getting rid of him the way they got rid of his father. Although we do not entirely rule out such happenings in the political gamble,¹ the far simpler scenario drawn above cannot but be seen as more plausible *per se*, being better supported by both the Amarna and the Hittite evidence (for which see below). Although the full implications of this

¹ See e.g., Murnane 1985: 21 ff. for a good definition of the dilemma faced by the Egyptians in trusting Aziru as their proxy. Of course, this hypothetical dilemma disappears altogether if the suggested reordering of Aziru's correspondence is accepted.

suggested reconstruction of Aziru's correspondence on the other Amarna sources cannot be evaluated in this study, I would state that I am not aware of any evidence in Amarna or elsewhere which might contradict it.

For the subject presently discussed, namely the circumstances and the date of Amurru's shift of allegiance from Egypt to Hatti, the most significant result is the emergence of one continuous process of rapprochement and submission, instead of two separate stages with a visit to Egypt sandwiched inbetween. The Amarna evidence for the development of Hittite-Amurrite relations may now be recapitulated as follows.

Although the Hittites had already appeared on the political horizon of Syria in the days of Abdi-Aširta, there is no evidence from this early stage of any contacts between Amurru and Hatti. The first Hittite involvement which had a lasting impact upon Amurru occurred in the days of Aziru, and should probably be attributed to Šuppiluliuma's First Syrian War (for the chronology see §4. below).

In the first part of his career, before the journey to Egypt, Aziru joined the chorus of concerned Syrian rulers demanding help from Egypt in the face of the Hittite threat (EA 157: 25 ff.). At this stage, there is no evidence of Aziru's contemplating overtures to the Hittites. He still saw himself as part of the Egyptian camp and strove for the Pharaoh's recognition and his advancement.

During Aziru's absence from Amurru, two Hittite contingents arrived in the area. Ba'aluya and Beti'ilu, the acting rulers of Amurru, had to decide posthaste how to react to these momentous developments in the neighboring region. They decided to initiate contact with the Hittite general Zitana once he arrived in Nuḥašše (EA 170: 14 ff.).

Receiving the news in Egypt, Aziru hastened back and entered into negotiations with the king of Hatti, who had meanwhile arrived in Nuḥašše (EA 165: 28 ff.; 161: 47 ff.). For about a year he kept up appearances of a loyal Egyptian vassal, sending tribute and conciliatory letters to the Pharaoh. When, however, the increasingly suspicious Egyptians peremptorily summoned him to court (EA 162), he severed his connections with them and finalized his

defection by means of an official vassal treaty with Šuppiluliuma, accompanied by the necessary military precautions to ward off a possible Egyptian retaliation.

For the sake of easy reference here is the suggested reordering of Aziru's correspondence:

Before journey to Egypt: EA 171, 156, 157, 158
 During stay in Egypt: EA 169, 170
 After journey to Egypt: EA 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168(?)
 Egyptian ultimatum: EA 162¹

3.3. AZIRU: HITTITE EVIDENCE

We may now proceed to examine the Hittite sources for possible clues to the relative dating of Aziru's apostasy.

The treaty between Aziru and Šuppiluliuma has been preserved in Ḫattuša in a Hittite copy (*CTH* 49 II) and in several Akkadian copies (*CTH* 49 I).² Unlike the standard format of Hittite vassal treaties, it opens with a concise summary of Aziru's duties, which include an oath of allegiance, a yearly tribute of 300 shekels of pure gold, and the commitment to present himself annually before the king of Hatti (Akk. B obv. 4'-10'; Hit. I 1- 13).

¹ EA 163 is a small fragment of a Pharaonic letter, containing the rest of a closing formula similar to that of EA 162. It cannot be established whether it too was sent to Aziru.

² For the Akkadian versions see Weidner 1923:70 ff. and Klengel 1964b. For the Hittite version see Freydank 1959-60 and Goetze, *ANET*: 529f. Note also that *CTH* 63, a ruling of Muršili II, contains a direct quotation, in Hittite, of one of the stipulations of the Aziru treaty (III 14 ff.; Klengel 1963: 37 f.; on this text see further, §6.3. below). A useful transliteration and translation (without commentary) of the Aziru, the Duppi-Teššub and the Bentešina treaties is found in Del Monte 1986: 116 ff. The line references in the following refer to Del Monte's transliteration.

The next paragraph contains the historical preamble, which duly emphasizes that Aziru asked for Hittite vassalship on his own initiative, at a time when the rest of Syria was still hostile to the king of Hatti. The list of hostile kings (Akk. B obv. 11'-13'; Hit. obv. I 14-17) is fragmentary in both versions, but their combination makes it possible to reconstruct most names:¹ Mišri,² Hurri,³ [],⁴ Nuḫašša, Niya, [Kinza⁵], Mukiš, Ḫalpa⁶ and Kargamiš. The missing name (or two at the most) probably belonged to another Syrian state within the orbit of Mittanni,⁷ perhaps Aštata or Kattanna (= Qatna). From the opening sentence preceding the

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- ¹ Cf. the similar characterization of the situation in Syria in the Talmi-Šarruma treaty, where the list of hostile states includes Kargamiš, Ḫalab and the lands of Nuḫašši (CTH 75, obv. 34; Weidner 1923: 84).
- ² I assume that the "the king of Egypt" opened the list, and the gap before it (unfortunately in both versions) contained some introductory statement, perhaps "these kings," which is taken up again at the end of the list. For the opening words (*karu ḫudak*) see below.
- ³ Instead of Hurri the Akkadian version has *A-mur-[ri]*. This must be a scribal error conditioned by the identical spelling of the two names (*hur = mur*), except for the initial sign A. For a similar confusion see Klengel 1964b: 440 (KUB XIX 9 I: 20).
- ⁴ The space available in the Hittite version (l. 15) allows for one long name, hardly for two, as assumed by Freydank. To my mind, *Ki-en-za* belongs in the next gap (l. 16).
- ⁵ The space is sufficient for a short name. *Ki-en-za* (= Qedeš), which is mentioned in III 19 (Hit. version) together with Niya and Nuḫašši, would fill out the space nicely.
- ⁶ The Akkadian version (l. 12') has URU *Ḫal[-* after Mukiš. Klengel (1964b: 440), and later Del Monte (1986: 116), prefer to apply the value DIDLI to the last sign, and translate "[these] citie[s]." I would rather stick to the parallel with the Hittite version, and restore the name Ḫalpa (and Kargamiš), with an omission of LUGAL KUR.
- ⁷ To my mind, Ugarit is not a likely candidate in this context.

list, only the beginning remains: *karu hudak*.¹ The latter adverb may be rendered as "immediately," "suddenly," "at once," "unexpectedly" or the like.² In this context, the last two meanings seem appropriate, conveying the notion of the suddenness and contemporaneity of almost everybody's enmity towards Hatti, in contrast with Aziru's friendly overtures. The chronological implications of this statement will be evaluated below.

Aziru's voluntary defection is described at length, but the preservation unfortunately is quite poor (Hit. version, obv. I 17- 26):³

- 17 *ku-u-uš* LUGAL^{MES} *hu-u[-ma-an-te-eš⁴ A-NA* dUTUŠ^I *ku-ru-ur e-še-ir*
 18 ¹*A-zi-ra-aš-ma* LUGAL K[UR URU^A*-mur-r*]i IŠ-TU [K]Á^{1?} ŠA [KU]R URU^{Mi-iz-ri}
 19 *ša-ra-a ti-ia-at n[a-aš-za A-N]A* dUTUŠ^I L[UGAL KUR URU^H]a-at-ti
 İR-na-aḫ-ta-at
 20 *nu-za-kán* dUTUŠ^I LUGAL.GA[L x-]x *pa-ra-a me-i[k-ki x(x)-k]u[?]-un*
 21 dUTUŠ^I-za-kán LUGAL.GAL QA-TAM-MA *pa-ra-a Ú-U[L me-i]k-ki*
 t[u-u]š^{I?}-ku-un
 22 A-NA ¹*A-zi-ra-za-kán* GIM-an *pa-ra-a x [*
 23 *ku-it* ¹*A-zi-ra-aš* A-NA ŠA-PAL GİR^{MES} d[UTUŠ^I *kat-ta-an ḫa-li-ia-at-ta-at na-aš*]
 24 IŠ-TU KÁ ŠA KUR URU^{Mi-iz-ri} *ú-it na-aš* A-[NA ŠA-PAL GİR^{MES} dUTUŠ^I
 kat-ta-an]
 25 *ḫa-li-i[a-at-]ta-at* dUTUŠ^I-ma-za LUGAL.GAL ¹*A-zi[-ra-an*
 26 *n[a-a]n-kán* A-NA ŠES^{MES}-š[Ú ḫ]a-an-da-nu-un [

¹ In the Akkadian version only *i-na ma[ḫ-ra* is left, corresponding to *karu*, "in the past."

² Friedrich, *HW*: 78: "eilends, schnell, bald, sofort; - plötzlich (?)." The word occurs, e.g., in the Second Plague Prayer, where it describes how the Hittites broke *hudak* their oath with the Egyptians. Goetze, *ANET*: 395 translated this occurrence as "promptly" (cf. Astour 1989:122 n. 446 with other references); on p. 529, however, he translated the same word in the Aziru treaty as "in fact."

³ The translation offered below is similar to that of Freydank and Del Monte, but differs considerably from Goetze's free rendering.

⁴ Or possibly *hu-u[-da-ak*, "promptly," as in l. 14.

17 These kings, a[ll(?)] (of them), were hostile [towards His Majesty].
 18 But Aziru, king of [Amurr]u, "rose up"¹ from the [gat]e(?)² of Egypt,
 19 and submitted himself to His Majesty, the k[ing of H]atti.
 20 His Majesty, the Great King, I have [3] mu[ch(?) ...]ed.⁴
 21 *Shouldn't I, His Majesty, the Great King, have likewise [mu]ch re[loi]ced(?)*⁵
 22 *as Aziru r[e]joiced(?)*⁶
 23 when⁷ Aziru [had thrown himself] at the feet of H[is Majesty]?
 24 He came from the gate of Egypt and threw himself [at the feet of
 25 His Majesty]. His Majesty, the Great King, [accepted(?)] Azi[ru]
 26 and joined him to his brothers. [...]

¹ For *šara tiya* (literally "stand up") and its Akkadian equivalent *šahāṭu* see Kestemont 1974b: 417 n. 252, 622, who suggests the derivative sense "to escape."

² Freydank (1959-60: 359) and Klengel (1964b: 441) restored ZA]G, "border." However, the tiny trace left hardly justifies this restoration, especially since the Akkadian version has KÁ.GAL (l. 13'). Goetze, *ANET*: 529 also translated it as "gate" (not marked as a restoration).

³ Freydank (ib.: 360, 373) suggests QA(?)-]TAM, "hand," which would go well with a verbal form of *para dai-* (i.e., "I stretched out my hand"), but this is hardly supported by the traces.

⁴ Del Monte (1986: 128) restores *tu-uš-k]u-un* (as in the next line), but the space is hardly sufficient.

⁵ Conjectural meaning (Freydank, Klengel, Goetze, Del Monte) based on the restoration of the verb [*t]u-u[š'-k]u-un*, apparently parallel to Akkadian *ḥa-a-ti*].

⁶ The verb is construed with the preverb *para* and the particles *-za-kán*, exactly like the verbs in the previous sentences. Hence the suggested restoration of the same verb, here referring to Aziru.

⁷ For *kuit* in the sense of "at the time when" see Friedrich 1960: 164 (§326e). This would probably correspond to *k]i-i-me-e* in the Akkadian version (l. 15').

It has been claimed that this description contains two distinct stages in Aziru's apostasy (Freydank 1959-60: 377 f.; Klengel 1969a: 274): The first overture, which occurred before his trip to Egypt, is ostensibly reflected in lines 19 through 23, when he "rose up" from Egypt and submitted himself to Hatti; the second and definite submission is stated in l. 24', when he "came from the gate of Egypt" (see below) and has joined his other vassal "brothers" (for this sense see Freydank 1959-60: 379f.; Kühne 1975: 240).

This, I think, is reading too much into the text. If read without any preconceived views, this passage may easily be understood as one continuous and emphatic account of Aziru's shift of allegiance. Šuppiluliuma's extensive elaboration is readily comprehensible, since Amurru was the only acknowledged Egyptian dependent to have joined his camp voluntarily. As already mentioned, such a detailed explanation was imperative for the legalistic justification of Amurru's annexation to the Hittite Empire (see further below).

Another alleged clue to a two-staged submission of Aziru was detected in rev. III 4' f. (Hit. version), a passage discussing the eventuality of dispatching Hittite military aid to Aziru (Del Monte 1986: 134; see further §5.1. below):

4' -*kā*]n ku-it ¹A-zi-ra-aš pa-ra-a ḫa-an-d[a-an-ni]
 5' [ZI-ni A-NA ^d]UTU^š IR-an-ni kat-ta-an EGIR-pa ú-i[t]
 4'] since Aziru turned of his ow[n
 5' will(?)¹ to H]is Majesty's servitude, ...

The verbal form *kattan appa uit* has usually been translated literally, "he came back," "he returned" (Freydank 1959-60: 370; Klengel 1969a: 274; Goetze, *ANET*: 530; cf. Friedrich, *HW*: 238). However, the very same expression recurs in rev. IV 6'-9', in a stipulation regulating the extradition of Hittite fugitives who may seek asylum in Amurru (Del Monte 1986: 138 and commentary on p. 94 f.). Here the notion of a repeated action is practically excluded:

¹ For *ḫandanni ištanžani* and its Akkadian parallel (*aššum naḫtišu*) see Del Monte 1986: 82.

- 6' [ma]-a-an-na-kán LÚ KUR URU_H[at-ti IŠ-TU KUR URU_Hat-ti]
 7' [pī]t-ti-ya-an-ti-li ú-i[z-zi tu-uk-ma]
 8' [kat]-ta-an EGIR-pa ú-i[z-zi zi-ga-an e-ip]
 9' [na]-an A-NA 'LUGAL' K[UR URU_Hat-ti pa-ra-a pa-a-i]
 6' If a man of H[atti from the land of Hatti]
 7' co[mes] as a fugitive, and [he]
 8' turns to [you, capture him
 9' and extradite] him to the king [of Hatti]."

This stipulation is in fact very similar to the one in the Aziru - Šuppiluliuma treaty dealing with the extradition of deportees (NAM.RA) in III 17' ff., where the expression used to describe the seeking of asylum is clearer (22' f.): *na-aš-kán tu-e-el KUR-e [an-da] ú-iz-zi*, "and he/she enters [into] your land." This parallel is a clear indication that in this context the expression *kattan appa uwa-* cannot mean "to return," but rather "to turn to someone," "to seek asylum" (as a fugitive, a vassal, or the like).

The same sense is most probably required in the description of Aziru's acceptance into Šuppiluliuma's servitude (III 4' f.). This is further demonstrated by a juxtaposition of the Hittite and the Akkadian versions. For Hittite *İR-anni kattan appa uit*, the Akkadian version has simply *a-na [İR-ut-ti] ú-ut-t[e-er-šu]*.¹ *turru* can basically mean both "turn" and "return" (von Soden, *AHW*: 1335), but the correct sense of *ana ardūti turru* in state treaties has correctly been identified by Kestemont (1974b: 591): "se faire tourner vers NP comme client, entrer (de soi-même) dans la clientèle de NP (en quittant un autre état), changer (de soi-même) de clientèle en faveur de NP." Exactly the same expression recurs in other treaties, where a repeated action is not intended,² and there is no reason to translate it differently in the Aziru treaty.

¹ *CTH* 49 I A obv. 31'; Del Monte 1986: 120. The line is restored after identical expressions in the Duppi-Teššub, Tette and Niqmaddu treaties (ib., 20, 148, 156).

² E.g., in the treaty of Tette of Nuḫašši (*CTH* 53 rev. III 9; Del Monte 1986: 148) and of Niqmepa of Ugarit (*CTH* 66, l. 39; ib.: 20).

In conclusion, both the Hittite and the Akkadian versions simply state that Aziru entered into the servitude of Šuppiluliuma of his own volition, with no reference whatsoever to an earlier submission. This is further supported by the later Amurru treaties, all of which go back to the beginning of Hittite-Amurrite relations, i.e., to Aziru's apostasy.

Duppi-Teššub and Muršili; Akk. version (CTH 62 I obv. 2-4; Weidner 1923: 76; Del Monte 1986: 156):

- 2 ¹A-zi-ra a-na ka-a-ša ¹Tup-pí-^dU-u[p] a-bi a-bi-ka šu-ú it-ti a-bi-ia i[t-t]a-[
 3 a-bu-ia a-na ÌR-ut-ti-šu ut-te-er-šu LUGALMEŠ URUNu-ḫaš-ši ù LUGAL KUR
 URUKi-in-za it-ti [a-bi-ia]
 4 ki-i ik-ki-ru ù ¹A-zi-ra a-bi a-bi-ka it-ti a-bi-ia ú-ul ik-ki-ir
- 2 To you, Duppi-Teššub, Aziru was your grandfather. Towards my father he ...[]
 3 (and) my father turned him to his servitude. When the kings of Nuḫašši and the
 king of Kinza were hostile to [my father]
 4 Aziru, your grandfather, was not hostile to my father.

Weidner (1923: 76) restored the verb at the end of l. 2 *i[t-t]a[-kir]*, "he was hostile." This restoration has generally been accepted, despite the fact that it squarely contradicts Aziru's favorable characterization in all the other Amurru treaties (Freydank 1959-60: 377; Kitchen 1962: 18 n. 5; Del Monte 1986: 156; cf. idem 1983: 230 n. 26, where *ittakir* is still restored with a question mark). Moreover, in Goetze's influential translation in *ANET*: 203 the restoration brackets have disappeared altogether: "He rebelled against my father, but submitted again to my father." Some historical commentaries have used this translation uncritically, with the effect that Aziru's "rebellion" against Hatti and his subsequent "return" have turned from mere conjecture into solid fact (see recently Mumane 1985: 14 f.).

In fact, there is no need to restore a verb with a negative connotation. Quite the contrary. The whole gist of the passage is to emphasize Aziru's loyalty towards Šuppiluliuma, in sharp contrast to the rebelliousness of Nuḫašše and Kinza. A simple comparison with the almost identical Hittite version of the Duppi-Teššub treaty suffices to demonstrate that Weidner's traditional restoration is most unlikely (CTH 62 II B obv. 3-5; Friedrich 1926: 4):

- 3 ¹A-zi-ra-aš tu-el ŠA [¹Tup-pí-^dU-up A-BI A-BI-KA (A-NA A-BU-IA ĪR-aḫ-ta-at
ú-e-ir-ma)]
 4 LUGAL^{MES} KUR URUNu-ḫaš-ši ku-wa-p[í LUGAL KUR URUKi-in-za-ia
ku-ru-ri-ia-a(ḫ-ḫi-ir)]
 5 ¹A-zi-ra-aš-ma Ú-UL ku-u-ru-[(ri-ia-aḫ-ta)
 3 Duppi-Teššub, your grandfather Aziru submitted to my father.
 4 And when it occurred, that the kings of Nuḫašši and the king of Kinza
 5 became hostile, Aziru did not become hostile.

There is no mention here of an earlier, hostile stage in Hittite-Amurrite relations, and there is no need forcibly to reconstruct one in the Akkadian version. A verb with a positive connotation¹ would make much more sense in this context, and would also be more in line with the characterization of Aziru's apostasy in the later Amurru treaties, like the Šaušgamuwa treaty, which explicitly states that Aziru never sinned against Hatti (see below, ll. 26f.).

As for Aziru's "return" to Hatti's servitude, obviously, it is entirely dependent on the existence of an earlier submission. The sense of *ana ardūti-šu uttēr-šu* has already been discussed in the previous section. I would tentatively suggest the following translation of ll. 2-3 of the Akkadian version, squarely opposing Weidner's traditional restoration:

"To you Duppi-Teššub, Aziru was your grandfather. He c[ame] to my father, (and) my father turned him to his servitude."

Bentešina and Ḫattušili; (only) Akk. version (CTH 92 obv. 4-6; Weidner 1923: 124 f.; Del Monte 1986: 178 f.):

¹ Probably *i[t-t]a-[al-ka]*, "he c[ame]" (to my father). This verb is used in the same context in the Aziru treaty; CTH 49 I B obv. 14': *it-tal-ka*₄ (see Klengel 1969b: 11; Del Monte 1986: 116). Cf. also the parallel Hittite expression in the Šaušgamuwa treaty, ll. 15 ff. (see below): *IT-TI A-BI A-BI ^dUTUŠI I-NA KUR URUḪa-at-ti [(ú-it)]*, "he came to my forefather to Hatti."

- 4 'a'-na pa-ni ¹Šu-up-pí-lu-li-u-ma a-ba a-bi-ia ¹A-zi-ra LU[GAL KUR
URU]A-mur-ri ...
- 5 [š]a KUR URU]Mi-iš-ri-i it-nu-ma a-na šu-pa-al G]R^{MEŠ} ¹Šu-up-pí-lu-[(li-u-ma
a-b)a a-bi-i[a im-ta-qú-ut a]-ba a-bi-ia [re-e-ma(?)]
- 6 [i]r-ta-ši-šu šup-pa ri-kil-ti il-ta-šar-ma ZAG^{MEŠ} ša KUR URU]A-mur-ri ša
AD-bi-šu il-ta-šar it-ta-din-šu x [...]
- 4 At the time of (lit.: in front of) Šuppiluliuma my grandfather, Aziru k[ing of
Amurru changed [the loyalty(?)]
- 5 of Egypt, and [threw] himself at the feet of Šuppilu[lima, my gra]ndfather.
My grandfather showed [favor(?)] to him,
- 6 wrote him a treaty tablet and wrote down the borders of the land of Amurru of his
fathers and gave it to him ... [].

Šaušgamuwa and Tudḫaliya; (only) Hit. version (CTH 105 A I 13-26; Kühne - Otten
1971: 6 f.; restorations from B obv. 5 ff.; ibid.: 18f.):

- 13 [ka-ru-ú(?)] KUR URU]A-mur-ra Ú[-UL (IŠ-TU G]ŠT)]UKUL
- 14 [(ŠA KUR URU]Ḫa-)]at-ti tar-aḫ-ḫ[a-an] e-eš-ta
- 15 [A-zi-ra-aš-ma(?) ku-w]a-pí IT-TI A-BI A-BI ^dUTUŠI
- 16 [^dŠu-up-pí-lu-]li-[(u-m)a] I-NA KUR URU]Ḫa-at-ti
- 17 [(ú-it nu)] KUR.KUR^{ḪIA} URU]A-mur-ra nu-u-wa
- 18 [ku-u-ru-u]r e-eš-ta]R^{MEŠ} ŠA LUGAL Ḫur-ri-at
- 19 [e-eš-ta] nu-uš-ši ¹[A-]zi-ra-aš QA-TAM-MA
- 20 [(pa-aḫ-ḫa-aš-t)]a-at IŠ[(-T)]U G]ŠTUKUL-ma-an-za-an
- 21 [Ú-UL tar-]aḫ-ta nu ¹[A-]zi-ra-aš A-BA A-BI-KA
- 22 [¹Šu-up-pí-]lu-li-u-ma-an AŠ-ŠUM EN-UT-TA PAP-aš-ta []
- 23 [KUR URU]Ḫa-a)t-ti-ia pa-aḫ-ḫa-aš-ta
- 24 kat-ta-ia ¹Mu-ur-ši-li-in AŠ-ŠUM EN-UT-TA
- 25 pa-aḫ-ḫa-aš-ta KUR URU]Ḫa-at-ti-ia PAP-aš-ta
- 26 nu IT-TI KUR URU]Ḫa-at-ti Ú-UL ku-it-ki
- 27 wa-aš-ta-aš
- 13 [In the past(?)], the land of Amurru was not
- 14 conquered by the weapon of the land of Hatti.
- 15 Wh[en Aziru] came to the 'forefather' (lit.: 'grandfather')
- 16 of His Majesty, Šuppiluliuma, in the land of Hatti,
- 17 the lands of Amurru were still [hostile;

- 18 they [were] vassals of the king of Hurri.¹
 19 Nevertheless, Aziru remained loyal to him,
 20 and he did [not def]eat him by weapon.
 21 Aziru, your 'forefather' (lit.: 'grandfather'),
 22 protected Šuppiluliuma in his lordship,
 23 and he also protected the land of Hatti.
 24 Thereafter, he protected Muršili in his lordship,
 25 and he also protected the land of Hatti.
 26 Against the land of Hatti
 27 he had not sinned at all.

In conclusion, Aziru's submission to Šuppiluliuma, an event of major importance for Hittite foreign policy, is referred to in each of the extant Amurru treaties. None of these, however, provides any evidence to support the traditional view of a two-staged apostasy of Aziru, before and after his visit to Egypt. I seriously doubt that presumed hints of such a view would have been considered at all, without the seemingly solid Amarna evidence, which we attempted to refute in the previous chapter. Both the Amarna and the Hittite sources can now be seen to point to the same conclusion, namely, that Aziru's defection from Egypt was in fact one progressive process, which must have occurred quite shortly after his return from Egypt. His (and earlier his brother's) negotiations with the Hittites in Syria probably led to a personal meeting between Aziru and Šuppiluliuma (already foreseen in EA 165: 29 f.), in which the alliance was concluded. In Hittite historiography this encounter is described as Aziru's throwing himself at the feet of Šuppiluliuma (see treaties of Aziru and of Bentešina). The location of this meeting is only hinted at in the Šaušgamuwa treaty, where Aziru is said to have submitted in the land of Hatti. However, both the chronological distance and the vagueness of the expression leave some doubts as to the exact venue of the meeting. By

¹ The significance of this statement, which apparently contradicts the early history of Amurru, will be discussed elsewhere. Suffice it to say here that the elaborate interpretation suggested by Kestemont (1978; cf. Liverani 1983: 120 n. 34), which envisions a real historical basis for the claim of a Hurrian rule over Amurru, is in my view hardly acceptable. On this problem see also Murnane 1985: 235 ff. (but cf. p. 242) and Altman 1987.

analogy with Ugarit, whose king Niqmaddu submitted to Šuppiluliuma at Alalah (RS 17.340 = *PRU* IV, p. 50, line 24), we may perhaps assume that Aziru also came to present his submission outside of the territory of Amurru.

4. CHRONOLOGICAL SETTING OF AZIRU'S APOSTASY

Turning back now to a closer examination of the relative dating of Aziru's apostasy, we may start by stating that the Hittite sources do not provide any exact details. Nevertheless, several indirect clues in the Aziru treaty may be of help in correlating them with the Amarna evidence.

Del Monte (1983: 230 f.; 1986: 1, 55 f.) has pointed to a chronological clue in the section stating Aziru's commitment to assist the Hittites in their struggle against potential enemies. The list includes the lands of Hurri, Egypt, Babylon, Aštata and Alš/ti (Akk. A obv. 5'-7'; Hit. II 12'-14'). The very same list is found in the more or less contemporary treaty with Tette of Nuḫašši (CTH 53 obv. II 6-9), whereas the treaty between Muršili and Niqmepa of Ugarit already omits the land of Aštata (CTH 66, 14-15; Del Monte 1986: 16 f.). According to Del Monte, this shows that the treaties with Aziru and with Tette were formulated before the conquest of Carchemish, since the land of Aštata was ceded to Šuppiluliuma's son Piyaššili shortly afterwards (CTH 51; Weidner 1923: 22 ff.; cf. Hawkins 1983: 135 f.). Although this observation indeed provides a *terminus ante quem* for the formulation of the treaty, its chronological value is quite limited. Some time must have elapsed between the conquest of Carchemish and the annexation of Aštata, which followed after Piyaššili's campaign to Irrite. The treaties of Aziru and Tette may have been formulated in this interval, at the latest. However, other indications seem to date the treaty with Aziru still earlier than the Second Syrian War (or Hurrian War) and the conquest of Carchemish.

As already mentioned in the discussion of the historical preamble, Aziru's submission is generally placed at a time when the rest of Syria — including Ḫalpa, Mukiš and Niya — was still hostile to Šuppiluliuma. Now, according to the Mattiwaza treaty, these states were the first to be subdued by Šuppiluliuma during the First Syrian War (CTH 51, obv. 30-37; Weidner 1923: 10). It is quite apparent that Aziru's submission is not likely to have antedated the

takeover of northern Syria. As stated above, the main objective of this unrealistic portrayal in the Aziru treaty of the international situation was political. The Hittite monarch was primarily interested in emphasizing Aziru's voluntary submission, for which no apparent reason is given. Unlike Tette of Nuḥašši, who had asked for Hittite protection when attacked by the king of Mittanni (*CTH* 53 I 6 ff.), or Niqmaddu of Ugarit, who had been rescued by Šuppiluliuma from a joint attack by Nuḥašši and Mukiš (RS 17.340 = *PRU* IV, p. 49, ll. 9 ff.), Aziru was not immediately threatened by any of his neighbors. Thus, in sharp contrast to the treaties with Nuḥašši and with Ugarit, the Amurru treaties could not introduce a "deliverance motif" (for this motif see Altman 1984; esp. pp. 57 f., 66; 1990: 189). This, I believe, explains the excessively long and repetitive description of Aziru's submission, as "he rose up from the gate of Egypt." He was not forced to submit, either by the Hittites or by his neighbors, and had chosen his new patronage of his own will (and interest). This motif recurs in the other Amurru treaties, and especially in the treaty of Šaušgamuwa. Thus, the author of the Aziru treaty may have deliberately exaggerated the goodwill of Aziru, in contrast to the other rulers of Syria, of whom he presents an unusually long list. That Aziru was not likely to have been one of the first rulers of Syria to become a Hittite vassal¹ is also shown by the last sentence of this section, according to which Aziru (by submitting to Šuppiluliuma) had joined his "brothers," i.e., his fellow vassals (Freydank 1959-60: 379 f.; Kühne 1975: 240).

Although these chronological clues may not be equally reliable in providing an accurate dating, the overall impression left by the historical preamble to the treaty is that Aziru's defection happened shortly after his return from Egypt. In other words, it seems that he threw in his lot with Šuppiluliuma at a relatively early stage of the Hittite takeover of Syria, perhaps in the wake of or shortly after the First Syrian (One Year) War. This seems to be the gist of the emphatic statements that Aziru "came from the gate of Egypt" (I 24), or "rose up from Egypt" (I 18 f.) when he voluntarily submitted to Šuppiluliuma. Even if we do not take these

¹ The list of neighboring countries which are at peace with Hatti but may rebel includes Nuḥašši (*CTH* 49 II obv. II 18'). From this Freydank (1959-60: 379) has concluded that the treaty with Tette of Nuḥašši probably preceded the one with Aziru.

expressions in a literal sense,¹ they nevertheless convey a notion of proximity between the two events. Although Aziru continued to write conciliatory letters to Egypt for at least one year (EA 162: 42ff.), at the same time he probably conducted negotiations with the Hittites. The end of his correspondence with Egypt probably marks the finalization of his submission to Šuppiluliuma. The possibility that several years had passed between Aziru's return from Egypt and his final defection to the Hittites does not seem to me compatible with the evidence in the Aziru treaty.

This early dating of the Aziru treaty (about a year after his return from Egypt) has been supported by most authorities (e.g., Freydank 1959-60: 378 ff.; Kitchen 1962: 46; Helck 1971: 178; Liverani 1983: 94). Klengel, however, (1962: 456; 1964a: 80; 1969a: 289; see also Murnane 1985: 37) prefers a much later dating, about the time of the conquest of Carchemish and the letter of the widow queen.² Klengel's main argument for this dating (which according to the Niphururiya = Tutankhamun identification falls about a decade after the end of the Amarna correspondence of Aziru), is based on two well-known texts of Ḫattušili III, which describe in retrospect Šuppiluliuma's wars. In these texts — KUB XIX 9 I 12 f. (*CTH* 83.1) and KBo VI 28 obv. 22 (*CTH* 88) — Amurru figures as the southern border of Šuppiluliuma's realm, after the victory over Hurri and the conquest of Carchemish. Since in the description of the First Syrian War in the Mattiwaza treaty the southern border is only demarcated by the Lebanon Mountain (*CTH* 51, obv. 4 and 47), and no mention is made of Amurru, this shows, according to Klengel (1964a: 80), that the submission of Amurru was achieved only during the Second Syrian (or Hurrian) War.

I have serious doubts about the validity of this argument. The texts of Ḫattušili, written half a century after the events, provide only a very concise retrospective. Only seven lines in KBo

¹ As conceived by Freydank 1959-60: 380. For "the gate of Egypt" as perhaps a figurative denomination for the frontier of Egypt see Klengel 1969a: 240 n. 109 (quoting Ch. Rabin).

² For a combination of both versions see Houwink ten Cate 1963: 273 n. 22.

VI 28 are devoted to the entire age of Šuppiluliuma and they probably include activities even prior to his accession to the throne. This is not the place to dwell upon the complicated issue of the accuracy of the chronological framework provided by these texts (see Murnane 1985: 223 f.; Wilhelm and Boese 1987: 91; Bryce 1989: 20), but it may easily be demonstrated (especially in the better preserved text of KUB XIX 9, translated in Kitchen 1962: 3) that the description follows not a strict chronological order but rather a logical one: first comes a general résumé of the two main phases of Šuppiluliuma's wars, namely, in the Hatti Lands and in the Hurri Lands; then the extreme limits of his conquests in Syria are given, from Kinza (= Qedeš) and Amurru in the south (mentioning in passing the vanquishing of the king of Egypt) to Irrita and Šuta in the north; then the appointment of Telipinu and Piyaššili, in Ḫalab and Carchemish respectively; and finally the summing-up statement about the six years that it took Šuppiluliuma to restore order in the Land of Amurri¹ (probably an error for Hurri). Clearly, this late text was not composed as a consecutive chronicle, and one can hardly rely on it in considering the date of Aziru's submission.

In conclusion, the conclusive evidence from the Hittite sources, though not entirely definitive, seems to support an early dating of Aziru's apostasy, shortly after his return from Egypt. Since we have now redated this visit early in his career, it follows that his return to Amurru occurred shortly after receiving the news about the advance of Hittite armies to Amqi and Nuḫašše. While still corresponding with Egypt, he established contact with the Hittite king who was campaigning in Nuḫašše, and offered his submission to him. This important reference to the Hittite king's presence in Nuḫašše (EA 165: 28 ff.) may plausibly be synchronized with Šuppiluliuma's First Syrian War, referred to in the Mattiwaza treaty (Kitchen 1962: 17, 44; Klengel 1969a: 273; Krauss 1978: 59; Murnane 1985: 203). The First Syrian War may reasonably be dated a few years (possibly three) before Akhenaten's death (see Murnane 1985: 199 f.; Bryce 1989: 23). In absolute terms this would fall at c. 1340 B.C. (with Akhenaten's death dated to 1337 B.C.; see recently Kitchen 1987: 52). Thus, the defection of Aziru would still fall within the reign of Akhenaten, probably just before his

planned campaign to Syria (see §5.2. below). As a matter of fact, the desertion of Amurru may have been one of the main reasons (the loss of Qedeš being the other) for his long-awaited decision to intervene on a large scale in the Syrian arena.

5. MILITARY PREPARATIONS FOLLOWING AZIRU'S DEFECTION

5.1. THE DEFENSE OF AMURRU

Amurru's final defection had created a new situation in Syria. On the local level, the treaties signed by Šuppiluliuma with the two important Levantine states, Ugarit and Amurru, and the accord between these two (RS 19.68 = *PRU* IV, pp. 284 ff.), had established a powerful "triple alliance," which proved to be a strong bulwark for Hittite interests in Syria. The two allies¹ loyally supported their overlord in the recurring anti-Hittite rebellions in inner Syria, for which they were generously rewarded by the expansion of their kingdoms (see Astour 1969).

On the international level, the loss of Amurru was a major setback for the Egyptians. Not only did it mean the loss of their northernmost Asiatic province, which they had occupied since Tuthmosis III, but, more importantly, it cut off their easy access to inner Syria, through the Eleutheros Valley.² It was quite clear to all parties involved that Egypt could not let the matter pass, and would at least attempt to retaliate. I believe that against this background, i.e., the establishment of the axis Hatti - Ugarit - Amurru, we may meaningfully set the General's Letter into its appropriate historical context.

¹ Note, that in the vassal treaties with Ugarit and Amurru the two states are mutually omitted from the list of neighbouring states (on the right bank of the Orontes) which might become hostile or rebellious.

² For the strategic importance of this route, which enabled the fast seaborne transportation of Egyptian forces to Syria, by-passing the long land route through Sinai, Palestine and the Lebanon Valley, see Alt 1950 (= 1959: 107-140); Rainey 1971: 146 ff.; Singer 1988b: 4.

Aziru, who no doubt expected punitive action on the part of the Egyptians, had good reason to believe that he would not be left alone on the battlefield. A specific provision in his treaty with Šuppiluliuma explicitly guarantees Hittite aid in just such an eventuality. In both the Akkadian and the Hittite versions the passage is considerably damaged, but it may confidently be restored from identical provisions in Šuppiluliuma's treaty with Tette of Nuḫašši (CTH 53 obv. III 7-18) and from Muršili's treaty with Niqmepa of Ugarit (CTH 66 obv. 35-44; Kestemont 1974a: 104f.; Del Monte 1986: 18 ff.). The beginning of the passage is better preserved in the Akkadian version, whereas its end is better in the Hittite one. The quotations follow accordingly:

Akk.: CTH 49 I A obv. 27'-30' (Del Monte 1986: 120 f.):

- 27' [ù š]um-ma ¹A-zi-ra a-[x x x (x)] ma-am-ma is-sà-aḫ-ḫa-as-sú lu-ú [lu]-ú
ma-am-ma [ù]
28' [a-na LU]GAL KUR URUḪa-at-ti [i-šap]-pár-ma a-na ti-il₅-[lu-u]t-ti-ia
[al-kam-mi] ù
29' [LUGAL a-na t]i-il₅-lu-ut-ti-{šu il-la-ka ù šum-m)a DUMU.LUGAL ù šum-ma
[be-]u!¹ GAL [iš-tu ERÍN^{MEŠ}] GIŠGIGIR^{MEŠ} i-ša[p-pár-ma]
30' [ù LÚKÚR] ša-a-šu []-šu [i]-d[u]-uk-[ku]

Hit.: CTH 49 II rev. III 4'-11' (Del Monte 1986: 134 f.):

- 4' [ki-nu-na-ká]n² ku-it ¹A-zi-ra-aš pa-ra-a ḫa-an-d[a-an-ni]
5' [ZI-ni A-NA d]UTU^{ŠI} ÌR-an-ni kat-ta-an EGIR-pa ú-i[t]
6' [nu-uš-ši-kán(?)] dUTU^{ŠI} BE-LUMEŠ KUR URUḪat-ti ERÍN^{MEŠ}-ia
ANŠ[E.KUR.RAMEŠ]-ia
7' [IŠ-TU KUR URUḪ]at-ti I-NA KUR URUA-mur-ri kat-ta-an u-[i-ia-mi]
8' [ku-i-ta-at-k]án A-NA URUDIDLI.ḪI.A-KA ša-ra-a i-ia-an-ta
9' [na-aš pa-a]ḫ-ši na-aš iš-ḫa-aš-šar-wa-aḫ-ḫi-eš-ki
10' [nu-ut-ta] ŠEŠ^{MEŠ}-aš i-wa-ar pí-ra-an i-ia-an-ta-ru
11' [nu LUGAL KUR URUḪ]a-at-ti pa-aḫ-ši

- 27' If someone puts pressure¹ on Aziru [], be it [a] or whoever he may be, [and]
28' he (Aziru) sends (a messenger) to the king of Hatti (saying): "Come, rescue me!"

¹ For this verb and its Hittite equivalent see Del Monte 1986: 77 ff.

- 29' [the king will come to his] rescue. And if [he will s]end either a prince, or a senior
[lord(?), with troops] and chariots,
30' [they will v]anquish that [enemy for h]im(?).
- 4' [Now(?)], since Aziru *turned [out of] his free*
5' [*will*¹ to] His Majesty's servitude,
6' [I will s]end [to him(?)] lords of Hatti, (with) troops and ch[ariots]
7' [from the Land of H]atti to the Land of Amurru.
8' [and since they] will enter your cities,
9' pro[tect them] and provision them!
10' They should "serve" (lit.: "walk before") [you] like brothers.
11' Protect [the king] of Hatti!

That this explicit provision was not merely a formal declaration is clearly shown by Šuppiluliuma's military interventions in response to the calls of Šarrupši of Nuḫašši and Niqmaddu of Ugarit. One may assume that these precedents, especially the latter, were known to Aziru, so that he could rely quite confidently on the promised Hittite help (certainly more than his neighbors could rely on Egypt). Thus, we may reasonably conjecture that if Aziru did turn to the Hittites for help, his appeal was probably not left unanswered.

Just such Hittite military aid to Amurru is, I believe, evidenced by the General's Letter from Ugarit. But before we return to this document, let us first consider the evidence pointing to the Egyptian preparations for a counter-offensive in Syria.

5.2. THE PROJECTED EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN

5.2.1. Amarna Evidence

It has long been recognized that the combined evidence from numerous late Amarna letters attests to preparations made for an Egyptian military expedition against Hatti and its Syrian surrogates (Schulman 1964: 63-64 n. 99; Waterhouse 1965: 69 ff.; Reviv 1966; Na'aman 1975: 210-216; see also Mumane 1985: 211 n. 53, with further references to discussions of the logistic aspects of such expeditionary forces). The evidence in this respect covers

¹ See above p. 148 n. 1 for this meaning of *ḫandanni ištanzani*.

practically every district of Egyptian Canaan (for references see Schulman 1964 and Na'aman 1975): Palestine (EA 65, 216-218, 227, 233, 247, 292-293, 315, 324-326, 328, 337, 367, 370), the Phoenician coast (EA 141-142 from Beirut, EA 144 from Sidon and EA 147 from Tyre), the Bashan region (EA 201-206), Damascus (EA 195) and the Lebanon Valley (EA 191, 193).¹

It is generally agreed that all these references pertain to the same planned expedition and consequently belong to the same chronological scope, in the late years of Akhenaten. There are various clues for setting this event into the relative sequence of developments in Canaan, but the most accurate single datum for an absolute dating is provided by EA 155, sent by Abimilki of Tyre. As first recognized by Albright (1937), Mayati who is referred to eight times in this letter, is Meritaten, daughter of Akhenaten and spouse of his co-regent Smenkhkare (see further Campbell 1964: 70 f; Waterhouse 1965: 72 f.; Helck 1971: 180; Moran 1987: 51 n. 126). Abimilki designates his own town as "the city of Mayati" (lines 42, 50, 62), in a manner which may indicate that the appellation was given to Tyre by the Pharaoh himself (Na'aman 1979: 675 n. 14). This clearly demonstrates that by the time EA 155 was written Meritaten had already become the chief lady in Egypt, having replaced Nefertiti in this position. The exact circumstances in which Meritaten assumed her position of prominence — whether through her marriage with Smenkhkare, or perhaps still earlier, after Nefertiti's disappearance from the scene — are still to be decided (see e.g., Campbell 1964: 70 f.; Aldred 1968: 77 f.). In any case, her emergence falls within the very last years of Akhenaten. EA 155 would thus have been written around 1337 B.C., the year of Akhenaten's death (see recently Kitchen 1987: 52), or perhaps a year later if Smenkhkare outlived Akhenaten.

There are various indications proving that the letters of Abimilki were written in close proximity to each other, perhaps within the space of about five years (see the argumentation

¹ Schulman and Na'aman also include EA 55 from Qaṭna, but see the reservations made in this respect by Izre'el 1988: 174 n. 68.

of Campbell 1964: 71 f.). According to EA 147 Abimilki received clear orders from the Pharaoh to prepare for the arrival of Egyptian troops (lines 35-38), as did other rulers of Canaan. Thus, the prolific correspondence dealing with the preparations for the campaign must be dated a few years prior to Akhenaten's death.

The combined evidence from the Amarna sources suggests that what the Egyptians had in mind was a large-scale operation directed against the Hittites and their newly recruited allies in Syria — Aziru and Aitakama. From the geographical distribution of these preparatory measures it appears that the plan was to advance in two spearheads. An expeditionary force was to sail up the Phoenician littoral, stopping for supplies at Tyre (EA 155), Sidon (EA 144: 19-21) and Beirut (EA 141: 18-33); another force, perhaps headed by the Pharaoh himself, was to advance through the Baqa^c and to penetrate the Orontes Valley (e.g., EA 191: 4-6, 11-14, from Ruḥizzi). The two armies were probably expected to join forces after having crushed the rebels in Amurru and in Qedeš. Evidently, this plan closely resembles the strategy employed more than half a century later, on the eve of the Battle of Qedeš.

5.2.2. Egyptian evidence

Whether the expected Egyptian expedition was sent in the end or not is yet to be decided. Direct evidence of the Syrian campaigns of Akhenaten is still lacking in the Egyptian sources.

Schulman (1964; 1978; 1988) has adduced some indirect indications of Akhenaten's Hittite wars from both literary and pictorial sources (see also Murnane 1985: 241 f.). Most notable amongst the former is the one found in Tutankhamun's restoration decree, in which he criticizes his predecessor, that "if the army was sent to Djahy to extend the frontier of Egypt, no success came of their efforts" (*Urk.* IV 2027: 13-14; Schulman 1964: 59). This has been taken as a reference to Akhenaten's failure on the Syrian battlefield.

The pictorial evidence consists of a number of battle scenes depicting Syrian and Hittite warriors on so-called *talatat* building blocks from Amarna temples at Karnak, which were demolished by post-Amarna Pharaohs. Schulman (1988; 1989: 48) has attributed some of these military scenes to Akhenaten. Recently, however, Ray Johnson, who is working on

these decorated stone fragments, arrived at the firm conclusion that none of the battle scenes belong to Akhenaten, but rather to later Amarna and even Ramesside Pharaohs (information courtesy of Alan Schulman). Schulman has now accepted this negative evidence from pictorial sources, but adheres to his historical reconstruction on the basis of the Egyptian and the Amarna literary evidence.

The Egyptian evidence seems inconclusive at present in proving the materialization of Akhenaten's projected campaign. Perhaps his sudden death interrupted the preparations, which were only resumed in the later years of his successor, Tutankhamun.

5.2.3. Hittite evidence

The Hittite sources may be relevant with respect to the planned Egyptian campaign and its corollaries only if the "Niphururiya Problem" were after all settled in favor of Akhenaten (or Smenkhkare) rather than Tutankhamun.

It is beyond the aim of this study to explore this labyrinthine debate,¹ which flared up again recently (see in particular Wilhelm and Boese 1987 and Bryce [forthcoming] for recent statements of the two opposing views). Also, a drastic lowering of Šuppiluliuma's accession date was recently put forward by Wilhelm and Boese (1987; see also Bryce 1989, but cf. Astour 1989: 6 ff.), and it is better first to explore the full implications of this suggestion for the overall chronology of Šuppiluliuma's age.²

¹ For a concise résumé with references to the basic literature see Moran 1987: 53-55. For a more detailed account of events according to each of the two options see Murnane 1985: 217 ff.

² Whereas Wilhelm and Boese identify Niphururiya with Smenkhkare, Bryce maintains that the Tutankhamun option provides even stronger support for their revised chronology of Šuppiluliuma. Astour rejects the revision as methodologically unsound (1989: 8).

Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness the two options will be outlined here in relation to Aziru's defection and the General's Letter, two subjects which, as I attempt to prove, are closely related to each other. The Hittite textual evidence (esp. from the Deeds of Šuppiluliuma and from the Plague Prayers of Muršili) has often been presented and need not be repeated here (Güterbock 1956: 92-98; 1960; for concise summaries see Schulman 1978; Murnane 1985: 24-41; Bryce [forthcoming]).

If Niphururiya is Tutankhamun (Sturm 1933; Edel 1948: 14-15; Güterbock 1956: 94 n. e; Kitchen 1962: 12; 1968: 318 f.; 1985: 44; Homung 1964: 93; Helck 1971: 181 f.; Kühne 1973a: 14 n. 63; Schulman 1978; Barta 1983; Murnane 1985: 24, 233; Moran 1987: 55; Bryce [forthcoming]), then the whole sequence of events preceding and following his death, including the Egyptian attack on Qedeš and the Hittite counterattack on Amqi led by Lupakki and Tarḫunta-zalma, is separated by about a decade from the projected campaign of Akhenaten referred to in the Amarna material. In that case, the Hittite evidence mentioned above may be relevant to our subject only if we assume that Aziru waited many years between his first overtures to the Hittites and his final submission. The evidence of the Šuppiluliuma - Aziru treaty and also Aziru's Amarna letters, however, have shown this to be most unlikely. There are several indications, as we have seen, that Aziru shifted his allegiance shortly after his return from Egypt, i.e., in the wake of or shortly after the First (One Year) Syrian War of Šuppiluliuma.

If the Pharaoh referred to in the Deeds of Šuppiluliuma as Niphururiya should after all be identified as Akhenaten (Smith 1947; Waterhouse 1965: 81 f.; Redford 1967: 159-162; Krauss 1978: 9-19; Strenhagen 1985: 41) or with Smenkhkare (Wilhelm and Boese 1987: 100-102), then the Second Syrian War, with the varied information about Hittite-Egyptian military encounters, can be correlated with the Amarna evidence. In this case the whole sequence of Šuppiluliuma's operations in Syria (the First and the Second Wars) would be conflated into one continuous war of about 6 years (instead of approximately 18 years according to the previous assumption). The main events, from the point of view of Amurru, could then be briefly reconstructed as follows (cf. Krauss 1978: 54-68):

1) Rumors about the growing Hittite menace in Syria reach Aziru and he asks for Egyptian aid in case he is attacked (EA 157: 25 ff.). This may be correlated with an early Hittite foray (Krauss's "1. syrische Krieg" = Kitchen's "second Syrian foray"), in the wake of which Šuppiluliuma accepts Šarrupši of Nuḫašše as vassal.

2) Aitakama of Qedeš turns his back on Egypt and attacks Biryawaza of Upe (EA 189), probably with the assistance of Aziru (EA 151).

3) Aziru goes to Egypt (after having captured Šumur) and is officially nominated as "mayor." While in Egypt he receives a report (EA 170) about a Hittite attack on Amqi, led by Lupakki and assisted by Aitakama and another Hittite force, led by Zita(na), which is expected in Nuḫašše.

4) Šuppiluliuma's One Year campaign (Krauss's "Grossen Syrienfeldzug" = Kitchen's First Syrian War), in which he conquers all of Syria, including Qedeš,¹ where he after a short while reinstates Aitakama as king. Aziru returns from Egypt, enters Tunip and establishes contact with the Hittite king in Nuḫašše (EA 161: 47 ff.; 165: 28 ff.). For a while he continues to write to Egypt (EA 161, 164-168) and then finally submits to Šuppiluliuma (CTH 49).

5) The Egyptians launch an attack on Qedeš (KBo V 6 A II 21-23; Güterbock 1956: 93) in response to the reinstatement of Aitakama as a Hittite vassal and his attacks on Egyptian surrogates (Amqa, Upe and Qatna).

6) The Hittites react with a second attack on Amqa (KBo V 6 A III 1-5; Güterbock 1956: 94).

¹ Perhaps the notation in the Mattiwaza treaty (CTH 51 obv. 40), according to which Šuppiluliuma did not anticipate that he would have to fight Qedeš, should be understood in light of the previous co-operation of Aitakama with the Hittites.

7) A large-scale Egyptian counter-offensive is anticipated in Syria. As one precaution the Hittites post General Šumi[- on the coast of Amurru (RS 20.33).

8) The Egyptian mission is cancelled when Akhenaten (= Niphururiya) dies. His widow appeals to Šuppiluliuma, who eventually consents to send his son Zannanza (KBo V 6 A III 7ff.; Güterbock 1956: 94-98).

9) Zannanza is murdered en route to Egypt and Šuppiluliuma takes revenge through another (third) attack on the Egyptian zone (KUB XIX 4, 6'ff.; Güterbock 1956: 108; KUB XIX 20; Murnane 1985: 27ff.).¹

The debate over the identity of Niphururiya will probably linger on. Obviously, the accumulation of corresponding information from southern and northern sources, in case the Akhenaten (or Smenkhkare) option is accepted, appears to be quite enticing, since it "permits a shorter and simpler sequence of events" (Murnane 1985: 223). However, this condensed scenario also raises quite a number of serious difficulties (ib.: 218 ff.), which cannot be dealt with here. Perhaps some new evidence will turn up in the future which will settle the matter conclusively. I intentionally refrain from taking a firm stand here, because the theory advocated in this study does not depend upon the choice of a certain synchronism or chronology. Whether Niphururiya is Akhenaten, Smenkhkare or Tutankhamun does not directly affect either the suggested reinterpretation of Amurrite history or the suggested historical setting of the General's Letter, which are based primarily on a scrutiny of the sources relating to the development of Hittite-Amurrite relations.

¹ The stationing of General Šumi[- could theoretically also be set at this stage. According to his report, the General had already spent five months in Amurru and we do not know how much longer he remained there. It is quite possible that after the submission of Amurru the Hittites intended to install a more or less permanent garrison force on their new border with Egypt.

5.2.4. Conclusion

The combined evidence from Egyptian, Hittite and Syrian (Amarna) sources does not at present seem to confirm the realization of the planned Egyptian campaign to Syria during the lifetime of Akhenaten. But whether this counter-offensive was started by Akhenaten after all, or had to wait another decade, has little bearing on our understanding of the political atmosphere prevailing in Syria on the eve of the projected campaign. The eventuality of the Egyptian move was no doubt taken seriously by the Hittites and even more so by the Syrian kingdoms caught in the struggle of the great powers. As is evident from the desperate epistles of the pro-Egyptian rulers, they pinned their hope on rescue by the Egyptian forces. On the other hand, those rulers who threw in their lot with the rising force of the Hittites, notably Aitakama and Aziru, had every reason to prepare an appropriate defense of their lands, hopefully with the help of their new overlords.

6. RECONSIDERING THE GENERAL'S LETTER

Turning back to the General's Letter we may now suggest that the circumstances described therein may reflect exactly the historical situation described in the previous chapters, i.e., the period immediately following Aziru's defection.

In the Egyptian naval bases along the coast of Amurru, especially in the Tripoli region, there probably remained Egyptian troops and personnel,¹ who were now trapped in hostile territory, after Aziru's shift of allegiance. Perhaps there was also some opposition to Aziru's new policy within the population of some lowland cities, such as Ardat. These pockets were still capable of putting up some effective resistance, especially since rumors were circulating about an approaching Egyptian expedition. Also, it seems that some reinforcements, probably from the Egyptian-dominated regions south of Amurru, managed to infiltrate into the beleaguered city of Ardat. Fearing this local resistance, and even more a major Egyptian campaign along the coast, Aziru asked for help from his new patron who promptly complied. Perhaps this request was not even necessary, and Šuppiluliuma dispatched a task force to Amurru on his own initiative, in anticipation of an Egyptian move. Such a step would not only demonstrate his determination to defend his new and valuable ally, but would also coincide with his overall strategy of containing the Egyptians and blocking their access to other bordering lands in Syria, such as Qedeš.

Having suggested a fitting historical setting for the situation portrayed in the letter, we may now reconsider in more detail some of the primary data contained therein: the possible

¹ Cf. Rainey 1971: 148, who assessed the situation very similarly, but fitted it into the period after the Battle of Qedeš. Later, however, he considered an earlier dating of the letter, possibly in the reign of Horemheb (1973:282).

identities of the addressee and the addressor, the circumstances in which the letter ended up at Ugarit and the language of the letter.

6.1 THE ADDRESSEE

The short opening formula of the letter¹ does not provide any clear clues for the identification of the addressed "king." As a rule, the Hittite king is addressed by his subjects as *ḫUTUšī*, "My Sun" (Hagenbuchner 1989: 45). This holds true not only for the predominantly late imperial correspondence from Ḫattuša and Ugarit, but also in the case of the Mašat Höyük letters, dated to the age of Šuppiluliuma and his immediate predecessors (Alp 1980). In his own letters, the Hittite monarch also refers to himself as "My Sun," or else, in letters to foreign countries, as "Great King" (LUGAL.GAL). The lesser title "King" (LUGAL), without further specification, is reserved for the Viceroy, i.e., the king of Carchemish (Singer 1983: 8 n. 9; Hagenbuchner 1989: 67), although there may be some exceptions to this rule (see Nougayrol 1955: 4 n. 1, addition).

Should we apply these observations in the case of the General's Letter, we may be led to conclude that the addressee could be the king of Carchemish, i.e., Piyaššili/Šarre-kušuḫ, Šuppiluliuma's son. Yet if, as suggested in this study, the General Šumi[- was posted to Amurru shortly after Aziru's apostasy, i.e., shortly after his return from Akhenaten's court, it would hardly have been possible for the letter to have been destined for the king of Carchemish. Piyaššili was elevated to kingship in Carchemish only after the takeover of this city, which occurred during the Second Syrian War, after the death of the Pharaoh Nipḫururiya (see above). Theoretically, Šuppiluliuma's other son, Telipinu, who was elevated

¹ Lines 1-2: "To the king, m[y lo]rd, say: Message of Šumi[--,] your servant: At the feet of my lord I fall." This opening formula is customary in the Amarna and Ugarit correspondence, but is less frequent in Hatti (Hagenbuchner 1989: 59 ff.). For the similar opening formula of RS 19.06 = *PRU* VI, no. 1, a letter sent by Bentešina to "the king," see below.

to kingship in Ḫalab, could already have been addressed as "king" at an earlier stage. However, there is as yet no evidence that Telipinu also held such an active role in the administration of Syria. Therefore, the possibility that RS 20.33 was addressed to one of Šuppiluliuma's sons is unlikely, unless one posits a somewhat later dating of the letter, after the coronation of Piyaššili. This, however, would be opposed to the rest of the evidence relating to the dating of Aziru's apostasy.

In dealing with the opening formula of the letter and the possible candidates for the addressee, we should also bear in mind that this is not a regular letter of the Hittite imperial correspondence, with regard to both its language and its early date. If, as shown by Izre'el, the letter was formulated by a local Amurrite scribe, who was as yet unfamiliar with the official nomenclature of the Hittite administration of Syria, the addressed "king" could, after all, be the Hittite king himself.¹

The unlikelihood of identifying the addressed king as the king of Ugarit has already been discussed at the beginning of the historical chapter. Had the letter been found anywhere other than in Ugarit, I seriously doubt that anyone would have suggested such a destination. Still, this findplace must have some plausible explanation, and are will be suggested below.

6.2. THE FINDPLACE OF THE TABLET

In view of the aforementioned conclusions concerning the addressee of the letter, it is now suggested that the General of the task force in Amurru sent his field report to the Hittites through the territory of another allied kingdom, Ugarit. This is both the shortest way (by land

¹ If the dating defended here is accepted, the addressee must be Šuppiluliuma himself. The whereabouts of Šuppiluliuma at this time can hardly be established. That he may have received the letter in Ugarit itself is not very likely. Although at this stage Ugarit must have already submitted to him, there is no evidence that he stayed in this city at any time. During the interval between the First and the Second Syrian Wars he seems to have been preoccupied with inner Anatolian matters (see Güterbock 1956: 90-92).

or sea) and the safest one, certainly preferable to the long route through the rebellious kingdoms of inner Syria.

That the itinerary of the letters sent from Amurru to Hatti or to Carchemish may have passed through Ugarit in some cases seems to be supported by RS 19.06 = *PRU* VI, no. 1. This is a so-called "lettre de politesse" sent by Bentešina to the king, his lord. The short introduction, only an opening formula and a confirmation of the sender's well being, does not provide any clues to the identity of the correspondents. Nevertheless, it is usually assumed that the sender is the well-known king of Amurru, whereas the addressee must be his Hittite overlord, either the king of Hatti or the king of Carchemish (Klengel 1969a: 214, 375; Rainey 1973b: 35; Ahl 1973: 480; Kühne 1973c: 185f.). Still, the question remains as to why the tablet was found at Ugarit. Rather than resolving the problem by assigning this letter to some other Bentešina, a resident of Ugarit (e.g., Hagenbuchner 1989: 75 f.), we should better assume that both it and the General's Letter¹ were sent from Amurru to a Hittite king, through the territory of Ugarit. The former was probably sent to the king of Carchemish (probably Ini-Teššub), whereas the latter went more likely, as suggested above, to the king of Hatti.

For some unknown reason, the General's Letter was detained at Ugarit, perhaps, a copy thereof (translated into Hittite?) was prepared and was sent forth to its final destination. Nougayrol (1968: 76) has pointed out that the reddish color of the clay and the script differ considerably from those of the tablets written at Ugarit. On the other hand, the tablet closely resembles the Amarna documents from Amurru and two documents from Ugarit originating from Amurru (the Aziru - Niqmaddu treaty, and the 'trousseau' of Aḫatmilku). Thus it would seem that the original letter was kept in Ugarit for over a century and finally found its repository in Rap'anu's archive, probably as an antiquarian item.²

¹ Incidentally, the two letters exhibit an almost identical introduction, consisting of a messenger formula and a prostration formula (cf. Pardee and Whiting 1987: 13).

² Another, rather extraordinary scenario would be that the letter was brought to Ugarit from some archive in Amurru over a century after its composition, possibly by the same

6.3. THE ADDRESSOR

The sender's name is unfortunately only partially preserved, which renders his identification conjectural. Nevertheless, attempts have been made to suggest at least a plausible restoration for Šumi[-. We may now review these suggestions in the light of the historical reconstruction put forward above.

Šu-mi-i[t-ti], Nougayrol's original suggestion (1957: 80), is a name reconstructed from two fragmentary Amarna occurrences: *Šu-mi-it-t[a(-)]* (EA 57: 13) and *-m]i-it-ti* (EA 40: 6).¹ There is hardly any evidence that the two names should be reconstructed similarly, or even that either of them should be reconstructed as **Šumitti*. The former name could, in fact, be plausibly associated with *Šumitta(ra)*, for which see below. In EA 40, a letter from Alašia to Egypt, *-m]itti* is apparently acting on behalf of the Egyptians. He could hardly have anything to do with General Šumi[-, even if the name is reconstructed in the traditional manner.

Šu-mi-y[a-na], Nougayrol's later preference (1963: 119; 1968: 69) is a name attested several times at Ugarit (Schaeffer 1968: 676 f.; Gröndahl 1967: 194, with parallels). One of the persons bearing this name was the father of a certain *Ra-ba-na*, who signed the colophon of two lexical texts (see Rainey 1971: 136, with references). Whether the latter may be identified, despite the different spelling, with the scribe Rap'anu in whose archive the General's Letter was found remains doubtful (Rainey, *ib.*; cf., however, Nougayrol 1968: 172 n. 2). According to the dated documents from this large archive (see Introduction), Rap'anu must have been active during the second half of the 13th century (Nougayrol 1968: 69). Even if we do accept the equation between Rap'anu and Rabana, he could hardly have been

ambassador who brought from Amurru to Ugarit the letter of Parši (RS 20.162 = *Ugaritica* V, no. 37), which was also deposited in the archive of Rap'anu. The reason, however, for such an exceptional act would remain a mystery.

¹ Cf. the name *Šu-mi-tum* in a Mari text (ARM XVI/I, 199; Hess 1984: 238).

the son of the General stationed in Amurru in the age of Šuppiluliuma (unless we assume exceptionally long lifetimes for both father and son).

Šu-mi-i[t-ta(-ra)] was first suggested as a possible restoration of the name by Rainey (1971: 136). The name is attested at Alalaḫ IV (AT 128: 9), at Boghazköy and in Amarna, the latter references perhaps alluding to the same person.

First a comment on the spelling is in order. The break in the tablet leaves sufficient space for two signs only, *i* or *it* and an additional sign. Thus, a reconstruction *Šu-mi-i[t-ta-ra]* could hardly be accommodated. However, in EA 57: 13 only *Šu-mi-it-t[a(-)]* is preserved and perhaps nothing is missing. At Alalaḫ the name is spelled *Šu-mi-ta-ru* (AT 128: 9) and at Boghazköy *Šum-mi-it-ta-ra-aš* (CTH 63, *passim*) or [*Šu-u*]m-mi-it-ta-ra-aš (KBo XIX 32, 4'). However, KUB XXIII 126 II 37 (CTH 63) has an exceptional spelling, where the final *r* is "omitted" (*Šum-mi-it-ta-aš*). Perhaps we may reconstruct an original **Šum(m)ittar* (cf., e.g., Šauššatar),¹ with the final "weak consonant" *r* occasionally dropped before the case ending. If so, this name could well be restored for General Šumi[-, which opens a whole set of prosopographical possibilities.

CTH 63 is a ruling of Muršili II concerning two Syrian affairs: the claims of Abiradda (or Abiratta²), king of Barga, to the city of Iyaruwatta, and the question of extradition of some deportees (NAM.RA) by Duppi-Teššub, king of Amurru.³ The exact connection between these two matters (separated in the text by a double line) is very difficult to establish, since about half of the text is missing. Cavaignac (1932: 191) suggested that Abiradda was in fact Aziru's Indo-European(?) throne-name, citing the fact that both kings had a son named

¹ For the suggested Indo-Aryan or Hurrian etymologies see Laroche 1966: 165 and Hess 1984: 238 (with references).

² The name is spelled in the text with both a final *-da* and a final *-ta*.

³ For comprehensive studies of the text see Cavaignac 1932 and Klengel 1963. See also Astour 1969: 411 ff.; Rainey 1971: 136; Bryce 1988: 23 ff.

DU-Teššub. Although this interesting suggestion would indeed provide a proper thematic connection between the two parts of the text, it entails serious difficulties, e.g., the very fact that Aziru himself is mentioned in the text several times by his "original" name (Klengel 1963: 49).

The Iyaruwatta affair, in which the name of Šumittara occurs, may be briefly summarized as follows. The city of Iyaruwatta had originally belonged to the land of Barga, but was given by the Hurrian king to the grandfather of Tette, king of Nuḫašši. Tette and a certain EN-urta revolted against Muršili, whereas Abiradda, king of Barga, remained loyal to him. In return Abiradda asked to be rewarded by the restitution of Iyaruwatta. The Hittite king agreed to comply with his request, except in the event that Tette was deposed by his own son or brother. In that case the city would remain in the possession of the latter. Here unfortunately follows a large gap in the text and the eventual fate of Iyaruwatta can only be inferred logically. What we do know is that EN-urta, perhaps a son of Tette, was vanquished by Muršili, and his throne and kingdom were given to Abiradda. The latter was restored as king of Barga, and his succession to the throne was promised to his son DU/Ir-Teššub. Here the text suddenly introduces Šumittara and Ḫuya, probably a father and his son, who remained loyal to Hatti. No indication is given as to their identity, but the two are sworn to refrain from hostilities against Abiradda and DU-Teššub, and vice versa.

It stands to reason that Šumittara was a nobleman from Nuḫašše, perhaps a pro-Hittite brother of Tette, who deposed him from the throne (Klengel 1963: 52). One may further assume that Šumittara actually became the ruler of the disputed town of Iyaruwatta, and that for this very reason the Hittite king had to assure his peaceful relationship with the neighboring kingdom of Barga and its king (Klengel, *ib.*). Both Barga and Iyaruwatta must be located somewhere in the western part of Nuḫašši, possibly in the middle Orontes region (see Klengel 1963: 45 ff.; Astour 1969: 410 ff.).

Even if this logical reconstruction is to some extent mistaken, one cannot fall too wide of the mark in identifying Šumittara as a pro-Hittite nobleman from one of the inner-Syrian kingdoms, most probably a client kingdom of the Nuḫašši confederacy. Since he probably

had a grown-up son (Ḫuya) by the time of Tette's revolt (Klengel 1963: 52), he could already have been active at the time of the Hittite conquest of Syria.

Another occurrence of this name at Boghazköy is in KBo XIX 32, 4' (*Šu-u*]*m-mi-it-ta-ra-aš*). This is a small fragment of a royal donation (CTH 222.27), and unfortunately not much can be said on the identity of the persons mentioned in it. It is worth noting, however, that next to Šummittara a certain *Ta-a-ku-uš* is listed; this is also a common Syrian name, and more notably, it is a dynastic name in Nuḫašše and Niya.¹ Is it possible that these donations, which included fields and personnel (mostly women), were presented to some of the pro-Hittite rulers of Syria?²

Finally, the name *Šu-mi-it-t[a(-)* occurs, in a deplorably damaged Amarna fragment, EA 57: 12' (for the collated text see Klengel 1963: 45 n. 3). Although the context is irretrievable, the outstanding circumstance that the fragment contains the only reference to Barga in the Amarna correspondence strongly suggests that we are dealing here with the same Šum(m)itta(ra). In fact, the name of the king of Barga may perhaps be restored as [Abirat]ta.³ In the first decade of Muršili's reign⁴ Abiradd/tta must have been an old man, who had

¹ See Astour 1969: 410 and 388 n. 3 for references. The last occurrence (KUB XXVI 92: 8) should be erased from the list. The name of the Man of Ariyanta should probably be read (after collation) as *Ta-ku-u[h-li* (Singer 1983: 12).

² E.g., Takuwa, king of Niya, who "came in peace" to Šuppiluliuma during his one-year Syrian campaign, whereas his brother Akit-Teššub revolted in his absence (CTH 51 obv. 30 ff.; Weidner 1923: 11). This situation would be similar to the behavior of Tette and Šummittara, if they were indeed brothers.

³ Although, according to Klengel (1963: 46 n.1), the traces of the penultimate sign (before a clear *-ta*) resemble a KUR-like sign.

⁴ For the date of the document, probably the ninth year of Muršili, see Klengel 1963: 54 f.

already nominated his son, DU/Ir-Teššub, as successor (*CTH* 63 II 5 ff.).¹ He could well have ruled the kingdom of Barga by the final years of Akhenaten, which is the date established by the other names mentioned in the letter, Akizzi king of Qatna and the Egyptian commissioner Puḫuru.

To sum up, in light of the Amarna and the Hittite evidence on Šum(m)itta(ra), the restoration of this name in the redated General's Letter seems quite plausible, and is preferable to Šumiyanu, certainly to an unattested Šumitti. That Šumittara, a pro-Hittite Syrian prince, could have been drafted by Šuppiluliuma and put in command of a task force sent to Amurru is logically and chronologically possible, but remains of course entirely conjectural. In the last analysis, the identity of General Šumi[- remains unknown.

6.4. THE LANGUAGE

The Akkadian used by the scribe has been subjected earlier in this monograph to a thorough linguistic examination by Izre'el. Here we may raise a more general question: if the letter was indeed written to the Hittite king (or his son), why was it composed in Akkadian?

This question (which may also be raised as an objection to our interpretation) may be easily answered on various grounds. First, in the Akkadian correspondence from Ḫattuša (see KBo XXVIII) there are other Akkadian letters sent to the Hittite king by state officials.² Second, General Šumi[- need not necessarily have been a native Hittite, and thus may have preferred to formulate his letter in Akkadian. Thirdly, in view of the circumstances of his mission,

¹ *CTH* 63 II 6.f.: A-NA LÚTAR-TE-EN-NU-UT-TI-ŠU-NU : ši-na-ḫi-la. The second term, marked with a double "Glossenkeil," must be the Hurrian equivalent of *tardennu* (see Laroche 1976-77: 233). For the office of the *tardennu* in the Hittite realm see Gurney 1983.

² Note e.g., the fragment KBo XXVIII 68, with a report to His Majesty about the rallying of Egyptian troops. Cf. also Singer 1988a.

perhaps the General did not have at his disposal a scribe who had mastered the Hittite language, and thus may have employed the services of a local Amurrite scribe (put at his disposal by Aziru?). One could envisage other possibilities of coping with the language 'problem,' e.g., an objection on the part of the local authorities to the use of a 'secret' language.

All this speculation, however, is hardly necessary. In the cultural milieu of the Amarna Age a letter written in Akkadian to *any* destination should hardly come as a surprise. It is far more relevant to try to identify possible linguistic influences which may have affected the scribe's Akkadian, and it seems that the results achieved by Izre'el are, to say the least, not at all incompatible with the historical interpretation put forward above.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This historical investigation set out from the premise that on the evidence of its language the General's Letter was written in the Amarna age, i.e., around the mid-14th century B.C. Within this period a historical situation was sought, and I maintain found, which most satisfactorily conforms to the situation described in the letter: a military unit posted at the southern confines of Amurru in anticipation of an Egyptian attack.

Beginning with an examination of the information contained within the letter itself, the study then moved to present a comprehensive reassessment of Amurru's policy vis-a-vis the struggle between Egypt and Hatti in the Amarna period. The following are the main results presented briefly in the order in which they appear in the study:

1. The king to whom the General addressed his letter must have been a central figure in the newly established Hittite imperial system — either the Hittite king himself or less probably a subordinate monarch in the administration of Syria. The candidacy of the king of Mittanni was ruled out, and that of the king of Ugarit was considered most unlikely.

2. The most logical time for a Hittite ruler to have posted a military unit in southern Amurru to prevent the invasion of Egyptian forces would have been at the juncture when this strategic land had shifted its allegiance from Egypt to Hatti. A scrutiny of Amarna and Hittite sources was undertaken in order to pinpoint this juncture in the developing Hittite-Amurrite relationships.

3. Contrary to a widely maintained view, no evidence was found either in the Amarna letters or in the Hittite sources to show that Abdi-Aširta had already made overtures to the Hittites and had become a Hittite surrogate. Thus the General's Letter was most probably not written at the time of Abdi-Aširta.

4. The first contacts between Amurru and Hatti were initiated by Aziru and his kin. This is amply documented in both the Amarna and the Hittite sources.

Contrary to a firmly rooted view, which goes back to the original scholarly efforts to order the Amurru letters, Aziru did not change sides several times between Egypt and Hatti, but rather shifted into the Hittite camp in one continuous process. A new ordering of Aziru's correspondence is suggested, resulting in the following stages in his career:

Aziru journeyed to Egypt to receive official recognition probably after he had seized Šumur. During his sojourn in Egypt he was informed by his brother about the Hittite offensive in Syria (EA 170). He hastened back to Amurru, captured Tunip and opened negotiations with the Hittites, eventually leading to the signing of a vassal treaty. Concurrently he kept writing conciliatory letters to Egypt (EA 161, 164-167), but never kept his promise to go for another visit and to defend himself before the Pharaoh. An Egyptian ultimatum (EA 162) marks the end of relations with his former master.

5. The suggested reconstruction of Aziru's career is in perfect agreement with the characterization of Aziru's apostasy in Hittite historiography. Both in the Aziru - Šuppiluliuma treaty and in the later Amurru treaties (Duppi-Teššub, Bentešina and Šaušgamuwa) Aziru's submission is described as a voluntary act which occurred after his return from Egypt. There is no evidence whatsoever of the alleged two-staged submission of Aziru to Hatti, a view which has been shown to rest partly on dubious textual interpretations, including unwarranted restorations.

6. Several chronological clues in the Aziru treaty indicate that his submission to Šuppiluliuma followed shortly after his return from Egypt. There he gained a first-hand impression of Egypt's military potential and received the news that the Hittite armies had invaded Amqi and Nuḫašše (EA 170). This event may probably be synchronized with Šuppiluliuma's First Syrian ("One Year") War, which may be dated to c. 1340 B.C., a few years before Akhenaten's death. Aziru's apostasy probably occurred still in the wake of or shortly after this campaign.

7. The military situation emerging from the General's Letter would best fit the time when Aziru submitted to Šuppiluliuma and was expecting an Egyptian retaliation.

Amarna sources clearly indicate that the Egyptians were planning a large-scale military operation in Syria. Whether this counteroffensive was eventually launched or was postponed because of Akhenaten's death is of little import in our recognition of the tense atmosphere and the resulting preparations of all sides involved.

Aziru and his new overlords had thus every reason to undertake preventive measures in case of an Egyptian move along the Phoenician coast. A special provision in the Aziru - Šuppiluliuma treaty (also found in other contemporary treaties) foresees the eventuality of assigning Hittite forces for the defense of Amurru. A military task force including chariots was posted at the southern border of Amurru under the command of a certain Šumi[-. The unit had apparently engaged in skirmishes with local, probably pro-Egyptian forces, and was expecting a major Egyptian move from the south.

8. The identity of General Šumi[- remains unknown. The most plausible restoration of the name seems to be Šumi[tta(ra)], a name attested in 14th century Syria. There is a slight chance that he is the Šumitta(ra) mentioned as a pro-Hittite Syrian prince in Hittite and Amarna sources.

9. General Šumi[-, weary of his mission in Amurru, and worried about the rumored onslaught of a large Egyptian contingent, wrote a letter to his Hittite lord asking for urgent reinforcements. The letter travelled through the neighboring kingdom of Ugarit, which had by then become a loyal ally of Amurru and the Hittites. A copy of the letter (perhaps translated into Hittite?) was then sent to the Hittite king's headquarters, whereas the original Akkadian letter was kept in some state archive in Ugarit, and had eventually found its way into Rap'anu's library.

How long General Šumi[- remained in Amurru? Did he receive the requested reinforcements? Did he eventually encounter the Egyptian army, and if so, what was the

outcome of this encounter? These are questions which are likely to remain unanswered. However, the political crisis which brought the General to his post in Amurru did not abate. The unavoidable clash between Hatti and Egypt over the domination of Amurru was merely delayed until the Battle of Qedeš (1275 B.C.). The preparations for this later decisive battle took a course very similar to the one in which General Šumi[- participated some sixty five years earlier.

APPENDIX SIGNLIST

Borger/AS	sign name	logograms	syll. values	examples
1/1	AŠ		aš	
2/2	ĤAL		ĥal	
5/4	BA	BA in A.AB.BA	ba	ni-ri-ba-te.MEŠ-šu-nu (l. 17)
6/5	ZU		šú	mu-uš-šú-ia (l. 26)
9/8	BAL		b/pal	
12/11	TAR		qut tar	
13/12	AN	DINGIR	an	
15/15	KA		ka	ardī (ĪR)-ka-ma (l. 2)
38/22	URU	URU		
50/25	ARAD	ĪR		
52/-	ITI	ITI		
55/27	LA		la	
58/30	TU	TU in KUR MAR.TU.KI	tu tú	iš-tu (passim); tu-ša ₁₀ -ri (l. 20) ip-tú-ru-ni, (l. 23)
59/31	LI		li	

61/35	<i>MU</i>	<i>MU</i>	<i>mu</i>	
62/36	<i>SĪLA</i>		<i>qa</i> <i>ka₄</i>	<i>qa-bal</i> (l. 6') <i>za-ka₄-am</i> (l. 12')
68/41	<i>RU</i>		<i>ru</i>	
69/42	<i>BAD</i>		<i>be</i> <i>bat</i> <i>páṭ</i> <i>til</i>	<i>be-lí-ia</i> (l. 2 etc.) <i>iṣ-bat-tū-ni</i> , (l. 10') <i>ni-páṭ-ṣar</i> (l. 22) <i>til-la-ta</i> (l. 9 etc.)
70/43	<i>NA</i>		<i>na</i>	
73/46	<i>TI</i>		<i>ti</i>	
74/47,48	<i>BAR</i>	<i>BAR</i>	<i>pár</i>	
75/49	<i>NU</i>		<i>nu</i>	
79/54	<i>NAM</i>		<i>nam</i>	
80/55	<i>IG</i>		<i>ig^{kq}</i>	
84/59	<i>ZI</i>		<i>zi</i> <i>ṣí</i>	<i>zi-i-nu</i> (l. 21) <i>ú-uṣ-ṣí-mi</i> (l. 12')
86/61	<i>RI</i>		<i>ri</i>	
97/70	<i>AG</i>		<i>ak^q</i>	
99/71	<i>EN</i>		<i>en</i>	
101/73	<i>SUR</i>		<i>šur</i>	
104/76	<i>SA</i>		<i>ša₁₀</i>	<i>tu-ša₁₀-ri</i> (l. 20)
108/80	<i>DUR</i>	<i>DUR</i> (l. 31)		
115/87	<i>SAG</i>	<i>SAG</i> in <i>SAG.DU</i> , <i>ḪUR.SAG</i>		
126/92	<i>TAG</i>		<i>šum</i> <i>šū₁₄</i>	<i>aš-šū₁₄</i> (l. 11')

128/93	<i>AB</i>	<i>AB</i> in <i>A.AB.BA</i> <i>ÊŠ</i> in <i>UD ÊŠ.ÊŠ</i>		
130/96	<i>UG</i>		<i>uk^q</i>	
131/97	<i>AZ</i>		<i>as^f</i>	
134/100	<i>UM</i>		<i>um</i>	
139/102	<i>TA</i>		<i>ta</i> <i>dá</i>	<i>til-la-ta</i> (l. 9) <i>dá-a-an</i> (l. 23)
142/103	<i>I</i>		<i>i</i>	
142a/104	<i>IA</i>		<i>ia</i>	
143/105	<i>GAN</i>		<i>ḫé</i>	<i>i[?]-ta[?]-na]m[?]-ḫé-ru-nim-ma^{!?}</i> (l. 6')
145/108	<i>AD</i>		<i>ad^t</i>	
147/109	<i>ZÍ</i>		<i>ši</i> <i>zé</i>	<i>na-aš-ši-ru-te.MEŠ</i> (l. 23), <i>a-ši-i-šu</i> (l. 29') <i>zé-ra-ni-ia</i> (l. 32')
151/112	<i>LUGAL</i>		<i>šàr</i>	
166/116	<i>KASKAL</i>	<i>KASKAL</i>		
170/120	<i>AM</i>		<i>am</i>	
171/121	<i>UZU</i>	<i>UZU</i>		
172/122	<i>NE</i>		<i>ne</i> <i>bí</i>	<i>i-te-ne-ep[-pu-u]š-šu-nu</i> (l. 4) <i>qí-bí-ma</i> (l. 1)
205/134	<i>IL</i>		<i>il</i>	
206/135	<i>DU</i>	<i>DU</i> in <i>SAG.DU</i>	<i>du</i> <i>ṭù</i> <i>tù</i>	<i>ik-šu-du-ni₇</i> (l. 12) <i>i-bal-]lu-ṭù-nim-me-e</i> (l. 13) <i>iš-bat-tù-ni₇</i> (l. 10')
207/137	<i>TUM</i>		<i>tu₄</i>	<i>mi-tu₄-ni₇</i> (l. 28)
208/-	<i>ANŠE</i>	<i>ANŠE</i>		

209/-	<i>EGIR</i>	<i>EGIR</i>		
211/138	<i>UŠ</i>		<i>uš</i>	
212/139	<i>IŠ</i>		<i>iš</i>	
214/140	<i>BI</i>		<i>bi</i> <i>pí</i> <i>kaš</i>	<i>aq-bi</i> (l. 32) <i>pí-iṭ-ṭa[-]at-te.MEŠ-ma</i> (l. 19') <i>a-kaš-ša-ad-šu-nu</i> (l. 14)
231/146	<i>NI</i>		<i>ni</i> <i>lí</i>	<i>be-lí(-ia)</i> (<i>passim</i>)
232/147	<i>IR</i>		<i>e/ir</i>	
295/153	<i>PA</i>		<i>pa</i> <i>bá</i>	<i>'pa¹-ni pa-ni-i-im-ma</i> (l. 31) <i>aš-bá-ku</i> (ll. 15, 20, 29)
296/156	<i>GIŠ</i>	<i>GIŠ</i>	<i>e/iš</i>	
298/160	<i>AL</i>		<i>al</i>	
306/161	<i>UB</i>		<i>up</i>	
307/162	<i>MAR</i>	<i>MAR</i> in <i>MAR.TU.KI</i>	<i>mar</i>	
308/163	<i>E</i>		<i>e</i>	
318/169	<i>Ú</i>		<i>ú</i>	
322/173	<i>KAL</i>		<i>kal</i> <i>dan</i>	
328/178	<i>RA</i>	<i>RA</i> in <i>ANŠE.MEŠ.KUR.RA</i>	<i>ra</i>	
330/180	<i>LÚ</i>	<i>LÚ</i>		
334/187	<i>Á</i>		<i>id^m</i>	
335/191	<i>DA</i>		<i>tá</i> <i>ṭa</i>	<i>aš-tá-na-²-al-šu</i> (l. 11') <i>pí-iṭ-ṭa-te.MEŠ-ma</i> (l. 24)
342/193	<i>MA</i>		<i>ma</i>	

343/194	<i>GAL</i>	<i>GAL</i> in <i>ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ</i>		
353/202	<i>ŠA</i>		<i>ša</i>	
354/203	<i>ŠU</i>	<i>ŠU</i>	<i>šu</i>	
366/211	<i>KUR</i>	<i>KUR</i> ; also in <i>ANŠE.MEŠ.KUR.RA</i>		
367/212	<i>ŠE</i>		<i>še</i>	
371/213	<i>BU</i>		<i>b/pu</i>	
372/214	<i>UZ</i>		<i>uṣ</i>	
376/218	<i>TE</i>		<i>te</i> <i>de₄</i>	<i>ni-i-de₄-šu-nu</i> (l. 24)
381/221	<i>UD</i>	<i>UD</i>	<i>ut</i> <i>u₄</i>	<i>u₄-ma-am</i> (l. 16)
383/228	<i>PI</i>		<i>wa</i>	
384/224	<i>ŠĀ</i>	<i>ŠĀ</i> ; also in <i>ŠĀ.GAL.MEŠ</i>		
393/226	<i>ERIM</i>	<i>ÉRIN</i>		
396/229	<i>ĪI</i>		<i>īi</i>	<i>ar-īi-iš</i> (l. 7)
398/234	<i>AĪ</i>		<i>a/uī</i> <i>ʔ₂ (áʔ)</i>	<i>aš-tá-na-ʔ₂-al-šu</i> (l. 11')
399/236	<i>IM</i>		<i>im</i>	
401/238	<i>ĪAR</i>	<i>ĪUR</i> in <i>Ī[U]R.SAG</i>	<i>kín</i>	
404/241	<i>ĪI-A</i>	<i>ĪĀ</i>		
406/235	<i>KAM</i>	<i>KAM</i>	<i>kam</i> <i>gám</i>	
427/248	<i>MI</i>		<i>mī</i>	

433/251	<i>NIM</i>		<i>nim</i> <i>ni</i> ₇	<i>ik-šu-du-ni</i> ₇ (l. 12)
437/255	<i>AMAR</i>		<i>sur</i> _x	<i>as-sur</i> _x (<i>ZUR</i>)- <i>ri</i> (l. 16')
441/258	<i>UL</i>		<i>ul</i>	
444/259	<i>GÌR</i>	<i>GÌR</i>		
449/261	<i>IGI</i>		<i>ši</i>	
451/263	<i>AR</i>		<i>ar</i>	
454/-	<i>SIG</i> ₅	<i>SIG</i> ₅		
455/264	<i>Ù</i>		<i>ù</i>	
457/266	<i>DI</i>		<i>di</i>	
461/269	<i>KI</i>	<i>KI</i>	<i>ki</i> <i>qí</i>	
465/270	<i>DIN</i>		<i>din</i>	
480/276	<i>DIŠ</i>	¹ <i>I</i> (male determinative)		
486/-	<i>GIGIR</i>	<i>GIGIR</i>		
532/287	<i>ME</i>		<i>me</i>	
533/288	<i>MEŠ</i>	<i>MEŠ</i>		
535/289	<i>IB</i>		<i>e/ib</i> ^p	
536/290	<i>KU</i>		<i>ku</i>	
537/292	<i>LU</i>		<i>lu</i>	
565/307	<i>LUM</i>	(<i>lum</i>)		<i>awila</i> (<i>LÚ-lum</i>) (l. 10')
575/310	<i>UR</i>		<i>ur</i> <i>lik</i> ^a	
579/311	<i>A</i>	<i>A</i> in <i>A.AB.BA</i>	<i>a</i>	

586/316	ZA		<i>z/ʒa</i>
589/317	ḤA		<i>ḥa</i>
593/-	EŠ,	3	
598a/324	IÁ	5	
598e/-	ILIMMU	9	

ABBREVIATIONS

AAS = *Annales Archéologiques de Syrie*.

AfO = *Archiv für Orientforschung*.

AHw = von Soden (1965-1981).

AmAkk = Izre'el (forthcoming c).

ANET = Pritchard (1969).

AnSt = *Anatolian Studies*.

AS = von Soden - Röllig (1976).

ARM XVI/I = Birot - Kupper - Roualt (1979).

AT = text no. according to Wiseman (1953).

BDB = Brown, F. - Driver, S.R. - Briggs, C.A. (1929).

BH = Biblical Hebrew

BMB = *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth*.

CAD = Oppenheim (1956-).

CAH = *Cambridge Ancient History*. Cambridge.

CTH = text no. according to Laroche (1971).

EA = text no. according to Knudtzon (1915) and Rainey (1978).

GAG = von Soden (1969).

HW = Friedrich (1952).

IOS = *Israel Oriental Studies*.

JANES = *The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society.*

JARCE = *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt.*

JCS = *Journal of Cuneiform Studies.*

JEA = *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.*

JNES = *Journal of Near Eastern Studies.*

KBo = text no. according to *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi.*

KUB = text no. according to *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköy.*

LB = Late Babylonian.

MA = Middle Assyrian.

MB = Middle Babylonian.

MIO = *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung.*

MSL X = Landsberger - Reiner - Civil (1970).

NA = Neo-Assyrian.

NB = Neo-Babylonian.

O = Object

OA = Old Assyrian.

OA = *Oriens Antiquus.*

OAKk = Old Akkadian.

OB = Old Babylonian.

OLZ = *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung.*

Orientalia = *Orientalia. Nova Series.*

P = Predicate

PA = Peripheral Akkadian.

PRU III = Nougayrol (1955).

PRU IV = Nougayrol (1956).

RA = *Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*.

RHA = *Revue hittite et asianique*.

RLA = *Reallexikon der Assyriology*. Berlin.

RS = text no. of the Ugarit - Ras Shamra tablets.

S = Subject

TMA = Tense-Mood-Aspect

UF = *Ugarit-Forschungen*.

Ugaritica V = Nougayrol (1968).

Urk. IV = text no. according to Sethe - Helck (1927-1958).

UT = Gordon (1965).

WPA = Western Peripheral Akkadian.

ZDPV = *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*.

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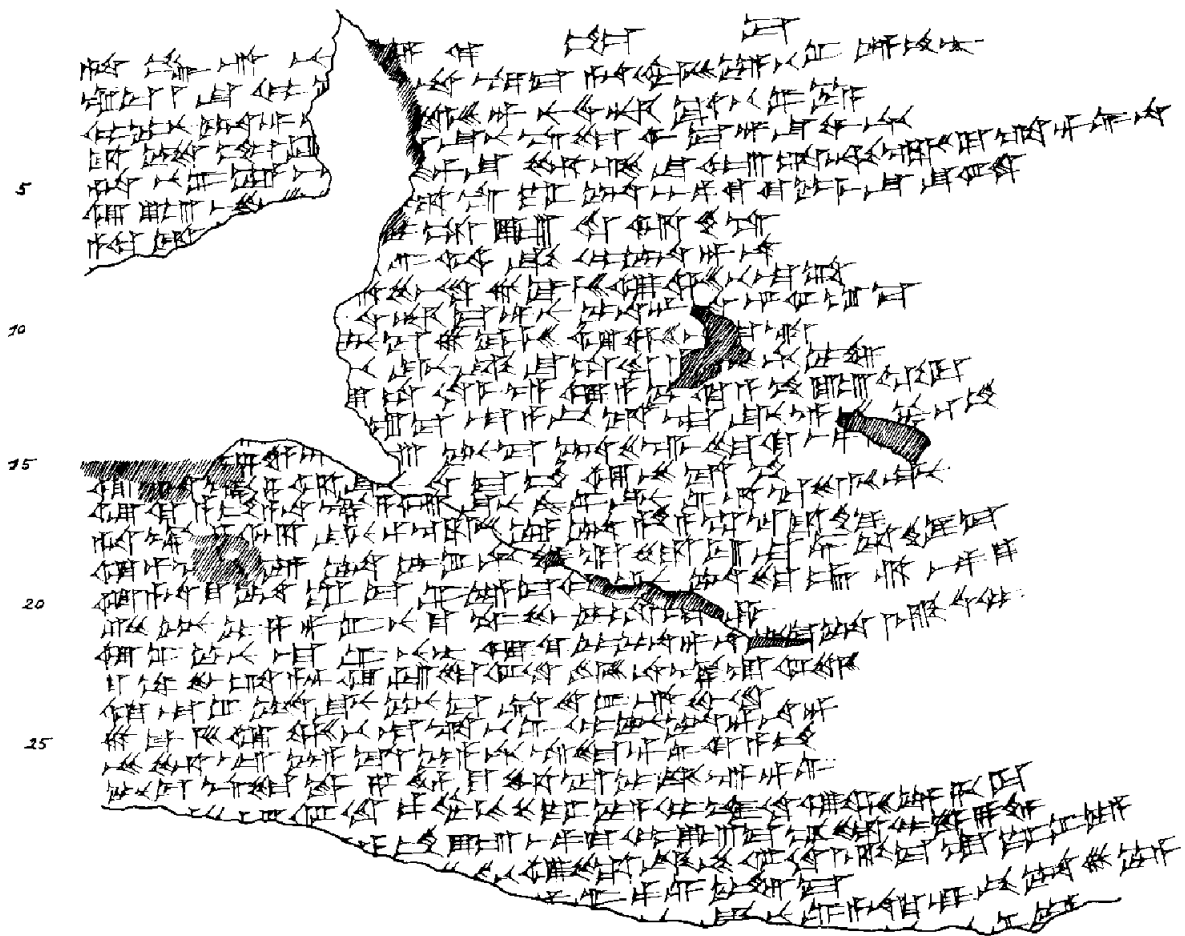
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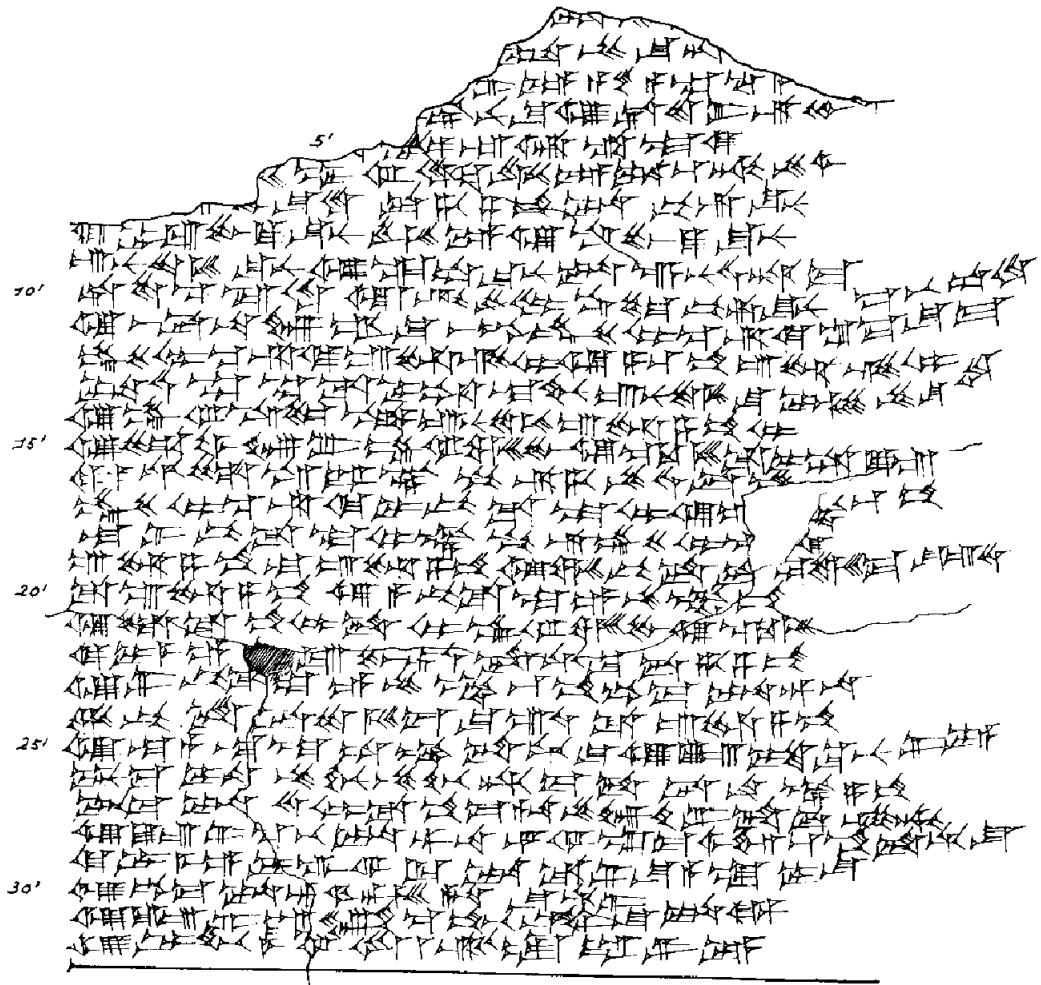
PLATES



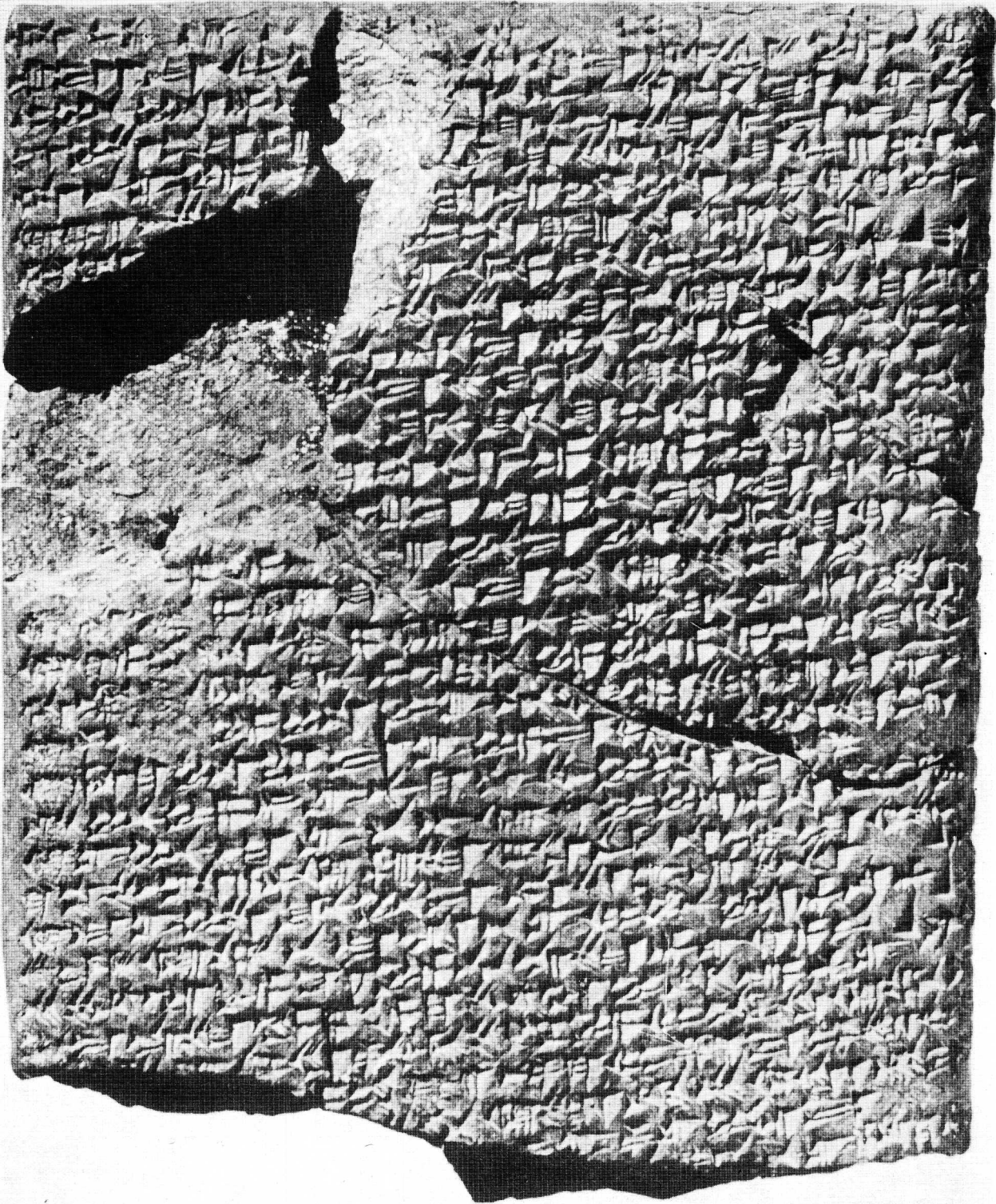


RS 20.33 Obverse, handcopy by Jean Nougayrol (*Ugaritica V*, p. 380)

PLATE II

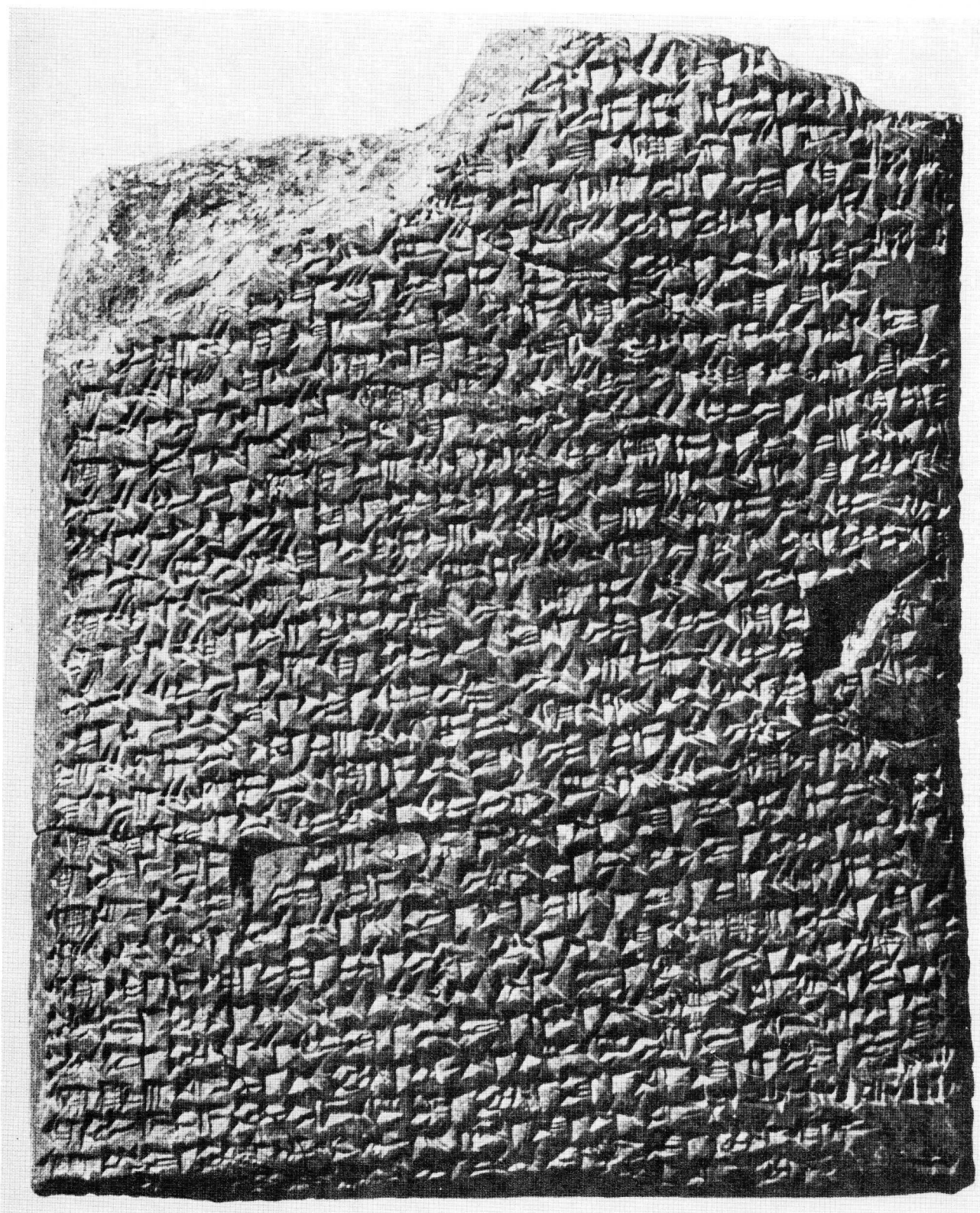


RS 20.33 Reverse, handcopy by Jean Nougayrol (*Ugaritica V*, p. 381)



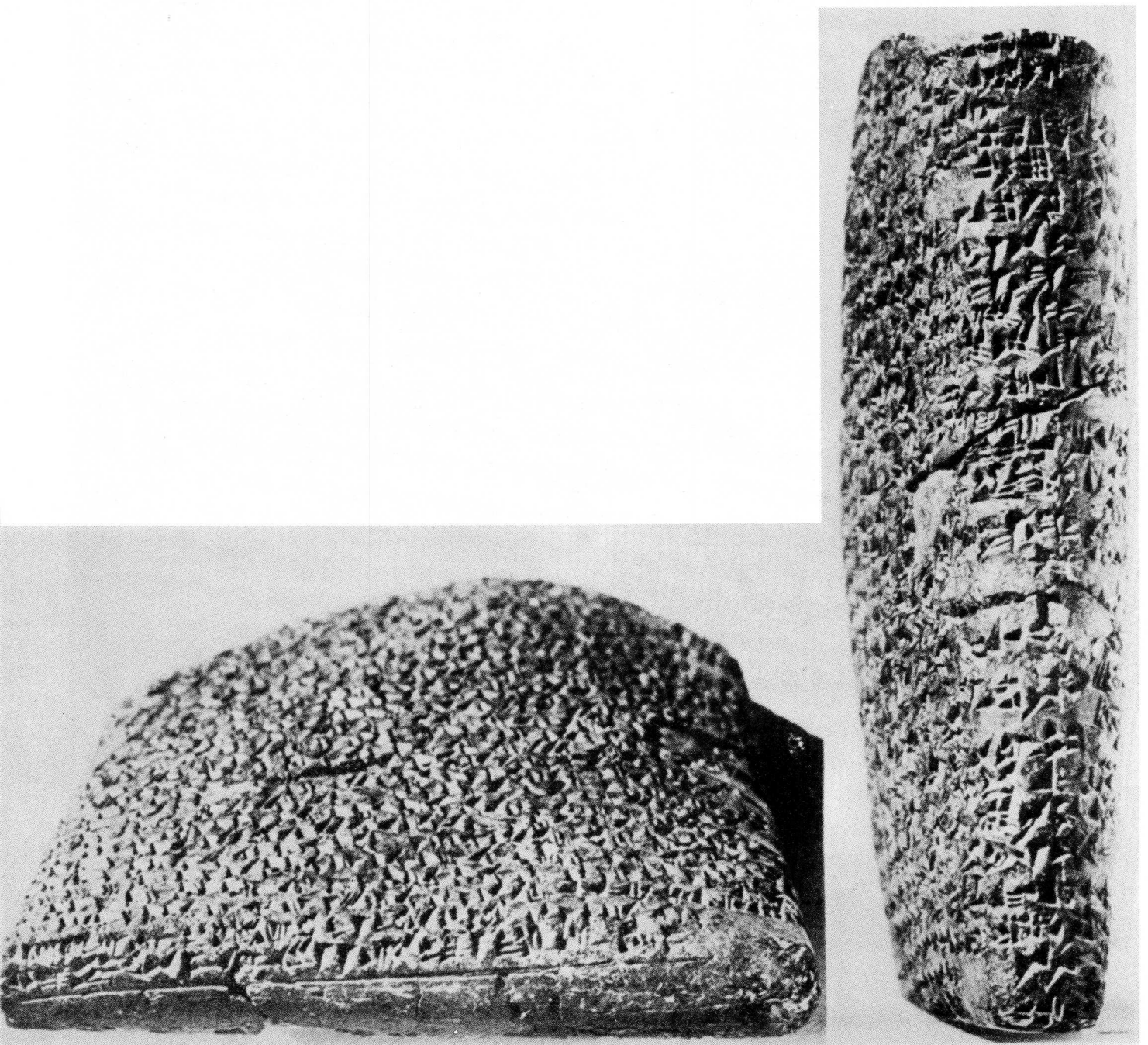
RS 20.33 Obverse, original state (*Ugaritica V*, fig. 22, p. 641)

PLATE IV



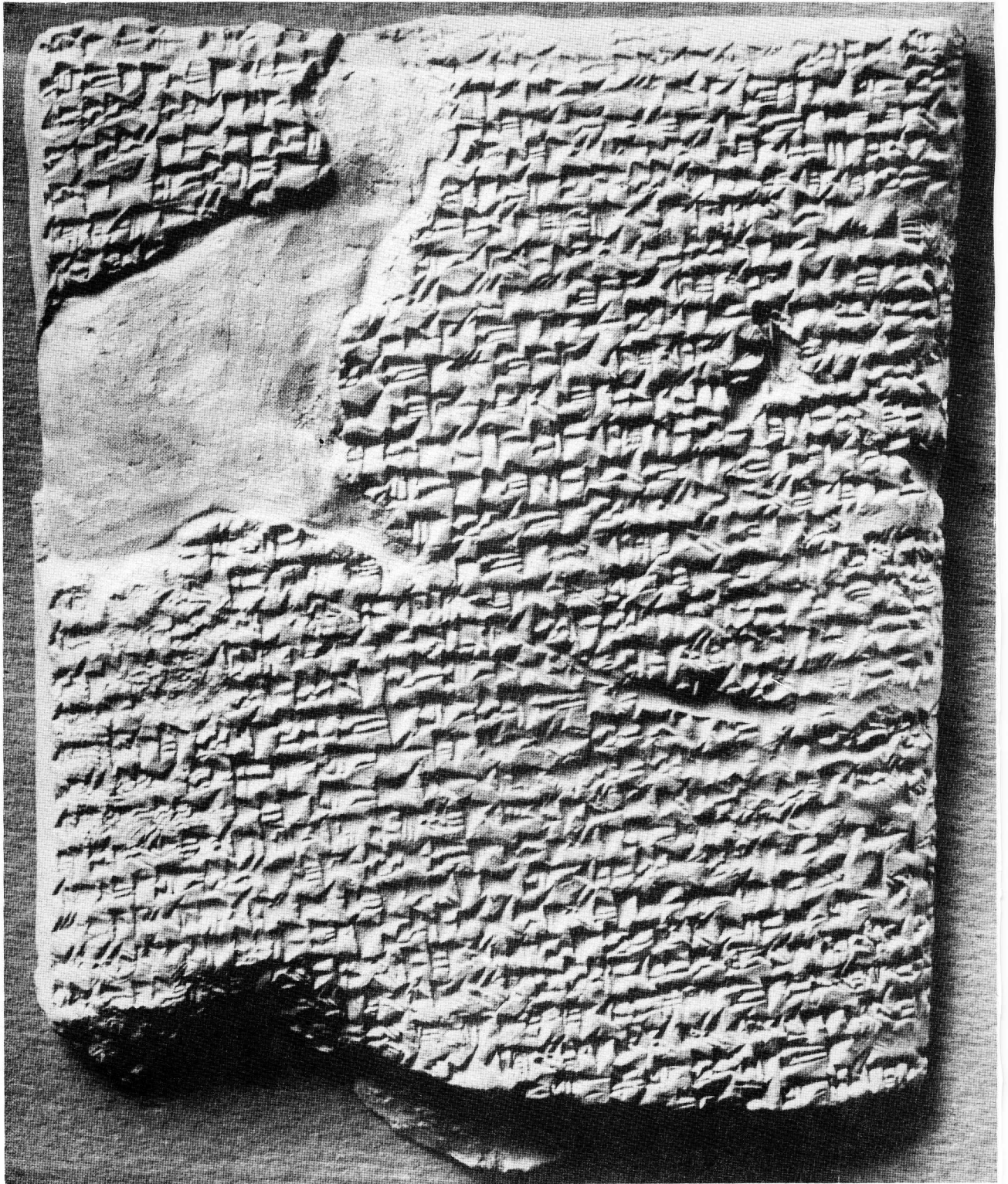
RS 20.33 Reverse, original state (*Ugaritica V*, fig. 22B, p. 643)

PLATE V

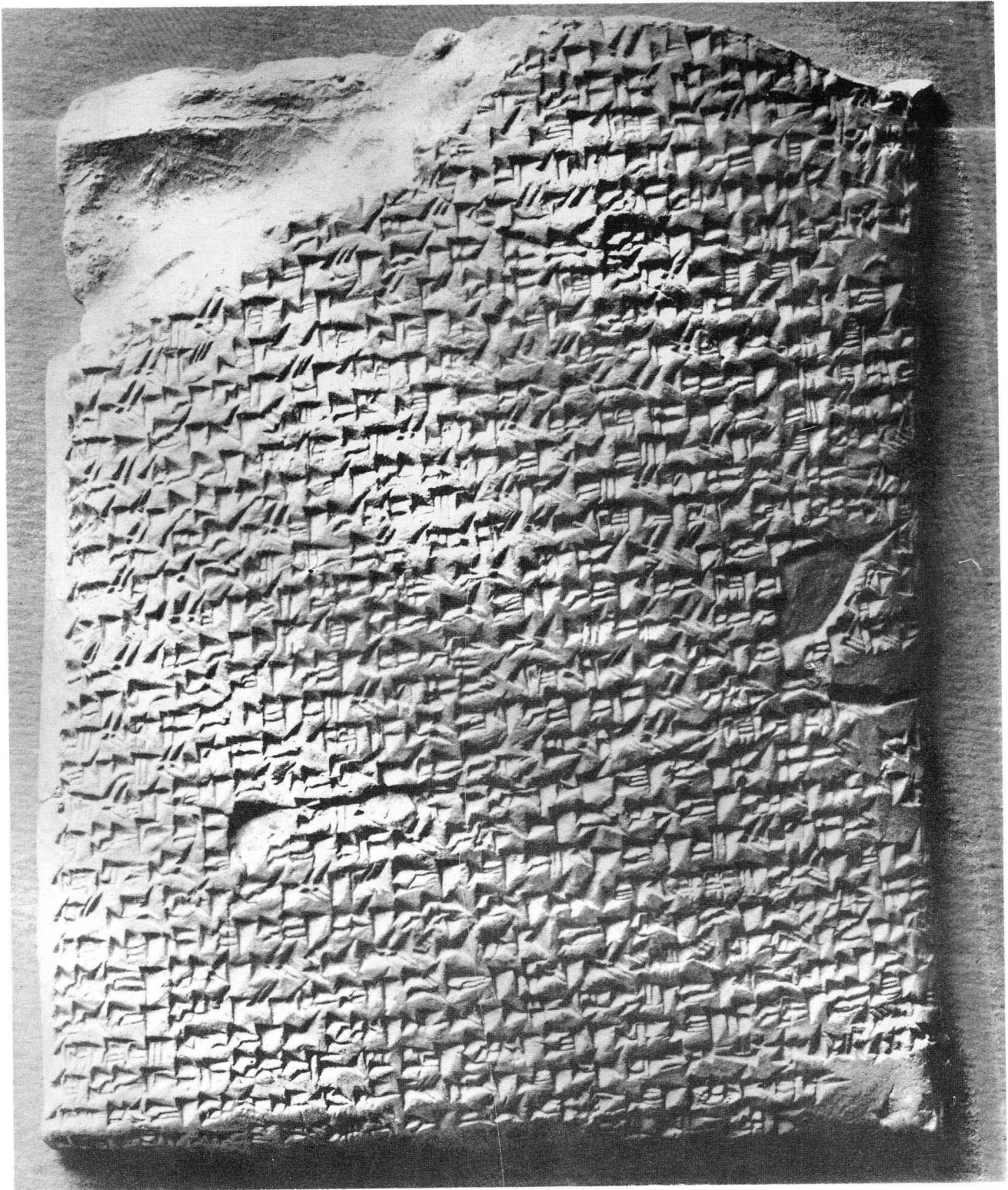


RS 20.33 Bottom and Edge, original state (*Ugaritica V*, fig. 22D, p. 646)

PLATE VI

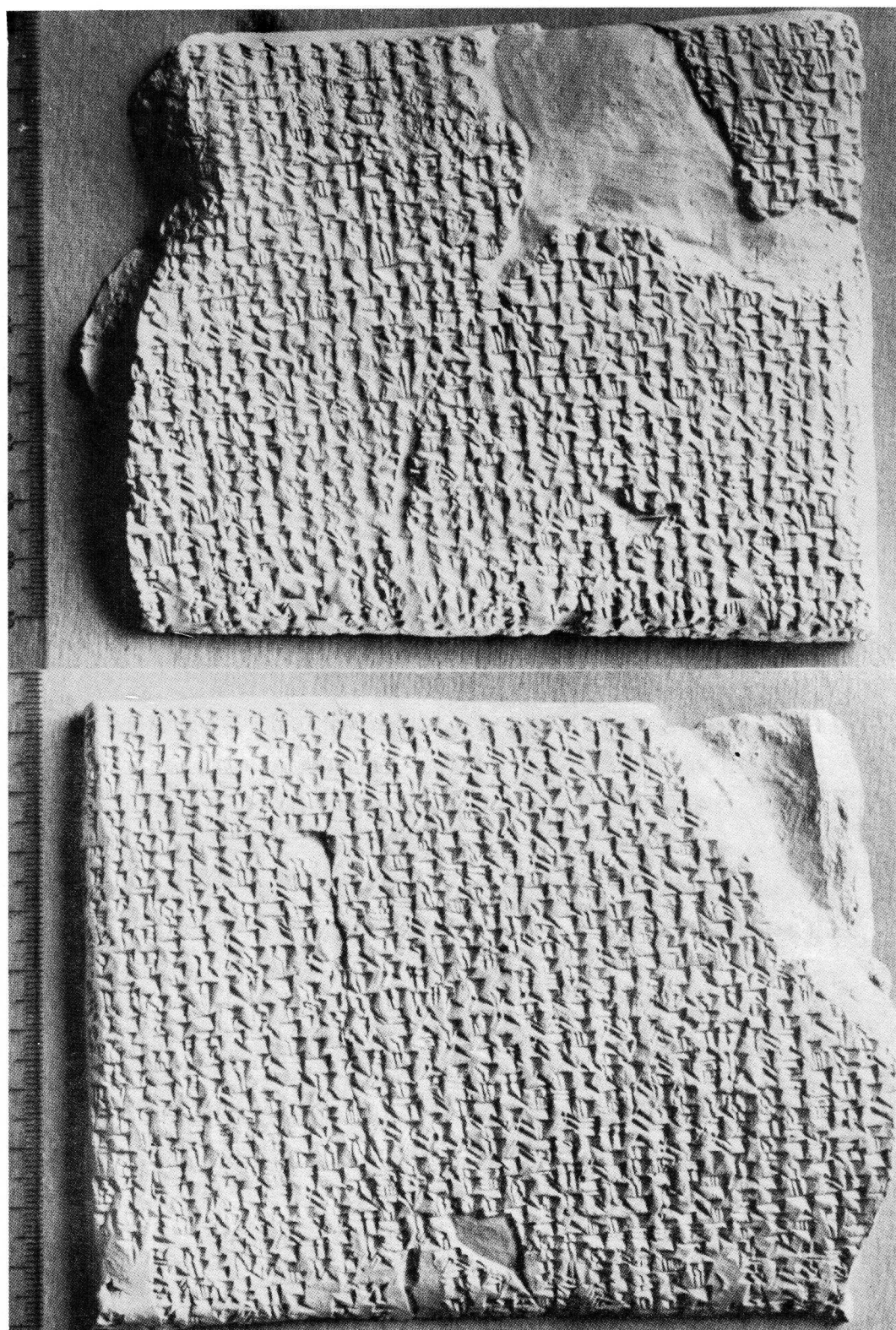


RS 20.33 Obverse, plaster cast (*Ugaritica V*, fig. 22E, p. 647)



RS 20.33 Reverse, plaster cast (*Ugaritica V*, fig. 22F, p. 648)

PLATE VIII



RS 20.33 Obverse and Reverse, plaster casts, with scale (*Ugaritica* V, fig. 22G, p. 649)

The General's Letter (RS 20.33) is one of the most intriguing texts discovered at ancient Ugarit. This letter, sent by a military field-commander to an unnamed king, is one of the most vivid examples of ancient military intelligence. The commander was stationed in anticipation of an Egyptian attack in the land of Amurru, on the central coast of the Levant. The identities of both the reporting commander and the addressee are unknown. Thus, the dating and the historical setting of this text have been subject to various interpretations since its discovery in 1956.

In this study, the General's Letter is reevaluated with regards to both its dating and its scribal tradition, as well as with regard to its historical setting. The linguistic evidence clearly points to a dating within the Amarna Age, and the suggested historical setting connects the General's mission with the period when Aziru, the reputed king of Amurru, shifted his allegiance from Egypt to Hatti.



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TEL AVIV, 1990