

Jacob Lauinger | Tyler R. Yoder



# The Amarna Letters

The Syro-Levantine Correspondence

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Jacob Lauinger  
Baltimore, MD

Tyler Yoder  
Solon, OH

# Abbreviations

|               |                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| :             | <i>Glossenkeil</i> (with sign used in parentheses following)                                                                                    |
| /             | runover line                                                                                                                                    |
| 1cs           | first-person common singular                                                                                                                    |
| 1cp           | first-person common plural                                                                                                                      |
| 2cp           | second-person common plural                                                                                                                     |
| 2fs           | second-person feminine singular                                                                                                                 |
| 2ms           | second-person masculine singular                                                                                                                |
| 3cs           | third-person common singular                                                                                                                    |
| 3fp           | third-person feminine plural                                                                                                                    |
| 3fs           | third-person feminine singular                                                                                                                  |
| 3mp           | third-person masculine plural                                                                                                                   |
| 3ms           | third-person masculine singular                                                                                                                 |
| ÄAT           | Ägypten und Altes Testament                                                                                                                     |
| <i>AbrN</i>   | <i>Abr-Nahrain</i>                                                                                                                              |
| ABW           | Archaeology of the Biblical Worlds                                                                                                              |
| <i>AcOr</i>   | <i>Acta Orientalia</i>                                                                                                                          |
| adj.          | adjective                                                                                                                                       |
| ADPV          | Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins                                                                                                    |
| <i>AeL</i>    | <i>Egypt and the Levant/Ägypten und Levante</i>                                                                                                 |
| <i>AFLN</i>   | <i>Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Nice</i>                                                                           |
| <i>AfO</i>    | <i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>                                                                                                               |
| ÄgAbh         | Ägyptologische Abhandlungen                                                                                                                     |
| <i>AHw</i>    | von Soden, Wolfram. <i>Akkadische Handwörterbuch</i> . 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–1981.                                              |
| <i>AIIN</i>   | <i>Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica</i>                                                                                             |
| <i>AIPHOS</i> | <i>Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves</i>                                                                  |
| AM            | Ashmolean Museum                                                                                                                                |
| AnBib         | Analecta Biblica                                                                                                                                |
| ANEM          | Ancient Near East Monographs                                                                                                                    |
| ANES          | <i>Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i>                                                                                                             |
| ANET          | Pritchard, James B., ed. <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955. |
| AnOr          | Analecta Orientalia                                                                                                                             |
| <i>AntOr</i>  | <i>Antiguo Oriente</i>                                                                                                                          |
| AO            | Antiquités orientales (Louvre)                                                                                                                  |
| AOAT          | Alter Orient und Altes Testament                                                                                                                |
| <i>AoF</i>    | <i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i>                                                                                                             |
| AOS           | American Oriental Series                                                                                                                        |
| ARES          | Archivi Reali di Ebla, Studi                                                                                                                    |
| AS            | Assyriological Studies                                                                                                                          |
| <i>ASJ</i>    | <i>Acta Sumerologica Japoniensi</i>                                                                                                             |
| <i>AuOr</i>   | <i>Aula Orientalis</i>                                                                                                                          |
| AuOrSup       | Aula Orientalis Supplementa                                                                                                                     |
| BA            | <i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>                                                                                                                   |
| BACE          | <i>Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology</i>                                                                                         |
| BASOR         | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>                                                                                    |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BATSH        | Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Schech Hamad/Dür-Katlimmu                                                                                                                                        |
| BBVO         | Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient                                                                                                                                                         |
| Beer-Sheva   | Beer-Sheva Studies by the Department of Bible and Ancient Near East                                                                                                                           |
| BH           | Biblical Hebrew                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>Bib</i>   | <i>Biblica</i>                                                                                                                                                                                |
| BIFAO        | <i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i>                                                                                                                                |
| BIN          | Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies                                                                                                                                       |
| <i>BiOr</i>  | <i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| BISNEL       | Bar-Ilan Studies in Near Eastern Languages and Culture                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>BJPES</i> | <i>Bulletin of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society</i>                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>BK</i>    | <i>Bibel und Kirche</i>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| BkA          | Bibliothek der klassischen Alterumswissenschaften                                                                                                                                             |
| BM           | British Museum ( <a href="https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection">https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection</a> )                                                                            |
| BMMA         | <i>Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art</i>                                                                                                                                             |
| BSOAS        | <i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>                                                                                                                                 |
| BN           | <i>Biblische Notizen</i>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| BzA          | <i>Beiträge zur Assyriologie</i>                                                                                                                                                              |
| BZAW         | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft                                                                                                                               |
| C            | Egyptian Museum (Cairo)                                                                                                                                                                       |
| CAD          | Gelb, Ignace J., et al. <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . 21 vols. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2010. |
| CAH          | Cambridge Ancient History                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Can.         | Canaanite                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| CANE         | Sasson, Jack M., ed. <i>Civilizations of the Ancient Near East</i> . 4 vols. New York: Scribners, 1995. Repr. in 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.                                      |
| CCHEM        | Contributions to the Chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean                                                                                                                                  |
| CCTMMA       | Corpus of Cuneiform Texts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art                                                                                                                                   |
| CDA          | Black, Jeremy, Andrew George, and Nicholas Postgate, eds. <i>The Concise Dictionary of Akkadian</i> . 2nd corrected ed. SANTAG 5. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000.                              |
| CDLI         | Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative ( <a href="https://cdli.ucla.edu/">https://cdli.ucla.edu/</a> )                                                                                          |
| CHANE        | Culture and History of the Ancient Near East                                                                                                                                                  |
| CM           | Cuneiform Monographs                                                                                                                                                                          |
| COS          | Hallo, William W., and K. Lawson Younger Jr., eds. <i>The Context of Scripture</i> . 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2016.                                                                        |
| CRAI         | <i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres</i>                                                                                                                        |
| CREWS        | Contexts of Relations between Early Writing Systems                                                                                                                                           |
| CSMS         | <i>Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies</i>                                                                                                                                              |
| DMOA         | Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui                                                                                                                                                       |
| DNWSI        | Hoftijzer, Jacob, and Karel Jongeling, eds. <i>Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions</i> . 2 vols. HdO 21. Leiden: Brill, 1995.                                                   |
| EANEC        | Explorations in Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations                                                                                                                                            |
| Eg.          | Egyptian                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Erlsr</i> | <i>Eretz-Israel</i>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| EPHE         | <i>Annuaire—Résumé des conférences et travaux: École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences religieuses</i>                                                                         |
| FAT          | Forschungen zum Alten Testament                                                                                                                                                               |
| fem.         | feminine                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| FM           | Florilegium Marianum                                                                                                                                                                          |

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FO      | <i>Folia Orientalia</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| GAG     | von Soden, Wolfram. <i>Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik; Ergänzungsheft zum Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik</i> . 2nd ed. AnOr 33/47. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.                                    |
| GM      | <i>Göttinger Miszellen</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| HACL    | History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant                                                                                                                                                                            |
| HALOT   | Köhler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001. |
| HANE/S  | History of the Ancient Near East/Studies                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| HdO     | Handbook der Orientalistik                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| HSAO    | Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| HSM     | Harvard Semitic Monographs                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| HSS     | Harvard Semitic Studies                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Hurr.   | Hurrian                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| IEJ     | <i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| IOS     | <i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| JA      | <i>Journal Asiatique</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| JAEl    | <i>Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections</i>                                                                                                                                                                        |
| JANER   | <i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| JANESCU | <i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| JAOS    | <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| JARCE   | <i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>                                                                                                                                                                    |
| JBL     | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| JCS     | <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| JEA     | <i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| JEOL    | <i>Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Gezelschap Ex oriente lux</i>                                                                                                                                               |
| JESHO   | <i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>                                                                                                                                                            |
| JHebS   | <i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| JHNES   | Johns Hopkins Near Eastern Studies                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| JLC     | <i>Journal of Language Contact</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| JNES    | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| JNSL    | <i>Journal of the Northwest Semitic Languages</i>                                                                                                                                                                          |
| JQR     | <i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| JSem    | <i>Journal for Semitics</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| JSOTSup | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements                                                                                                                                                                     |
| KEF     | Kārum, Emporion, Forum                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| LANE    | Languages of the Ancient Near East                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| LAOS    | Leipziger altorientalistische Studien                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| LAPO    | Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| LHBOTS  | Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies                                                                                                                                                                              |
| LSAWS   | Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| LSS     | Leipziger semitistische Studien                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| LOS     | Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| MANE    | Monographs of the Ancient Near East                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| MAOG    | Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft                                                                                                                                                                            |
| MB      | Middle Babylonian                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| MDOG    | <i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft</i>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| MIOF    | <i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung</i>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| ML      | Musée du Louvre ( <a href="https://collections.louvre.fr/">https://collections.louvre.fr/</a> )                                                                                                                            |

|         |                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| mng.    | meaning                                                                                                                                        |
| MRS     | Mission de Ras Shamra                                                                                                                          |
| MVAG    | <i>Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft</i>                                                                               |
| MVCAE   | Material and Visual Culture of Ancient Egypt                                                                                                   |
| MZL     | Borger, Rykle. 2004. <i>Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon</i> . AOAT 305. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004.                                           |
| NABU    | <i>Nouvelles assyriologique brèves et utilitaire</i>                                                                                           |
| NS      | new series                                                                                                                                     |
| OAC     | Orientis antiqui collectio                                                                                                                     |
| OBO     | Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis                                                                                                                   |
| OLA     | Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta                                                                                                                |
| OLP     | <i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica</i>                                                                                                        |
| OLZ     | <i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>                                                                                                       |
| Or      | <i>Orientalia</i> (NS)                                                                                                                         |
| OrAnt   | <i>Oriens Antiquus</i>                                                                                                                         |
| PAe     | Probleme der Ägyptologie                                                                                                                       |
| PEQ     | <i>Palestinian Exploration Quarterly</i>                                                                                                       |
| PIHANS  | Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul                                                                    |
| Pj      | <i>Palästinajahrbuch</i>                                                                                                                       |
| pl(s).  | plural; plate(s)                                                                                                                               |
| PM      | Pushkin Museum                                                                                                                                 |
| prp.    | perhaps                                                                                                                                        |
| PRU     | Le palais royal d'Ugarit                                                                                                                       |
| PSBA    | <i>Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archaeology</i>                                                                                     |
| QS      | Quaderni di Semitistica                                                                                                                        |
| QSS     | Qatna Studien Supplementa                                                                                                                      |
| RA      | <i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>                                                                                         |
| RAI     | Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale                                                                                                        |
| RB      | <i>Revue biblique</i>                                                                                                                          |
| REE     | <i>Revista de Estudios de Egiptología</i>                                                                                                      |
| RÉS     | <i>Revue des études sémitiques</i>                                                                                                             |
| RGTC    | Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes                                                                                                 |
| RHA     | <i>Revue hittite et asiatique</i>                                                                                                              |
| RhWAW.G | Rheinisch-westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Geisteswissenschaften                                                                      |
| RLA     | <i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie</i> . Edited by Erich Ebeling et al. 16 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1928–2019. |
| RSI     | <i>Rivista storico italiana</i>                                                                                                                |
| RSO     | <i>Rivista degli studi orientali</i>                                                                                                           |
| RSOu    | Ras Shamra-Ougarit                                                                                                                             |
| RSQ     | <i>Rhetoric Society Quarterly</i>                                                                                                              |
| RT      | <i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes</i>                                               |
| SAAB    | <i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>                                                                                                      |
| SAHL    | Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant                                                                                           |
| SAK     | <i>Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur</i>                                                                                                       |
| SAOC    | Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization                                                                                                       |
| SB      | Standard Babylonian                                                                                                                            |
| SBA     | Saarbrücker Beiträge zur Altertumskunde                                                                                                        |
| SBLMS   | Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series                                                                                                |
| SCCNH   | Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians                                                                               |

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ScrHier | Scripta Hierosolymitana                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| SEL     | <i>Studi epigrafici e linguistici</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Sem     | <i>Semitica</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| sg.     | singular                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| SMA     | Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| SMEA    | <i>Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| StMed   | Studia Mediterranea                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| StMes   | <i>Studia Mesopotamica</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| StPohl  | Studia Pohl                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| StSem   | Studi Semitici                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Sup     | Supplement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| SWBA    | Social World of Biblical Antiquity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| TA      | <i>Tel-Aviv</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| TCL     | Textes cunéiformes du Musée du Louvre                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| THeth   | Texte der Hethiter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| TUAT    | Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| UBL     | Ugaritische-Biblische Literatur                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| UF      | <i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Ug.     | Ugaritic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| VAB     | Vorderasiatische Bibliothek                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| VAT     | Vorderasiatische Abteilung Tontaf. Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin<br>( <a href="https://recherche.smb.museum">https://recherche.smb.museum</a> )                                                                                                                              |
| VO      | <i>Vicino Oriente</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| VS      | Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| VT      | <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| WAW     | Writings from the Ancient World                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| wEdge   | Cutting-Edge Research in Cuneiform Studies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| WPA     | Western Peripheral Akkadian                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| WS      | West Semitic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| WSR     | West Semitic Research ( <a href="https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/asset-management/2A3BF1OL6PW?WS=SearchResults&amp;DetailTab=Custom_X0CND000000001347">https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/asset-management/2A3BF1OL6PW?WS=SearchResults&amp;DetailTab=Custom_X0CND000000001347</a> ) |
| WZKM    | <i>Weiner Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Xenia   | Xenia, Konstanzer Althistorische Vorträge und Forschungen                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ZA      | <i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| ZABR    | <i>Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| ZAH     | <i>Zeitschrift für Althebraistik</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| ZÄS     | <i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| ZÄSB    | <i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde Beiheft</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| ZAW     | <i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ZDMG    | <i>Zeitschrift für Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| ZDMGSup | Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft Supplementbände                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| ZDPV    | <i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

# Introduction

## 1. What Are the Amarna Letters?

During the Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1550–1292 BCE), the Egyptian New Kingdom pharaohs campaigned repeatedly in Syria and the Levant and established political control over much of the region. As a result of these conquests, the rulers of Syro-Levantine city-states sent letters written in the cuneiform script on clay tablets to the Egyptian pharaohs. So, too, did the kings of the other great geopolitical powers of the time (e.g., Assyria, Babylonia, Hatti, Mittani; hereafter, the Great Powers). At the end of the nineteenth century CE, local farmers and, later, archaeologists working at the site of the one-time Egyptian capital of Akhetaten (modern Tell el-Amarna) discovered remnants of this correspondence, mostly dating to the reigns of Amenhotep III (ca. 1388–1350 BCE) and his son and successor Akhenaten (ca. 1350–1333 BCE), who had moved the capital there from Thebes. Today, the corpus of cuneiform texts known as “the Amarna letters” comprises 346 letters (1 actually found at the site of Tell el-Hesi in the southern Levant) and 4 administrative lists; 28 scholarly and literary texts were found with these archival texts and probably used in the training of the scribes.

## 2. Why a New Edition of the Amarna Letters?

There are two reasons for this new edition of the Amarna letters. The first reason is the need for an up-to-date transliteration and translation of the texts. While Anson Rainey’s (2015) edition provides both a transliteration and translation, as well as many important insights into the texts, the book was produced posthumously, and, unfortunately, the text editions are not as reliable as they would have been had Rainey been able to oversee the book’s publication in his lifetime; see §4b. Mario Liverani’s (1998c, 1999) and William Moran’s (1992) translations are *magna opera*, but both are only translations with occasional transliterations scattered in various notes. Samuel Mercer (1939) provides both a transliteration and translation of the letters, but his editions are generally understood to be derivative of an earlier 1915 edition by Jørgen Alexander Knudtzon and then further marred by the introduction of errors not in Knudtzon’s work; see, for example, C. J. Gadd’s 1940 review. This leaves Knudtzon’s own 1915 edition of the Amarna letters for anyone interested in working with both a transliteration and translation of the Amarna letters. Knudtzon’s editions are superb and still highly relevant for anyone grappling with the texts. But the editions are also now incomplete, both because a number of letters were only published for the first time after Knudtzon’s editions appeared, and a good deal of research on the Amarna letters has been done in the more than a century that has passed since the book was published.

The second reason for this new edition is that, unlike every other edition of the Amarna letters that has been published, this one is the print companion to a digital-first project. The text editions were produced on the Oracc platform, where they are currently available.<sup>1</sup> This method of production involved annotating every word in the corpus for a number of different features,

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1. AEMW/Amarna (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/aemw/amarna/>).

including the word's part of speech, extended part of speech, general meaning, particular sense, and normalization. These annotations allowed for the rapid creation of glossaries of words and proper nouns that helped shape the continuing process of annotating and translating. The effect was complementary, where translations guided the process of annotation, which, in turn, gave new insight into the lexicon and thereby influenced the process of translating. The ability to search for sign strings quickly and easily across the entire corpus of Amarna letters also played an important role in evaluating previous research; for example, when deciding between competing restorations, we could easily find whether parallels existed for proposed restorations in the corpus and how common these parallels were. We believe that the perspectives offered by this digital-first approach to editing the Amarna letters, combined with the need for an up-to-date transliteration and translation of the texts, justify the publication of a new edition of the texts.

### 3. About This Edition of the Amarna Letters

This edition of the Amarna letters does not and cannot claim to be a definitive reedition of the texts. We have not visited the museums and personally collated the tablets, relying instead on the various photographs of the tablets that are either publicly available or were made available to us by the generosity of colleagues. Practically speaking, we have had access to photographs of mostly everything in Berlin, London, and Paris, but nothing in Cairo. Yet even in cases where we have access to multiple photographs of a tablet, the reader will encounter numerous places in the following pages where we indicate that photos are insufficient and personal collation is advisable.

We have aimed for responsible transliterations that have been checked against available photographs and hand copies and that clearly indicate disputed or difficult readings. We have updated the bibliography of Jean-Georges Heintz (1982, 1995, and the coauthored supplements published in *UF*) through 2023.<sup>2</sup> We have worked through the relevant secondary literature for every letter, choosing for any given crux what we evaluate to be the best option among the various treatments. And we have aimed for clear and consistent translations to allow readers to move back and forth between the translation and transliteration.

### 4. The Discovery of the Amarna Letters and a Sketch of Their Publication History

#### 4.1. Discoveries and Acquisitions

At the conclusion of her history of the discovery and acquisition of the Amarna letters, Jana Mynářová (2015b: 46) describes “the early formative stages” as “rather ‘wild.’” This is perhaps an understatement, as the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the representatives of a number of different countries, as well as independent collectors and antiquities dealers, competing to acquire the tablets. The traditional story goes that the first tablets were discovered in the autumn of 1887 by a local peasant woman, or, alternatively, by local farmers, who were digging up bricks from the site of Akhetaten for reuse in the construction of their houses. Subsequent “private excavations” by the Egyptian antiquities dealer Farag Ismaïl (whose surname also appears in the scholarly literature as Ismail) discovered even more. However, Mynářová (2015b: 39) notes that in the Cairo Museum’s *Journal d’entrée* “the earliest objects of Amarna

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2. The bibliography in this print edition is more accurately a list of references, containing only the secondary literature that is cited within. A fuller bibliography is available on the AEMW/Amarna website (<https://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/aemw/amarna/bibliography/index.html>).

provenience were registered in the Museum [as early as] May 1887, with the name of Farag Ismaïn mentioned as the man who sold some of them to the authorities.” Thus, it seems possible that intentional, illicit excavations, not chance, were responsible for the vast majority, if not all, of these tablets.

According to a report by Assyriologist Archibald Sayce, who was in Egypt at the time, about two hundred tablets were available for sale in Cairo during the winter of 1887/1888 (Mynářová 2007: 19). Subsequently, these were brought to Luxor, where E. A. Wallis Budge, then assistant keeper of Department of Antiquities at the British Museum, saw about seventy letters when stopping over on a trip upstream to Aswan (Mynářová 2007: 18). (Mynářová’s [2007: 17; 2015b: 40] archival research shows that Budge’s own narrative in his autobiography [1920: 1.134–35] is incorrect in this regard.) Budge purchased these tablets and then another ten from various other antiquities dealers as the first group of Amarna letters acquired by a Western collection.

But other museums were actively acquiring Amarna letters as well. The Royal Museum in Berlin purchased groups of letters from several different European and Egyptian antiquities dealers, while the Egyptian Museum of Cairo, after initially considering some tablets to be forgeries, acquired some as well from Farag Ismaïn. It is at this time, also, that Farag Ismaïn seems to have revealed the find spot of the tablets to Egyptian museum authorities (Mynářová 2015b: 43).

One museum that missed out during this “grab” for tablets was the Louvre. At around this same time, a collection of Amarna letters had been privately acquired by the director of the French Archaeological School in Cairo, Egyptologist Urbain Bouriant. One of these tablets was sent to French Assyriologist Jules Oppert in light of the collection’s possible purchase by the Louvre, but Oppert declared it a forgery. The tablet remained in Oppert’s possession, and its whereabouts are now unknown, while the other tablets in Bouriant’s collection were purchased by the Royal Museum in Berlin (Knudtzon 1915: 1.8).

Still, as the nineteenth century ended, the Louvre would get a second chance to acquire some Amarna letters because as Mynářová (2015b: 45) observes, “it is beyond dispute that in the early decades of the 20th century individual Amarna tablets were still available on the antiquities market.” Possibly these were tablets that had been discovered decades earlier but had been held onto by antiquities dealers, or possibly ongoing illicit excavations at the site still continued. The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow acquired a few tablets via the private collection of Russian Egyptologist V. S. Golenischeff in 1911 and the Louvre finally acquired most of its small collection of Amarna letters in 1918, while additional tablets entered the collections of the Oriental Institute (now the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures) of the University of Chicago in 1915, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1924, and, as late as 1933, the *Musées Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire* in Belgium.

Alongside the hundreds of Amarna letters that were looted, a few tablets have come to light through scientific excavation. The first of these were by the famous archaeologist W. M. Flinders Petrie in 1891–1892 (Petrie 1894; see Mynářová 2007: 33–35). Petrie focused on a structure now known as Building 19, which local residents had previously indicated to Sayce as the site where the illicitly excavated Amarna letters had been found as well as stamped bricks identified in hieroglyphs as “The Place of the Letters of the Pharaoh.” Petrie uncovered twenty-two fragmentary tablets, almost all of which were found in two rubbish pits inside the building. While some of these were letters, including a join of the Pharaoh Akhenaten’s letter to the king of Babylon (EA 14), the majority were scribal exercises. These tablets subsequently entered the collection of Oxford University’s Ashmolean Museum.

The next excavations at the site were conducted by a German team from the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* from 1911–1914 (Borchardt 1914; see Mynářová 2007: 37). Although these excavations discovered the famous bust of Nefertiti, they found only two tablets, both of which were scholarly texts and not letters. Interestingly, these tablets were not discovered in Building

19, where Petrie had found other scholarly texts in rubbish pits, but in two private houses in a suburban area. These tablets entered the collection of the Cairo Museum.

Subsequently, a British team from the Egypt Exploration Society found one tablet in its first season of excavation in 1921 and then eight more tablets in the 1933–1934 season (Peet and Woolley 1923; see Mynářová 2007: 37–38). These tablets were all found in Building 19, with the exception of one that was found in a private house. These tablets entered the collection of the British Museum.

#### 4.2. Publications of the Amarna Letters

The early history of the discovery and acquisition of the Amarna letters accounts for the disparate publications in which the initial hand copies and editions of the texts appeared. While a number of smaller pioneering publications focused on a few tablets, the larger publications tended to approach the tablets by museum collection. So, for instance, Hugo Winckler and Ludwig Abel (1889–1890) published the tablets in Berlin and Cairo, as well as three that were privately held and would later enter the collection of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts; Abel's hand copies are still the only published copies of the letters in the Cairo Museum. Meanwhile, Carl Bezold and Budge (1892) published copies of the letters in the British Museum in the “auto-type facsimile” used for the British Museum's publication of cuneiform texts at the time, Sayce (1894) published the tablets from Petrie's excavations that were in the Ashmolean Museum, Otto Schröder (1915c, 1915d) published new copies of the tablets in Berlin that superseded Abel's earlier copies, and François Thureau-Dangin (1922b) published the tablets in the Louvre.

The same year as Schröder's new copies of the letters in Berlin appeared, Norwegian Assyriologist Jørgen Alexander Knudtzon brought text editions of all the known texts from Amarna, including the inventories and some of the literary texts, under a single cover for the first time (Knudtzon 1915). The first of what is two volumes was actually completed in 1907 and focused on transliterations and translations of the texts. Knudtzon personally collated almost every text and included hand copies of difficult signs of disputed reading. His notes to various lines show a careful attention to the tablets' ductus and clay that presages more contemporary work on the materiality of the texts by over a century. Indeed, even the familiar “EA” numbering system—still in use today—was Knudtzon's innovation. This system positions the letters of the Great Powers before those of the Syro-Levantine city-rulers and organizes the latter by city of origin from the northern Levant proceeding southward, with an attempt at a chronological arrangement within each city's “dossier.”

The second volume of Knudtzon's monumental work, which was completed in 1915, comprises an extensive commentary on the letters and a glossary. This volume was not actually written by Knudtzon himself, but by Weber and Erich Ebeling. Knudtzon passed away in 1917 and was too ill in the years before his death to write the intended volume. However, he did read the proofs to the volume and also provided Weber with his own unpublished manuscript, which Weber used to write the commentary to the letters; Weber (*apud* Knudtzon 1915: 2.iii) notes that he always accepted the views put forward by Knudtzon in this manuscript, even when he had a different opinion. While Ebeling wrote the glossary without access to any previous manuscript from Knudtzon, Weber (*apud* Knudtzon 1915: 2.iv) explicitly acknowledges the latter's “self-sacrificing participation” (*aufopfernden Mitwirkung*).

Translations of the Amarna letters appear in major anthologies of ancient Near Eastern primary sources such as *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Albright 1955a), *Context of Scripture* (Moran 2002a–f; Hess 2017a–f), and *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments Alte und Neue Folge* (Dietrich and Loretz 1985; Rainey 2006a). There are also five scholars whose publications of the entire corpus, four in the form of translations and one as a full text edition, since Knudtzon's edition, are worth looking at more closely.

The first of these scholars is Moran, who published a translation of all the letters in French (1987b) and then a revised translation in English (1992); interestingly, the initial French translation was actually translated from English into that language for him by ancient Near Eastern art historian Dominique Collon and biblical scholar Henri Cazelles. Moran was already one of the field's authorities on the basis of his Johns Hopkins University dissertation, "A Syntactical Study of Byblos as Reflected in the Amarna Tablets" (1950a), written under the direction of William F. Albright, and his subsequent scholarship. In particular, while previous scholars had recognized the role and influence of Canaanite on the variety of Akkadian found in many of the letters (see §6.2), Moran's dissertation propelled the field's understanding to a new level. Moran's aim was to offer a new translation of the entire corpus that would reflect "the advances of the last seventy-five years" since Knudtzon's edition had appeared, in light of the fact that "the results of all this progress have remained scattered in dictionaries, monographs, dissertations, anthologies, articles, and footnotes. Except to the narrow specialist, they have been practically inaccessible" (Moran 1992: ix).

Moran collated many of the letters himself and also had access to unpublished collations of the tablets in the British Museum and Cairo made by Edmund Gordon. However, his own collations focused primarily on difficult passages, not the entire text: "My time being limited, the collations were at times not sign by sign, but recognized difficulty by recognized difficulty" (Moran 1992: x). He used the notes to his translations to incorporate recent scholarship and give his own new readings of the difficult passages that he or Gordon had collated. Engagement with previous scholarship on these passages was more limited, however, because, as he remarked, "considerations of space often made it impossible to give in these notes due recognition to counterarguments and divergent views" (Moran 1992: x). Moran's translations are still considered paramount, and one can often find them cited in secondary literature in lieu of an author's own translation of a particular passage.

A second scholar to have translated the entire corpus of Amarna letters is Mario Liverani. Liverani translated the letters into two volumes, the first of which (1998c) contained the correspondence of the Syro-Levantine city-rulers and the second of which (1999) contained that of the Great Powers. Unlike Moran, Liverani included a substantial bibliography of secondary literature at the beginning of each letter. Like Moran, Liverani's occasional new readings of select lines were presented as notes to the translation, which allowed little room for elaboration. The translations themselves were informed by his long study of the letters and their social and historical contexts. Particularly influential in this regard was his understanding of many of the letters as reflecting a structural, seasonal correspondence as opposed to a reading of the same letters through the lens of *l'histoire événementielle* (see §5.4). This understanding manifested itself especially in seeing many epistolary features of the letters as having their origin in routine communications that the client kings were receiving from the Egyptian chancellery. Another important innovation of Liverani's translations was a new numbering system for the letters of the client kings that differed from Knudtzon's (1915) canonical arrangement. Unlike Knudtzon's arrangement of "EA" numbers, which proceeds from the northern Levant to the southern Levant, Liverani's arrangement of "LA" numbers proceeds from the southern Levant to the north. Liverani (1998c: 62) explained that the reason for this new orientation is that the letters from the southern Levant document the typical structure of Egyptian imperial hegemony, while the farther to the north one moves, the more atypical the situation becomes. To our knowledge, Liverani produced his translations from the hand copies, without consulting photographs or collating the texts personally—at least the mentions of "*fotografia*" (once) and "*collazione*" (three times) are only in reference to the collations of others.

In addition to these English and Italian translations, the Amarna letters have been translated into Hebrew by Zipora Cochavi-Rainey (2005) and into Arabic by Farouk Ismail (2010). In particular, Ismail's translation benefited from his personal collations of the Cairo tablets. In

preparing our editions, we have not been able to work as closely with these translations as we would have liked. However, we do include references to both works in the heading of each individual letter for those readers who are more familiar with these languages and would like to consult the translations.

The most recent full edition of all of the Amarna letters since Knudtzon's own work appeared exactly one hundred years later. This is a two-volume work by Rainey (2015): Volume 1 consists of a lengthy introduction, including a contribution by Mynářová, a short glossary prepared by Alice Mandell, and the text editions; volume 2 comprises an extensive commentary on the letters. The editions are the work of a great scholar's lifetime; Rainey died in 2011, and the editions were posthumously published by Cochavi-Rainey and William Schniedewind. This state of affairs had two unfortunate effects on the resulting volumes. First, the editions contain many production errors that would, presumably, have been caught by Rainey had he been alive to correct the proofs. One especially unfortunate example is the reverse of EA 94 (lines 59–78), which is missing from the edition of that text but appears at the end of EA 95. Second, the readings and commentary are idiosyncratic and not cohesive. Points of interpretation are presented as *ex cathedra* statements in the third person without offering any support, presumably because the commentary was assembled from Rainey's notes by Cochavi-Rainey after his death. Ultimately, one has to concur with Krzysztof Baranowski's (2013b: 31) assessment that, while the book is "a valuable addition to the Amarna studies," it cannot qualify "as an authoritative edition."

### 4.3. Other Secondary Literature

In addition to these four major treatments of the entire corpus of Amarna letters, countless other studies on the texts have appeared, both in the form of monographs as well as smaller articles. A full treatment of the secondary literature is outside the scope of this introduction, and so we single out here just a few notable developments of the past half century.

Two works have to do with those texts from Amarna, both letters and scholarly texts, that were published only after Knudtzon's edition. Known today as EA 359–379, these texts had been subsequently published in various scholarly journals, and so in 1978 Rainey gathered them in one volume (1978b), which was explicitly intended to be a supplement to Knudtzon's edition.<sup>3</sup> Rainey gave readers up-to-date transliterations and translations but did not include copies, so interested readers still needed to search out the journals for the original hand copies. He also provided a glossary of the words that appeared in these texts, so that the book supplemented Ebeling's glossary in volume 2 of Knudtzon's edition. Subsequently, Shlomo Izre'el's (1997) extensive study of the scholarly material from Amarna culminated in his own critical edition devoted specifically to the scholarly texts that included not just transliterations and translations of these texts but also photographs and hand copies.

In the area of language and grammar, pride of place must go to Rainey's (1996a) *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets*, a survey in four volumes of the orthography, phonology, morphology, and syntax of the "Canaano-Akkadian" in which the letters are written (for more discussion of "Canaano-Akkadian," see §6.2). This last point should be stressed: Despite the book's title, Rainey's focus is not on elements of Canaanite, per se, in the Amarna letters but on the particular variety of Akkadian used in them that was influenced by contemporary Canaanite (Pardee 1999). Rainey had already published widely on the language of the Amarna letters, and the four volumes depend heavily on this body of scholarship.

Rainey was also involved in another of the more important technological developments in the study of the Amarna letters: The West Semitic Research Project's creation of high-resolu-

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3. Two more texts, EA 380 and 381, have been published since 1978; see Walker 1979 and Izre'el 1997: 99.

tion digital photographs of about one hundred letters in the British Museum and Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin. These photos were taken by Bruce Zuckerman, Marilyn Lundberg, and Rainey as part of the West Semitic Research Project's larger focus on Northwest Semitic inscriptions. The photographs were processed via different techniques, including reflectance transformation imaging (RTI), which allowed users to manipulate the light direction in the photos. Beginning in 2004, the photos were accessible through the InscriptiFact image database application. Unfortunately, the InscriptiFact application is no longer available, but the database of images is now hosted by the University of Southern California's library.<sup>4</sup> Juan-Pablo Vita also took photographs of the Amarna letters in Berlin, London, and Paris during the course of his research on the letters' paleography that would result in his 2015 monograph, *Canaanite Scribes in the Amarna Letters* (2015a). Vita made his photos of the Berlin tablets freely available on the internet for years before malicious hackers compromised the site; according to personal communication, he intends to make them available again.

Vita's (2015a) monograph on paleography, together with Yuval Goren, Israel Finkelstein, and Nadav Na'aman's (2004) petrographic study of the tablets, comprises the final important developments in the study of the Amarna letters that needs to be mentioned in this selective sketch of the voluminous secondary literature. While Vita took handwriting as his focus, and Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman took the chemical composition of the tablets' clay as theirs, these two studies came to similar, groundbreaking conclusions. Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman showed that tablets were not always made of clay from the place where the Syro-Levantine city-ruler who was sending the letter actually ruled. For instance, a number of different letters that had been assigned by Knudtzon to the northern Levant on the basis of their script and phraseology were shown to have actually been made from clay sourced to an area in the south of Hazzatu (Gaza; see Goren Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 306–13). The city-rulers and their scribes likely traveled to this important Egyptian administrative center (see §5.4), where the letters were written and then sent to Egypt. Similarly, but on the basis of paleography, Vita suggested that a single scribe could write letters for more than one city-ruler, even for the rulers of different cities. For example, one of the three letters sent by a certain Tagi, probably the ruler of Ginti-Kirmil, was written by a scribe in the service of the ruler of Gezer named Milki-ili, who was Tagi's father-in-law (Vita 2015a: 84). Since the petrography of the letter shows that this tablet was made at Ginti-Kirmil, the letter was probably written for Tagi by one of scribes of the ruler of Gezer when the latter was visiting his son-in-law at Ginti-Kirmil. Essentially, the work of Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman, on the one hand, and Vita, on the other, has altered the paradigm of scholarship on the Amarna letters: Even if many questions remain (see, e.g., Cohen 2023), it can no longer be assumed that any given city-ruler's letter was written by a scribe from his city and sent from that city, as well. Life was complicated, and city-rulers, scribes, and Egyptian authorities were often on the move.

## 5. The Historical Context of the Amarna Letters

### 5.1. Chronology

The Amarna letters cover a period of time from about 1358–1325 BCE, with the earliest letters dating to late in the reign of Amenhotep III, the latest letters dating to early in the reign of Tutankhamun, and the mass of the correspondence dating to the reign of the monarch in between them, Akhenaten (*né* Amenhotep IV). This chronological distribution reflects historical events. As part of the political and religious reforms of Atenism, Pharaoh Akhenaten famously

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4. For the internet address, see WSR ([https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/asset-management/2A3BF1OL6PW?WS=SearchResults&DetailTab=Custom\\_XOCND000000001347](https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/asset-management/2A3BF1OL6PW?WS=SearchResults&DetailTab=Custom_XOCND000000001347)).

founded a new capital, Akhetaten, at the site of Tell el-Amarna in the fifth year of his reign. When he and his court moved to the city, they brought that diplomatic correspondence with them that was still relevant; this is how letters written to Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III, who died before the founding of the city, arrived at Tell el-Amarna. After Akhenaten's death, the court remained for a short period of time at Akhetaten before moving to Thebes; this is how letters addressed to Akhenaten's successor Tutankhamun arrived at Tell el-Amarna. When the court departed Akhetaten, those letters that were no longer deemed relevant were not taken along but were abandoned at the site; this is why the Amarna letters have survived to the present day at all.

The letters to and from Great Powers are anchored to broader chronologies of the ancient Near East because the kings addressed each other by name in the greeting formulas (Kühne 1973). In two instances, dockets written in hieratic Egyptian on the tablets also date them to precise regnal years (Abrahami and Coulon 2008: 14). However, the Syro-Levantine city-rulers address the pharaoh simply as "the king," and the letters are not dated. Therefore, scholars have examined the correspondence for internal clues that allow them to arrange the letters in a relative sequence and link them to external events whenever possible. The framework of the letters' relative chronology is well established (Campbell 1964). For instance, it is clear that the letters document three different periods of rule for the city-state of Amurru: The first ruler was a man named 'Abdi-'Aširte; after his death, the city-state was governed by "the sons of 'Abdi-'Aširte," who are not named in the sources; finally, one son in particular, 'Adiri, assumed sole rule of the city-state. However, within this framework, there are still questions about the chronological arrangement of some letters, especially those sent by city-rulers from northern Syria around the time of the campaigns of Suppiluliuma I into the area (Gromova 2013).

Even though they provide us with a narrow window of about thirty years' time, they are probably representative, in at least a general way, of Egypt's diplomatic relations during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties. Indeed, cuneiform tablets discovered at the Hittite capital of Hattusa in Anatolia show that communication between the Hittite king and queen and the Pharaoh Ramses II continued into Dynasty 19.

## 5.2. The Geopolitical Context

The Amarna letters come from a pivotal point in Egypt's foreign relations during the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550–1200). Egypt emerged from the Second Intermediate period and the domination of Lower Egypt by the Hyksos under the reigns of Seqenra, Kamose, and, finally, Ahmose, who not only recaptured the delta and reunified Egypt but also inherited the Hyksos's territorial claims to the southern Levant (Morris 2018: 119–20). This move beyond their traditional borders brought the early Dynasty 18 kings into conflict with the Mittanian Empire, which stretched from the foothills of the Zagros Mountains in the east to the Mediterranean in the west and exerted considerable political influence over the small kingdoms of the Levant. From about 1500–1415, the Egyptian pharaohs—especially Thutmose III (ca. 1479–1425 BCE)—would campaign repeatedly and successfully in the Levant against the Mittanian army and/or its Syro-Levantine client kings (Redford 2003).

Close to a century of conflict with Mittani was followed by a long period of peace (Grandet 2022: 415–19). Beginning in the reign of Thutmose III's successor, Amenhotep II (ca. 1425–1397 BCE), conflict between Egypt and Mittani, as well as their Syro-Levantine proxies, began to ebb as the two monarchs entered into negotiations for peace. The presence of envoys from Mittani in Egypt later in Amenhotep II's reign implies that these negotiations were successful. During the reign of his successor, Thutmose IV (ca. 1397–1388 BCE), the Egyptian pharaoh actually married a Mittanian princess, as did his own successor and Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III (ca. 1388–1350 BCE). It is toward the end of this period of peace that the earliest extant Amarna letters date.

Peace came to an end because a king of the Hittite Empire, Suppiluliuma I (ca. 1344–1322 BCE), took advantage of infighting within the Mittanian royal family to challenge Mittani’s hegemony over the northern Levant (Stavi 2015: 79–81). Suppiluliuma I campaigned several times in northern Syria and the Levant, striking both the capital of Mittani, Wassuganni, as well as client kingdoms of Mittani in the Levant. These campaigns necessarily drew in not just the attention but also the resources of the Egyptian Empire. Some of Egypt’s more northerly client kings were threatened by Hittite incursions, while others saw an opportunity to renounce their alliance with Egypt and side with the Hittite Empire instead. Still others used this disruption to the order of international politics to attack their neighbors and grow more powerful. At the same time, the Mittani Empire grew weaker through a combination of internal and external factors and so was less able to control its imperial territories. This growing weakness culminated in their one-time client, the kingdom of Assyria, declaring itself a Great Power, equivalent to Babylon, Hatti, and even Egypt.

Ultimately, Mittani, itself, became a client of the Hittite Empire, and the Hittite Empire took its place as sovereign of the northern Levant. Then the same sequence of encounters played out between Egypt and the Hittites as had between Egypt and Mittani in the centuries beforehand: a period of conflict, followed by a period of peace. But those events occurred after Egypt’s royal court had already abandoned the city that Akhenaten built at Tell el-Amarna.

### 5.3. The Social and Political Landscape of the Levant

The Amarna letters give the impression that the city-state was the basic political unit in the Levant during the Late Bronze Age; that is, a small urban settlement governed by a ruler who also controlled the territory in the settlement’s immediate surroundings. One group of scholars has estimated that the southern Levant and the area of the northern Levant under Egyptian control may have comprised twenty to twenty-five city-states altogether (Goren, Finkelstein, and Na’aman 2004: 320). While a city-state’s population included a small group of elites and craft specialists, including the scribes who wrote the Amarna letters, the majority of the city’s population was engaged in agriculture and left the city to work in the surrounding fields each day (Benz 2016: 63). Indeed, taxes on products of this population’s labor, as well as seasonal call-ups of their labor, provided the city-state’s ruler with his economic wherewithal.

Yet a careful reading of the same letters makes clear that this picture is somewhat of an illusion, one conveyed by the city-rulers themselves, no doubt in order to project authority to the Egyptian court. In fact, the ruler was not an absolute authority in his city-state. There were other social-political institutions that carried weight, such as the elders and the city, itself (Benz 2016: 69–72). For instance, EA 100 is a letter that opens, “This tablet is a tablet of (the city of) Irqata to the king. To the king, our lord, a message from (the city of) Irqata and its elders” (lines 1–4). Because the letter later establishes that the city-ruler of Irqata was alive and well, it is clear that the city, the elders, and the city-ruler coexisted as sources of authority.

Even the majority of the city-state’s population, known as the *hupšu*, that was engaged in agriculture could put the ruler of a city-state under considerable pressure. If they were not provided for adequately, the *hupšu* could simply leave the city-state, and their departure would leave the city-state vulnerable to attack, since the *hupšu* provided a substantial portion of the army’s manpower. For instance, in one letter, Rib-Addi, the ruler of Byblos, warns, “Look, should the men of the *hupšu*-citizens go away, the *habiru* will seize the city” (EA 118: 36–38). Even worse, a ruler’s *hupšu* could turn against him and kill him. Indeed, Rib-Addi concludes another letter by pleading for an Egyptian ship to come and rescue him because, in his words, “I am fearful of the men of [my] *hupšu*-cit[izens] lest they attack me” (EA 77: 36–37).

Furthermore, at this time, an unknown but not insignificant proportion of the population of Syria and the Levant did not live in one of the twenty to twenty-five city-states that fell under

Egypt's imperial control; rather, they were what we can describe as “nonstate actors.” Because they did not live in a city-state, they owed no responsibilities to—and had no rights protected by—the ruler of a city-state. The best attested, and most discussed, of these nonstate actors are the *habiru* (also known in the scholarship as ‘*apiru*’), who were already mentioned above in the quotation from Rib-Addi's letter, EA 118.<sup>5</sup>

In our project glossary, we define *habiru* as “displaced person” because their most characteristic feature seems to be that they are no longer identified with a city-state. However, this description derives more from attestations of the *habiru* from other cuneiform corpora of the Late Bronze Age Levant. In the Amarna letters, they typically appear in some sort of association with state actors, frequently in violent or pejorative contexts. For instance, Rib-Addi (again) asks about another Syro-Levantine city-ruler whom he is accusing of treason and then answers his own question: “Who is his auxiliary force that he is strong? Because of the *habiru* his auxiliary force is strong” (EA 71: 20–22). In another letter, he claims that this same ruler “sent a message to the men of (the city of) Ammiya saying: ‘Kill your lord and ally with the *habiru*!’” (EA 73: 26–29). In still other letters, *habiru* seem to engage in collective decision or make diplomatic overtures. The ruler of Mušihuna(?) even describes them as an integral part of his army, as he ends one letter to the pharaoh with the following statement: “Now I, together with my troops and my chariots, and together with my brothers, and together with my *habiru*, and together with my Suteans, am (ready) for the front of the regular troops, wherever the king, my lord, commands (them to go)” (EA 195: 24–32).

The appearance of the *habiru* in association with Suteans in this last letter is probably not coincidental, as Suteans represent the second most important group of nonstate actors mentioned in the Amarna letters.<sup>6</sup> The term, which literally means “Southerners,” is also well-attested in other cuneiform corpora, especially from Middle Bronze Age Mari, and is often described as a nomadic or seminomadic population defined by tribal affiliation. Like the *habiru*, Suteans undoubtedly had formal or informal associations with city-states, as their presence in the king of Mušihuna(?)'s army attests in EA 195, quoted above. Given the meaning of Sutean as “Southerner,” the term may have originated by designating people who were associated with the arid regions of southern Syria and eastern Jordan. For this reason, some scholars identify the Suteans with the Shasu, a designation appearing in Egyptian texts for both a territory in the Transjordan and the nomadic groups who occupied it (see, e.g., Redford 1992: 272–73).

Although the descriptions of the *habiru* and the Suteans in the Amarna letters are frequently negative, it is important to remember that the image we receive is one-sided, reflecting the perspective and rhetoric of Syro-Levantine city-rulers who sought to influence the Egyptian court.

#### 5.4. Egyptian Imperial Administration in the Levant

In contrast to their imperial administration in Nubia, which involved a heavy Egyptian presence to support mining operations, the Egyptian imperial administration in the Levant was relatively light. The basic building blocks were the Syro-Levantine city-rulers, who swore oaths of loyalty to the Egyptian pharaoh and were expected to supply tribute, troops, and workers for *corvée* labor as directed. In the correspondence with Egypt, these city-rulers were generally referred to—and referred to themselves—not by the Akkadian word for king (*šarru*) but by the word *hazannu* (Morris 2018: 158–60). This word is often translated as “mayor” in Akkadian texts but better describes a member of a local community who was appointed by a king to act as his go-between with that community (Marti 2010; Viano 2018). However, at least one Syro-Levantine

5. For the discussion, see, inter alia, Bottéro 1954; Greenberg 1955; Rainey 1995; Fleming 2012; and Benz 2016: 135–37.

6. See, inter alia, Heltzer 1981; Ziegler and Reculeau 2014; and Benz 2016: 125–34.

city-ruler transcended the authority of his fellow *hazannu*: a certain Biryawaza, who had probably been raised at the Egyptian court before returning to the Levant, seems to have had wide authority to act on behalf of Egyptian interests throughout the northern regions under Egypt's control (Pitard 1982: 67–69; Vita 2015a: 31–34).

In terms of the actual Egyptian presence in the Levant, it is clear that the Syro-Levantine city-rulers were overseen by Egyptian commissioners (Akkadian *rābišu*, literally, “lurker”). Less clear is whether these commissioners were responsible for fixed administrative districts, each of which was associated with a center. For instance, Moran (1992: xxvi–xxvii) describes a system of two or three administrative districts that correspond roughly to the southern Levant, with an administrative center at Hazzatu (Gaza), the Beqaa Valley in modern-day Lebanon and the area still further to the east around Damascus, with an administrative center at Kumidu (Kamid el-Loz), and, perhaps, the land of Amurru and the Lebanese coast cities to the south, with its administrative center at Šumur (Tell Kazel). On the other hand, Ellen Morris (2005: 254–56; 2018: 180) argues for a more flexible and fluid system of oversight, whereby commissioners were stationed at Egyptian garrisons or Syro-Levantine cities as needed and moved between them as necessary. For this reason, she believes that Syria and the Levant “cannot be parceled into well-defined administrative units, each governed by an officer stationed at this permanent base. Instead, one should view the empire as peppered with representatives of the Egyptian government” (Morris 2005: 255).

Whether or not cities such as Hazzatu, Kumidu, and Šumur were the centers of administrative districts, it is clear that Egyptian garrisons were stationed there and also at other strategic locations, such as Beth-shean (Tell el-Husn) in the Jezreel Valley. The Egyptian commissioners had these garrison troops at their disposal, and the Syro-Levantine city-rulers often wrote to the pharaoh or to the commissioners directly in order to request military aid. Often times, these requests were for guardsmen (*maššartu*) who could be stationed in their city not just to protect them but as a visible instantiation of Egyptian support (Pfoh 2016: 159–60). In emergencies, city-rulers could ask a commissioner to order neighboring city-rulers to send local, Syro-Levantine, troops who were known as “reinforcements” (*tillatu*). But one of the most frequent requests that city-rulers made was for the Egyptian army, referred to as “the regular troops” (*šābū piṭṭāti*), to undertake a campaign in the Levant. (Because *piṭṭātu* derives from Egyptian *pṯt*, “archer,” *šābū piṭṭāti* is sometimes translated as “archery corps”; in the Amarna letters, the phrase seems to be a general term for military troops [Morris 2005: 163].)

The regularity of the Egyptian army's campaigning in the Levant has been the object of an important, but yet still unresolved, scholarly debate. In particular, a great number of the extant letters sent by Syro-Levantine city-rulers are replies to an order that they had received from the pharaoh. For instance, if one compares EA 321, sent by the city-ruler of Ashkelon to the pharaoh, to EA 367, a copy of a letter sent by the pharaoh to the city-ruler of Akšapa that was kept on file in Egypt, it is clear that the former matches the latter topic by topic in mentioning guarding (*našāru*) the ruler's city, preparing (*šūšuru*) supplies, and obeying (*šemū*) the pharaoh's commands (*awātu*). The scholarly debate concerns whether letters like these were exchanged every spring in anticipation of the Egyptian army's making an annual march through the Levant as a show of force and to collect tribute (see, e.g., Liverani 1990b), or whether the letters are connected to a specific Egyptian military campaign that was planned for late in the period of time documented by the archive but that may not have actually occurred (see, e.g., Na'aman 1990b). What is at stake in this debate is the question of how often the Egyptian army was physically present in the Levant, whether or not it was accompanied by the pharaoh, with the two sides of the debate being “almost every year” and “rarely.” At a minimum, we can say that the Syro-Levantine city-rulers' replies to the pharaoh's order give every indication of being a routine, institutionalized practice, even if the surviving examples were written in response to an isolated Egyptian campaign.

In addition to these tangible aspects of the Egyptian imperial administration in Syria and the Levant, it is also important to consider less-tangible aspects of what can be described as a colonial encounter between Egyptian colonizers and local Syro-Levantine communities. Liverani (2021d) has made the intriguing argument that this encounter was characterized by a foundational miscommunication that derived from two different worldviews. A relatively minor example of this miscommunication can be found in a few letters where the pharaoh's routine command that a Syro-Levantine city-ruler prepare for "the arrival of the regular army" was misunderstood, intentionally or not, as an order to prepare to go at "the front of the regular army." (The mix-up was possible because the word *pānu* that is used in the pharaoh's letters to the Syro-Levantine city-ruler has both the meanings "front" and "arrival.")

A more profound example is located in a different understanding of the relationship between a political superior and his inferiors. According to this argument, the Egyptian letters that were sent to the Syro-Levantine city-rulers commanding that they guard their city and prepare supplies were not conceived of by the Egyptians as letters per se; they were orders sent by an administration working on behalf of a divine ruler that required only a simple note of affirmation in response. In the Syro-Levantine worldview, however, the understanding of a ruler's relationship to his subordinates involved an essential element of reciprocity, wherein a ruler was a patron who protected and otherwise took care of his clients in exchange for their loyalty. If Liverani's arguments are correct, then the actual praxis of Egyptian imperial administration in the Levant was characterized by profound miscommunication, as beautifully exemplified by Rib-Addi's response to the pharaoh's routine order that he guard his city: "Inasmuch as the king, my lord, sent a message, 'Guard yourself!' Who will guard me? Now, as a result, I send messages to the palace <for> guardsmen and for horses so that [I may] gua[rd] his [city]. What can I myself do?" (EA 119: 8–14).

## 6. The Languages of the Letters

### 6.1. Varieties of Akkadian Present in the Letters

The Amarna letters are mostly written in Akkadian, an East Semitic language that originated in Mesopotamia but had spread throughout the ancient Near East by the end of the Late Bronze Age. Other languages are represented: One very long letter from the king of Mittani (EA 24) is written in Hurrian, and a letter from the king of Arzawa (EA 32) is written in Hittite. The Arzawa letter concludes, "As for the tablets that are brought here, always write in Hittite!" (adapting the translation of Wilhelm *apud* Moran 1992), and EA 31, a letter from the Egyptian pharaoh to the king of Arzawa is, in fact, written in Hittite. But, otherwise, the letters are written in Akkadian.

This seemingly straightforward statement obscures as much as it elucidates, for the letters are written in a number of different dialects or varieties of that language. Among the letters from the Great Powers, for instance, those sent by the king of Babylon are written in the standard Middle Babylonian dialect. However, the letters written by the king of Assyria are not written in the corresponding Middle Assyrian dialect; one shows features of both Babylonian and Assyrian, while the other is in Hurro-Akkadian (de Ridder 2018: 27). Letters from the Hurrian-speaking king of Mittani are also, unsurprisingly, in Hurro-Akkadian (Adler 1976), while those from the kings of Alashiya (Cyprus) and Hatti show a number of features that are different from contemporary Mesopotamian dialects of Akkadian (Cochavi-Rainey 2003; Beckman 2021: 1281). The two letters from the king of Egypt to other great powers are written in the same standard Middle Babylonian that was at home in Babylon, while his letters to his Syro-Levantine client kings show many nonstandard features (Cochavi-Rainey 2011, Müller 2021).

The letters sent by those client kings are often designated as "peripheral Akkadian" (as are the letters from the kings of Mittani, Alashiya, and Hatti). A better designation might be "hybrid

Akkadian,” though, because the scribes who wrote the letters clearly and consciously combined Akkadian with their local language, either Canaanite or Hurrian, to write in two varieties of Akkadian that are known in the scholarship as Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian, respectively (Vita 2021a: 1235–36; Lauinger 2024a: 21–25). Roughly speaking, Hurro-Akkadian is found in letters from the northern areas of Egyptian control, especially those closer to the influence of the kingdom of Mittani, while Canaano-Akkadian is found in letters along the Lebanese coast and in the southern areas of Egyptian control. However, it would be misleading to consider either Hurro-Akkadian or Canaano-Akkadian as homogenous dialects with defined geographic distributions. There are many local differences even among the letters that are designated as Hurro-Akkadian and Canaano-Akkadian, and some, such as, famously, the letters from Jerusalem, show features like Assyrianisms (Moran 1975b).

## 6.2. Introducing Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian

Because one of the most striking and important aspects of the Amarna letters written by Syro-Levantine city-rulers is the Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian varieties of Akkadian used in them, this subsection briefly describes some of the characteristic features of each. Then, in the following subsection, we outline some of the models that have been introduced to explain Canaano-Akkadian (and, secondarily, Hurro-Akkadian) as a linguistic phenomenon.

Canaano-Akkadian has received much more scholarly attention than Hurro-Akkadian, and so we begin with it.<sup>7</sup> The code, to use a linguistically more neutral term, is perhaps best described as being a base or foundation of Akkadian in which features of Canaanite are manifest. These Canaanite features can be vocabulary items, such as the sporadic use of Canaanite words in the body of a letter or as an explanatory gloss. They can be syntactic, such as the frequent verb-subject-object word order, as in Canaanite and other West Semitic languages, as opposed to the subject-object-verb word order used in standard Akkadian. And they can be morphological, such as the complete absence of the subordination (or subjunctive) marker, which is required in subordinate clauses in Akkadian but not in Canaanite.

However, the most striking feature of Canaano-Akkadian is the verbal system. In Canaano-Akkadian, an inflected Akkadian word generally communicates only *lexical* information. This lexical base is then marked for person, number, and tense/aspect by the presence or absence of Canaanite prefixes and/or suffixes. For instance, as in Canaanite, the prefix *y-* marks a verb as 3ms and *t-* marks it as 3fs or 2f/ms; a 1cs form, which would be marked by a prefix *ʾ* (*ʾaleph*) in Canaanite, is left unmarked. For the suffixes, there is a basic division in the singular between the presence or absence of a suffix *-u*, with unmarked forms (i.e., *yaqtul*) being preterite and marked forms (i.e., *yaqtulu*) being present-future.

To illustrate the differences between Canaano-Akkadian and other varieties of Akkadian, it is helpful to compare how a single form would be understood by speakers and/or readers in Babylonia and the Levant. In EA 292: 23 (Gezer), there is a verb that is written as *iš-su<sub>2</sub>-ru*. In Babylonia, this form of the verb *našāru*, “to guard,” would be understood either as *i-šsur-u* (< *i-nšur-u*), for a 3cs preterite + subordination marker, *išsuru*, “(which) he guarded,” or as *i-šsur-ū*, for a 3mp preterite, *išsurū*, “they guarded.” For a Levantine reader, however, the entire *iššur* component of the form serves only as a lexical base that communicates that the verb is a form of *našāru*, “to guard”; it gives no information about person, number, or tense/aspect. Accordingly, the form would be understood as Ø-*iššur-u*. The absence of any prefix would mark it as 1cs, and the presence of the *-u*-suffix would mark it as present-future. Rather than being translated as “he guarded” or “they guarded,” as in Babylonia, the verb form is translated as “I am guarding” or “I will guard.”

7. For descriptive grammars, see Böhl 1909; Rainey 1996a; and Tropper and Vita 2010.

Similarly, a Babylonian reader might be puzzled by the *y-* prefix of the verb written as *yi-iš-tap-pa-ra* in EA 130: 9 (Byblos) but would understand the *-t-* infix and geminated second radical to mark the Gt present or Gtn preterite stems and so might be able to reach a translation such as “he sent messages again and again to me.” For a reader in the Levant, however, the lexical base *ištappar* might still convey only that the verb in question is *šapāru*, “to send (a message),” without needing to be analyzed as in the Gt reciprocal/reflexive or Gtn iterative stems.<sup>8</sup> The familiar *y-* prefix would mark the verb as 3ms, the absence of a suffix *-u* would mark the verb as preterite, while the suffix *-a(m)* would mark the Akkadian 1 cs dative, as for a Babylonian reader. Accordingly, a Levantine reader might translate, “he sent a message to me,” without the iterative sense communicated to the Babylonian.

This is only the briefest sketch of one of the most distinctive features of Canaano-Akkadian. The code displays many other important characteristics that differentiate it from the Akkadian language that was spoken and written down in Mesopotamia. For instance, among many others, Akkadian statives can be used as perfective suffix conjugation verbs; the *yaqtul* conjugation can also function as a jussive, in place of or alongside the Akkadian precativ; and an internal Gp stem is sometimes used to form the passive voice of G-stem verbs, where the N stem would be used in Mesopotamia. It is also important to emphasize that Canaano-Akkadian is not a homogenous variety of Akkadian; there are regional and chronological differences among the various subcorpora of Amarna letters that show features of Canaano-Akkadian. For instance, scribes from the Beqaa Valley often write an /i/ vowel with the E sign in what seems to be a regional orthographic or phonological variant (Rainey 1996a: 1.25). And Izre’el (1991: 1.380) has shown that the earliest texts sent from Amurru show considerably more Canaano-Akkadian features in their verbal system than the later ones.

Hurro-Akkadian is similar to Canaano-Akkadian in that it is, essentially, a base or foundation of Akkadian in which different features of Hurrian are manifest.<sup>9</sup> However, inflected Akkadian words do not function as purely lexical bases, and the overall effect is not as great a departure from Mesopotamian Akkadian as with Canaano-Akkadian. Still, there are a number of differences. For instance, some features of Hurrian can be seen in the use of Hurrian words in the body of a letter or as explanatory glosses; an indifference to voiced and unvoiced phonemes, as voice does not carry phonemic status in Hurrian; hypotactic coordination (i.e., the use of the Akkadian conjunction *u* or enclitic *-ma* to coordinate a subordinate clause and a main clause); and a verb-subject-object word order that reflects the word order used in Hurrian. Hybrid Hurrian-Akkadian verbal forms are known from other cuneiform corpora (see §6.4), but they are not common in the Amarna letters written in Hurro-Akkadian.

It is important to emphasize that the Amarna letters from Syro-Levantine city-rulers show great linguistic variation and creativity. For instance, while one letter may show Canaano-Akkadian verb forms and word order consistently, another may switch between Middle Babylonian and Canaano-Akkadian verb forms in the space of just a few lines. Other letters may use verb forms that mix the verbal prefixes of Mesopotamian Akkadian with the Canaanite conjugation suffix; for example, *i-di-nu-mi*, “he was providing” (EA 186: 27 [Hazi]) instead of *\*yi-di-nu-mi*. And letters from some regions, such as Amurru, may show features of both Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian. Although the overall impression may seem chaotic at times, such variation is probably best understood within a larger context of orthographic variation in the Amarna letters written by Syro-Levantine city-rulers and seen as reflecting the exercise of scribal agency within the constraints of diplomatic protocols (see §7).

8. Sometimes, Canaano-Akkadian verb forms based on the Gtn stem do seem to have an iterative sense, though contextually this sense can be difficult to establish conclusively; see, e.g., the discussions in Izre’el 1990b: 584; and Rainey 1996a: 2.113–16.

9. For more detailed descriptions, see Giorgieri 2005: 92–97; and Andrason and Vita 2016: 308–16.

### 6.3. Interpretive Models of Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian

How should we interpret these varieties of Akkadian? The vast majority of scholarship attempting to address this question has discussed Canaano-Akkadian, not Hurro-Akkadian, so the focus of this section is on Canaano-Akkadian as well. One approach has been to view Canaano-Akkadian as a contact language; that is, a language that derives from the contact of two different speech communities, which would be speakers of Akkadian and Canaanite in this case. In particular, the term pidgin designates a contact language that typically develops when two speech communities are in an asymmetrical power dynamic. Often, the more powerful group's language will provide the pidgin's lexicon, while the less powerful group's language will provide the pidgin's basic grammar. Moran (1992: xxi–xxii) described Canaano-Akkadian as a pidgin, where the more powerful group spoke Akkadian and the less powerful group spoke Canaanite, because this model seemed to explain, among other features, the use of inflected Akkadian words as lexical bases which were marked with Canaanite verbal morphology.

Somewhat relatedly, Canaano-Akkadian has also been interpreted as a mixed language (Kossmann 1994, Izre'el 2012). Unlike a pidgin, which derives from the contact of two different speech communities, a mixed language derives from a situation in which two different languages are spoken within a single speech community. In one type of such situation, known as diglossia, one of the languages is considered high prestige in the speech community, and the other is considered low prestige. According to this model, Akkadian was the high prestige language and Canaanite the low prestige language, and the mixed language of Canaano-Akkadian combined features of each.

However, both the pidgin and mixed language models run into difficulty interpreting Canaano-Akkadian in their need to posit communities that were actually speaking Akkadian and Canaano-Akkadian. While Izre'el (2012: 189–95) has highlighted orthographic evidence showing that scribes were pronouncing texts as they were writing them, there is no real evidence to suggest that either Akkadian or Canaano-Akkadian were spoken languages in Syria and the Levant during the Late Bronze Age. Accordingly, in the absence of such evidence, any interpretive model that depends on speech communities seems unlikely.

For this reason, a second approach to interpreting the phenomenon of Canaano-Akkadian has been to focus on it as a written code that was never spoken. For instance, Alexander Andrason and Vita (2014, 2016) have modified the mixed-language model, described above, to be a *written* mixed-language model. According to this model, Canaano-Akkadian derives from a diglossic situation where the high prestige language, Akkadian, existed primarily in written form. The written, and therefore restricted, context in which Akkadian texts circulated encouraged the development of Canaano-Akkadian as a jargon among Canaanite-speaking scribes; in other words, a specialized code restricted to a particular group that emphasized in-group status. Andrason and Vita have therefore described Canaano-Akkadian as “a professional high-status jargon ... principally aimed at written communication” (2014: 171).<sup>10</sup>

In a series of articles written over a number of years, Eva von Dassow (2003, 2004, 2010) argued for a different model that described Canaano-Akkadian as an example of alloglottography. This term describes a situation in which a text is written down in one language but actually read in another language. For instance, a text that consisted entirely of Sumerian words used as logograms but that was read as normalized Akkadian could be described as an example of alloglottography. According to von Dassow's model, the Akkadian words in Canaano-Akkadian that form the lexical bases of verb forms are essentially logograms, with the verbal prefixes and suffixes acting as phonetic complements that guided a reader to the correct Canaanite verb

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10. They leave open the possibility that it might have been spoken “under very specific circumstances; i.e. at the scribal centres” (Andrason and Vita 2014: 160); see also Vita 2015b: 392–93.

form. While alloglottography is an intriguing model, Mandell (in press) has pointed out that it runs into trouble accounting for the orthographic variation and code-switching that occurs in the letters.<sup>11</sup>

Agustinus Gianto (2000) and, subsequently, Baranowski (2016b) have developed a different model of Canaano-Akkadian as an interlanguage; that is, a type of language that is created, in effect, by speakers of one language imperfectly learning a second language. For Baranowski, in particular, both the second language being acquired and the interlanguage that resulted were written, not spoken, codes, as with the written mixed language model described above. According to his model, after Akkadian cuneiform entered the Levant during the Old Babylonian period, it was taught by successive generations of scribes who increasingly combined written Akkadian with elements of Canaanite grammar. Eventually, this written interlanguage, frozen somewhere between Akkadian and Canaanite, “became institutionalized on the level of local schools and became their shared heredity and possibly a mark of their own scribal tradition and identity” (Baranowski 2016b: 47).

The final model to be discussed here has recently been proposed by Mandell (in press), who has anchored her interpretation of Canaano-Akkadian in the concept of scribal communities of practice. In this model, the emphasis is on the Amarna letters as “inscribed material things that were designed and crafted by cuneiform scribes for other scribes who were trained in the same script.” Mandell’s model has the benefit of shedding many assumptions or speculations found in other models by narrowing the focus down to three known quantities: the scribe who wrote a tablet; the scribe who read that tablet; and the tablet itself. At the same time, the model’s focus on letters as “inscribed material things” dramatically increases what “counts” as Canaano-Akkadian: extralinguistic features and scribal marks such as tablet shape, layout, and rulings are seen as communicative as Canaanite vocabulary items or verbal morphology.

The interpretive models that most directly inform our editions are the written mixed language model and the scribal communities of practice model. Especially if one replaces the “high-prestige” qualification of Canaano-Akkadian with “institutionalized,” we see these models as largely compatible: The Canaano-Akkadian code is a written, institutionalized, professional jargon that was communicated via both linguistic and extralinguistic features.

#### 6.4. Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian outside of the Amarna letters

One final point that needs to be kept in mind when discussing how to interpret Canaano-Akkadian and Hurro-Akkadian is that these varieties of Akkadian are not restricted to the Amarna letters. Hurro-Akkadian, in particular, is very well attested in cuneiform texts found at sites throughout the ancient Near East, such as from late fifteenth century BCE Alalakh (Tell Atchana), a city located in the northern Levant not far from the mouth of the Orontes River (Márquez Rowe 1998); mid-fifteenth to mid-fourteenth century Nuzi (Yorghana Tepe), a city far on the other side of the Near East, east of the Tigris River in northern Iraq (Wilhelm 1970); and, perhaps most strikingly, Qatna (Tell Mishrifeh), a city on a tributary of the middle Orontes (Richter and Lange 2012: 29–41; Baranowski 2018). Qatna is a particularly interesting case, because six of the Amarna letters were sent by a ruler of Qatna. While these letters are written in a variety of Hurro-Akkadian, the texts excavated at Qatna proper, which date mostly to this ruler’s predecessor, are written in a somewhat different variety of Hurro-Akkadian in which Hurrian features manifest much more strongly.

Canaano-Akkadian is also found outside of the Amarna letters; indeed, as described at the beginning of this introduction, EA 333, one of the “official” Amarna letters, was actually discovered not in Egypt but at the site of Tell el-Hesi and has been included in the canonical

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11. See also Izre’el 2012: 197–99.

editions of the texts since 1896. However, the number of extant texts written in Canaano-Akkadian is far fewer than those written in Hurro-Akkadian. Two of the most important corpora of texts are from Tell Taanach and Kumidi (Kamid el-Loz). Fifteen letters and administrative texts from Tell Taanach date to the late fifteenth century and provide the first known attestations of Canaano-Akkadian (Horowitz, Oshima, and Sanders 2018: 132–55; Pruzsinszky 2020). Features that are characteristic of the variety of Canaano-Akkadian found in the Amarna Letters do not always appear in the Canaano-Akkadian of the earlier Tell Taanach texts. For instance, the 1cs verbal prefix is as often *a-*, as in Mesopotamian Akkadian, as it is Ø.

Eight more letters are known from or attributed to the site of Kumidi, which is located in Lebanon’s Beqaa Valley and, as described in §5.4, was one of the Egyptian Empire’s administrative centers in the Levant (Pruzsinszky 2008). These letters are contemporaneous with the Amarna letters. Some are copies of letters that were sent by the Egyptian pharaoh to different Syro-Levantine city-rulers and that were archived at the administrative center at Kumidi. Others were sent by Syro-Levantine city-rulers to the Egyptian official who resided at Kumidi.

One last find that should be mentioned is a remarkable clay cylinder found at Beth-shean that is inscribed with the opening of a letter sent by a certain Tagi to a certain Labaya (Horowitz, Oshima, and Sanders 2018: 47–48). Both of these names belong to city-rulers who sent Amarna letters to the pharaoh, so the Beth-shean cylinder may be a valuable witness to the use of cuneiform, and perhaps even Canaano-Akkadian, for internal communication between Syro-Levantine city-rulers as well as with Egypt (Izre’el 1995b: 2418; 2012: 173).<sup>12</sup>

## 7. Translating the Amarna Letters

In an interview, Emily Wilson, the acclaimed translator of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, spoke of the duty that she felt to her readers: “They need to trust that I’m telling them the truth, both about the language and the psychology” (Thurman 2023: 48). This apt and concise description captures an understanding about the sort of work that a translation should do that is as old as translation itself, but that has been widely theorized since the 1950s. This understanding presents translation as a search for equivalence between two poles. There is a literal translation, what linguist Eugene Nida (1964) described as “formal equivalence,” which attempts to render an utterance in a target language so that it is as syntactically and semantically equivalent as possible to the utterance in the source language; and there is a free translation, Nida’s “dynamic” or “functional equivalence,” which attempts to render an utterance in a target language so that it is the closest natural equivalent to the message being communicated by the utterance in the source language. A translation that is formally equivalent may obscure the message of an utterance, while a translation that is functionally equivalent may obscure more formal features of the source language’s utterance, such as chiasmus or alliteration.

In the field of Assyriology, a view of translation in favor of functional equivalence was articulated by A. Leo Oppenheim (1967) in a chapter in his anthology of Akkadian letters entitled “Can These Bones Live? An Essay on Translating Akkadian Letters”:

To translate a text from a foreign language requires bridging the gap of the conceptual difference by means of that rare link, the much-searched-for *mot juste*, that accidental *réussite*, which only empathy can engender, and which, even optimally, can only approximate the original.... No

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12. Note that the only word in the short portion of text that can be conclusively identified as Canaano-Akkadian (*iš-te-me*, line 7, because it is 1cs and clause initial) appears in the quotation of a letter that Tagi had sent to the pharaoh, so its context is not actually the internal communication of two Syro-Levantine city-rulers. Izre’el (2012: 177) also considers the cylinder to be “an exercise in letter writing, ... evidence for scribal education in the same language used for writing letters to Egypt, namely, Canaano-Akkadian.”

adequate translation of a phrase or even a word can be applied again without care, because it would degrade the translation to the level of the one-to-one correspondences where words are handled like tokens (1967: 60–63).

In particular, Oppenheim considered a translation that proceeded by trying to establish one-to-one correspondences between words in the target and source languages to be a denial of the “gap” that exists between the worldviews that underlie those languages. He remarked that such a “translator replaces unit by unit and sees in the quaintness of the text produced an adequate rendering of the otherness of the original” (1967: 59).

But what is a translator to do when the language that they are translating is an institutionalized, professional jargon that was not spoken outside of curricular contexts?

If anything can be identified as the worldview that underlies the linguistic utterances of the Amarna letters, it is the routine administrative structure that is exemplified by the spirit of the few extant orders that the Egyptian pharaoh sent to the Syro-Levantine city-rulers and the many more replies to these orders that they sent back. Because of his “guiding principle” of including only “atypical” letters in his anthology (Oppenheim 1967: v), Oppenheim missed this point. He includes ten letters from Syro-Levantine city-rulers to the pharaoh in his anthology of Akkadian letters, but not one of these letters is an example of the routine correspondence; they are all exceptions to it. They were probably selected for inclusion because they are full of detail and so intrinsically more interesting to read on their own, but the result is that a reader of his selection of the Amarna letters is left with a misconception of the larger context of the correspondence and the worldview behind it.

In Moran’s brief reflection on his own translations, he stated, perhaps a bit patronizingly, that “the prose of the Amarna letters is, at best, pedestrian,” so that “*traduttore traditore* seldom, if ever, applies” (Moran 1992: x). Moran clearly seems here to have had the worldview of routine administrative correspondence in mind, though he considered it so monotonous that, to him, Oppenheim’s conceptual gap between speaker and audience simply did not exist and, as a result, translation could not be an act of treason. But the issue of a conceptual gap is not so easily side-stepped. Liverani’s work, described in §5d, has argued compellingly that misunderstandings between the Egyptian pharaoh and the Syro-Levantine city-rulers existed even in antiquity. We cannot deny the possibility of a gap between our own worldview and that of the letters’ ancient authors simply because the letters are repetitive and seem straightforward.

As the scholar who has done the most to identify and describe the system of routine administration underlying the Amarna correspondence to and from the client kings, Liverani’s (1998c) translations, unsurprisingly, are deeply sensitive to it. Interestingly, his approach to translating the “technical-administrative terms” (*termini tecnico-amministrativi*), as Liverani (1998c: 61) characterizes the vocabulary of the source language, is, in fact, to rely on one-to-one correspondences. This does not mean that great emotive power or accomplished rhetoric cannot be found in Liverani’s translations of letters sent by the Syro-Levantine city rulers. Many of the letters depart from or modify the constraints of the larger routine administrative structure: an inserted proverb here, a careful *inclusio* there, a gloss in Canaanite that subtly alters the meaning of the Akkadian word it glosses. Yet at the same time, these wonderful moments in the Amarna letters can only be truly appreciated for what they do when they can be seen against the technical-administrative professional jargon that served as their matrix.

Liverani’s approach is the one that we have also taken for our translations, and for the same reasons.<sup>13</sup> So, for instance, we try to consistently translate forms of the verb *šapāru* as “to send” when a direct object is specified (and as “to send a message” when no object is specified),

13. See also Izre’el 1990b: 581–83 for arguments in favor of translations of the Amarna letters that are “less interpretive, less explicative.”

whereas we translate *šūbulu* as “to dispatch.” However, we do translate a single Akkadian word by different English words when the Akkadian word is used with different senses in different contexts. For example, we translate the verb *šemû*, “to hear, listen to,” as “to obey” in contexts that involve instructions from the pharaoh or an Egyptian official, since in these contexts “to hear is to obey.” Similarly, we translate the verb *edû*, “to know,” as “to care for” when a Syro-Levantine city ruler implores the pharaoh to “know” his land (Yoder 2020: 5–11).

While some may consider the result to be “quaint” or artificial, that seems to us to be a more accurate reflection of the texts’ background and historical context than would be a more idiomatic or stylistically fluid rendering of a professional jargon that was rarely spoken. To be clear, there were occasions in the process of translating the letters when the result was not “quaint” but actually unintelligible or misleading. In the face of occasions like this, and they are not uncommon, we have departed from maintaining a one-to-one correspondence of senses.

## 8. The Arrangement of the Letters and Conventions for Transliterations and Translations

We have decided to use a modified version of the traditional sequence of EA numbers for the letters that was established by Knudtzon, as described in §4b. While Liverani’s alternative numbering system, as also described in that section, is very sensible and has great advantages, EA numbers are so entrenched in the scholarship that to use a different numbering system would present an obstacle to readers, both new and old. Similarly, in order to similarly facilitate the ease of comparing different editions and resources, we have tried, whenever possible, to maintain the line numbering used by Knudtzon and subsequent scholars.

However, our arrangement of the letters departs from the traditional sequence in two significant ways. The traditional sequence of EA numbers moves by site from north to south, and letters sent from a single site are organized according to Knudtzon’s understanding of their internal chronological sequence, proceeding from earliest to latest. For a variety of reasons, though, that go back to the publication history of the letters and subsequent scholarship on them, letters from a single site, and even a single sender, can have EA numbers that are widely separated. For instance, letters sent by the rulers of Amurru are numbered EA 60–62, 156–171, and 371, while letters sent by Rib-Addi of Byblos are numbered EA 68–95, 101–138, and 362. Our arrangement of the letters brings together those sent from a single site and/or a single ruler while otherwise following Knudtzon’s overall sequence. We also begin with the letters sent by the pharaoh and by Egyptian officials to the Syro-Levantine city-rulers in order to highlight the routine administrative structure in which the city-rulers’ correspondence operated. In particular, we begin with EA 367, because this letter from the pharaoh to the city-ruler of Akšapa best exemplifies this structure and the expectations of empire to which every letter written by a Syro-Levantine city-ruler—whether explicitly or implicitly, compliantly or defiantly—was a response. The book’s table of contents shows the sequence of sites and senders, while the index at the end of the book allows readers to locate individual letters.

Each letter opens with a heading that provides its museum number, the online location of any publicly available photographs, and bibliography for its hand-copy, editions, translations, and other secondary literature. In order to be the most useful to readers, we include many more references in the heading for any given letter than we necessarily cite in the notes to our edition of it. However, we make no claim that the bibliography is comprehensive; our references prioritize, though not exclusively, secondary literature that quotes passages from the letters.<sup>14</sup> Some references have been omitted for lack of relevance, and others have, undoubtedly, been

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14. For this reason, references to isolated forms in grammatical studies such as Böhl (1909), Harris (1939), or Jucquois

overlooked. Some of the references listed in the fields for editions and translations may not include the entire text. For instance, references to Mynářová 2007 are generally only to the opening lines of a text because her monograph is a study of the address and greeting formulas of the Amarna letters.

As described in §2, this edition of the Amarna letters written by Syro-Levantine city-rulers is a print companion to digital editions that were created on the Oracc platform. This genesis has left several imprints on the transliterations, which will be familiar to users of Oracc projects. For instance, partially preserved signs always appear in half brackets; so, for example, always *'ba*', never *[b]a* or *b[a]*. We use subscript numbers instead of acute or grave accents to identify MZL's second and third homophonic sign values for a given logogram or syllable; for example, when the sign PA has the syllabic value /ba/, we transliterate it as *ba<sub>2</sub>* and not *bâ*. And a slant sign (/) in the transliteration of a text marks that the subsequent signs are actually written in the following line as overflow; these instances are usually accompanied by a note.

Other features of the transliteration derive from the particular history of the project. We began our editions with electronic transliterations of all the letters that had been graciously provided to us by Shlomo Izre'el, who also cautioned us that they had been prepared several decades earlier and needed updating in light of subsequent scholarship. As an initial step, then, we harmonized all of the transliterations in light of Rainey's (2015) edition, which had been recently published at the time. Only after this corpus-wide update did we begin the process of editing each letter individually and revising its transliteration as necessary according to the scholarship on that particular letter. However, the legacy of the intermediate stage whereby the transliterations were harmonized with Rainey's editions can still be seen in the transliteration of certain signs with "normalizing" vowels, especially, but not exclusively, in the morphophonemic context of verbal prefixes and suffixes; for example, we transliterate *ti<sub>7</sub>-iq-bu-na* and not *te-eq-bu-na*, *da-ag-la-ti<sub>7</sub>*, and not *da-ag-la-te*, and *i<sub>15</sub>-ša-ti* and not *e-ša-ti*.

Cuneiform signs used as logograms are transliterated into the Roman alphabet in the upper case and are not italicized. Signs used syllabically to spell Akkadian words are transliterated into the Roman alphabet in the lower case and are italicized. Signs used syllabically to write words in the other languages that occasionally appear in the letters (Canaanite, Hurrian, Egyptian, and even one word in Ugaritic) are transliterated into the Roman alphabet and are not italicized. Only Egyptian words that appear in a letter proper are transliterated as part of the text edition; the dockets written in hieratic Egyptian that were written on some letters after they arrived in Egypt are not transliterated, but their presence is indicated in a note. The identification of words as Canaanite relies primarily on Izre'el's (1998) review of Jacob Hoftijzer and Karel Jongeling's (1995) *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions (DNWSI)*.

The rendering of personal names follows Richard Hess's (1993a) *Amarna Personal Names*, though we have accounted for subsequent scholarship and made a few adjustments to introduce consistency in theophoric elements (so Haddaya for his Addaya) or where his citation form differs from the individual's own self-identification (so Etakkama for his Itakkama). Logographically written theophoric elements are occasionally translated with two possibilities (e.g., Haddu/Teššub) when the reading is unclear; the possibilities are generally determined by geographic location/dialect (so Haddu/Teššub in Hurro-Akkadian texts and Ba'lu/Haddu in Canaanite-Akkadian texts). Otherwise, the normalization of logograms in personal names reflects the presumed local phonemic inventory. It also follows our project's own protocol in understanding logographic elements to have had a 1cs pronominal possessive suffix (e.g., the elements DINGIR- and ŠEŠ- are normalized as 'Ili- and 'Ahi-, respectively; note the absence of macron

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(1966) are not included in the secondary literature for the letters. However, references to Ebeling 1910 (specifically, to the appendices) and Rainey 1996a are included.

over -i in keeping with Oracc protocol not to lengthen vowels in the normalization of proper nouns).

The rendering of geographical names mostly follows Juan Antonio Belmonte Marín's (2001b) *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der Texte aus Syrien im 2. Jt. v. Chr.* (RGTC 12.2). These renderings reflect the presumed local phonemic inventory, as with the rendering of personal names.



## Text Editions



# Egypt

EA 367

Museum No.: AO 7095

Copy: Thureau-Dangin 1922b: 105

Photo: ML

Edition: Mercer 1939: 612–15; Thureau-Dangin 1922a: 377–82; 1922b: 100–101; Rainey 1978b: 36–37; Mynářová 2007: 258; Rainey 2015: 1248–49, 1630–31

Translation: Alt 1924: 24; Albright 1955a: 484; Oppenheim 1967: 119–20; Pintore 1972: 127; Seux 1977: 50–51; Moran 1992: 365; Kuhrt 1995: 325; Liverani 1998c: 133–34 (95); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 268–69; Liverani 2008: 292; Ismail 2010: 646; Liverani 2014: 338; Mandell 2015: 501–2

Secondary literature: Alt 1924: 24–27; Dhorme 1924: 11; Jirku 1924; Maisler 1935: 39; Ranke 1937: 93; Albright 1946: 11; Gordon 1947: 4–5; Helck 1962: 263; Campbell 1964: 80, 111–12; Hachmann 1970: 64, 82; Gevirtz 1973a: 103; Rainey 1975a: 410; Hachmann 1982: 147, 171; Pintore 1983: 328–29; Knauf 1988: 108; Cochavi-Rainey 1990a: 63; 1990b: 9, 13–15, 20; Mangano 1990: 148, 167; Na’aman 1990b: 397–401; Lemche 1991: 35; Gestoso Singer 1992a: 44; Rainey 1991–1993: 108; 1992a: 182; Hess 1993a: 71–72, 89–90, 107; Na’aman 1994: 401–2; Rainey 1996a: 1.143, 2.202, 313, 3.49, 78; 1996c: 7; Gestoso Singer 1996–1999: 93; Gianto 1997: 431; Harpine 1998: 85; Rainey 2002a: 66; von Dassow 2004: 655; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na’aman 2004: 27; Pfoh 2006: 178–79; Rainey 2006b: 86; van der Westhuizen 2006: 515; Mynářová 2009: 112; Pfoh 2009a: 126; 2009b: 367; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 100, 104–7, 109–10, 113–16, 118, 121–23, 133, 139, 146, 150, 152, 174, 179, 180, 182–84, 186–87, 209, 212, 261; Tarawneh 2011: 274; Dallaire 2014: 172; Mynářová 2014: 29; Breier 2016: 18; Pfoh 2016: 49; Mynářová 2020: 425; Liverani 2021b: 193, 195; 2021c: 104; Lauinger 2024b: 138–39

## Obverse

001 *a-na* <sup>m</sup>*in-tar-u<sub>2</sub>-ta<sub>2</sub>* LU<sub>2</sub> <sup>uru</sup>*ak-ša-pa*

002 *qi<sub>2</sub>-bi<sub>2</sub>-ma um-ma* LUGAL-*ma*

003 *a-nu-ma ṭup-pa an-na-a uš-te-bi-la-ku*  
*qa<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>-e<sup>15</sup>*

004 *a-na ka-a-ša u<sub>3</sub> uš-šur lu-u<sub>2</sub> na-ša-ra-ta*

005 *aš-ru* LUGAL *ša it-ti-ka*

(o 001) Speak to Intaruta, the ruler of Akšapa, thus (says) the king: Herewith he is sending this tablet to you as a command for you: “Be on guard! You should guard the king’s place that is by you.”

006 *a-nu-um-ma* LUGAL *um-te-eš-še-ra-ku*

007 <sup>m</sup>*ḥa-an-ni* DUMU <sup>m</sup>*ma-i-ri-ia*

008 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup>UGULA TUR<sub>3</sub> *ša* LUGAL *i-na* KUR *ki-na-aḥ-ḥi<sup>16</sup>*

009 *u<sub>3</sub> ša i-qab<sub>2</sub>-ba<sub>2</sub>-ku ši-ma-aš-šu*

(o 006) Herewith the king is dispatching to you Hanya, the son of Ma’iriya, the king’s stable master in the land of Canaan. That which he commands to you, obey it very carefully lest the king find guilt in you (lit.

15. Rainey (2015: 1248) emends the text to <*a-na*> *qa<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>-e*; see our note to the parallel line in EA 370.

16. For *akil tarbaši* here and in EA 369: 8 as the translation of an Egyptian military tile, see CAD T s.v. *tarbašu* mng. 2, citing previous literature.

010 SIG<sub>5</sub>-iš *dan-niš<sub>2</sub> la-a i-kaš-ša-dak-ku*  
 011 LUGAL *ar-na a-wa-ta gab<sub>2</sub>-ba<sub>2</sub>*  
 012 *ša i-qab<sub>2</sub>-ba<sub>2</sub>-ku ši-ma-aš-šu* SIG<sub>5</sub>-iš *dan-niš<sub>2</sub>*  
 013 *u<sub>3</sub> e-pu-uš<sup>r</sup> SIG<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>-iš dan-niš<sub>2</sub>*  
 014 *u<sub>3</sub> uš-šur<sup>r</sup> uš<sup>r</sup>-šur la-a ta<sub>2</sub>-mi-ik-ki*  
 015 *u<sub>3</sub> lu-u<sub>2</sub> šu-šu-ra-ta<sub>2</sub> a-na pa-ni<sup>17</sup>*  
 016 ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ *pi<sub>2</sub>-ta-ti* LUGAL NINDA *ma-a-ad<sup>18</sup>*

Reverse

017 GEŠTIN *gab<sub>2</sub>-bu mi-im-ma ma-a<sup>r</sup>-ad<sup>r</sup>*  
 018 *a-nu-um-ma i-kaš-ša-dak-ku*  
 019 *ar-ḫi-iš ar-ḫi-iš*  
 020 *u<sub>3</sub> i-na-ak-ki-is<sub>2</sub> SAG<sup>r</sup>-ad<sup>r</sup>*  
 021 *a-ia-be<sub>2</sub>-e ša* LUGAL

get hold of guilt for you). Very carefully obey and perform every command that he speaks to you. And be on guard, be on guard! Do not be negligent! And you should prepare much food and much wine (and) everything else for the arrival of the king's regular troops. Now, he will reach you very quickly and cut off the head of the king's enemies.

022 *u<sub>3</sub> lu-u<sub>2</sub> ti-i-de<sub>3</sub> i-nu-ma*  
 023 *ša-lim* LUGAL *ki<sup>r</sup>-ma<sup>1</sup> dUTU-aš*  
 024 *i-na* AN <sup>sa-me-e</sup> ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ-*šu* <sup>giš</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu*  
 025 *ma-a-du ma-gal šul-mu<sup>19</sup>*

(r 022) You should know that the king is healthy like the sun in the heavens (Akk. gloss: the heavens). His troops (and) his numerous chariots are very well.

## EA 99

**Museum No.:** C 4742 (12196)

**Copy:** Winckler and Abel 1889–1890: no. 202

**Photo:** n/a

**Edition:** Winckler 1896: 376–77; Knudtzon 1915: 1.448–51, 2.1193; Mercer 1939: 338–39; Mynářová 2007: 208; Rainey 2015: 546–547, 1443

**Translation:** Oppenheim 1967: 120; Moran 1992: 171; Kuhrt 1995: 325; Liverani 1998c: 243 (198); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 137; Ismail 2010: 323

**Secondary literature:** Thureau-Dangin 1922a: 380; Dossin 1934b: 133; Bonkamp 1939: 264; Gadd 1940: 122; Malamat 1961: 221; Hachmann 1970: 69; Pintore 1972: 130; Gevirtz 1973a: 103; Pintore 1973: 302; Zaccagnini 1973: 161; Kufeldt 1974: 93; Moran 1975a: 153; Liverani 1976b: 382; Zaccagnini 1976a: 484; Pintore 1978: 14; Huehnergard 1989: 115; Liverani 1979a: 32; 1979b: 11; Pintore 1983: 328; Cochavi-Rainey 1990b: 13–16, 20; Mangano 1990: 148, 182; Gestoso Singer 1992a: 58; Klengel 1992: 104; Liverani 1994: 253; Zaccagnini 1995: 51–52; Na'aman 1996d: 156–57; Rainey 1996a: 1.143; Liverani 2001: 190; von Dassow 2004: 655; Ouda 2004: 110–11; Gestoso Singer 2005: 198; 2008: 36; Mynářová 2009: 112; von Dassow 2010: 913; Podany 2010: 195; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 100, 104–5, 116, 118, 122–24, 139, 146, 151–52, 163, 173–74, 181, 183–84,

17. For a different interpretation of *šūšuru* here, see Rainey 1996a: 2.313.

18. Following Moran (1992: 365) in taking the *mād* here and in the following line as attributive so that *akalu*, etc. are direct objects of *šūšuru*, as it makes better sense and parallels the attributive use of *mādu* in the closing formula of this text and others; see the discussion in Moran 1992: 172 n. 7, referencing p. xxviii n. 78.

19. Cf. the note to EA 99: 26 against *mādu* in a predicative construction.

186; van der Westhuizen 2012: 379; Mandell 2015: 501; Pfoh 2016: 87; Morris 2018: 157; Langer 2021: 180; Liverani 2021b: 193, 196

## Obverse

001 [a-na<sup>m</sup>x-x]-[aš-ma-a-nu<sup>ʾ</sup>

002 [LU<sub>2</sub>]<sup>ʾuru</sup>am-mi-ia

003 <sup>ʾ</sup>qi<sub>2</sub>-bi<sub>2</sub>-ma<sup>ʾ</sup>um<sup>ʾ</sup>-ma

004 LUGAL-ma<sup>ʾ</sup>a<sup>ʾ</sup>-nu<sup>ʾ</sup>um-ma<sup>ʾ</sup>

005 *tup-pa<sup>ʾ</sup>a-na-a<sup>ʾ</sup>uš-te-bi<sup>ʾ</sup>-la-ku*

006 qa<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>-e [a]<sup>ʾ</sup>na ka<sup>ʾ</sup>-a-ša

007 u<sub>3</sub>uš<sup>ʾ</sup>šur<sup>ʾ</sup>lu-u<sub>2</sub>

008 na-ša-ra-ta aš-ru

009 LUGAL ša it-ti-ka

010 šu-ši-ir DUMU.MUNUS-ka

011 <sup>ʾ</sup>a-na LUGAL EN-ka

012 u<sub>3</sub>šu-ši-<ir> IGI.DU<sub>8</sub>.ḪI.A

## Bottom

013 <sup>ʾ</sup>20<sup>ʾ</sup>IR<sub>3</sub>.MEŠ SIG<sub>5</sub>-ti<sub>3</sub>

014 <sup>ʾ</sup>KU<sub>3</sub>.BABBAR<sup>gis</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ

## Reverse

015 ANŠE.KUR.RA.ḪI.A SIG<sub>5</sub>-ti<sub>3</sub>

016 u<sub>3</sub>li-iq-ba<sub>2</sub>-ku

017 LUGAL EN-ka ša-ia-tu<sub>3</sub><sup>ʾ</sup>ba-an-tu<sub>3</sub><sup>ʾ</sup>

018 ša ta<sub>2</sub>-ad-din-šu

019 IGI.DU<sub>8</sub> a-na LUGAL

020 EGIR DUMU.MUNUS-ka

021 u<sub>3</sub>lu-u<sub>2</sub>ti-i-de<sub>9</sub>

022 i-nu-ma ša-lim LUGAL

023 ki-ma<sup>d</sup>UTU

024 i-na ša-me-e

025 <sup>ʾ</sup>ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ<sup>gis</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ-šu

026 ma-a-du ma-gal šul-mu<sup>20</sup>

(o 001) [Sp]eak [to x-x-a]šmanu, [the ruler] of Ammiya, thus (says) the king:

(o 005) Herewith he is sending t[hi]s tablet to you as a command [f]or you: “Be on guard! You should guard the king’s place that is by you.” Prepare your daughter for the king, your lord, and prep<are> the audience-gifts—twenty good-quality slaves, silver, chariots, (and) good-quality horses—so that the king, your lord, may say to you, “That was good,” about that which you gave to him as an audience-gift for the king after your daughter.

(r 021) You should know that the king is healthy like the sun in the heavens. The [tr]oops (and) his numerous chariots are very well.

20. On *mādu* as attributive and not predicative, see Moran 1992: 172 n. 7.

## EA 162

**Museum No.:** VAT 347

**Copy:** Winckler and Abel 1889–1890: no. 92; Schröder 1915c: no. 86

**Photo:** n/a

**Edition:** Winckler 1896: 114–21; Knudtzon 1915: 1.654–59, 2.1266–69; Mercer 1939: 520–25; Muntingh 1995: 162–93; Mynářová 2007: 220; Rainey 2015: 802–7, 1511–12

**Translation:** Conder 1893: 39–43; Moran 1992: 248–50; Knapp in Giles 1997: 414–16; Liverani 1998c: 279–81 (251); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 183–85; Westbrook 2005: 225–26; Rainey 2006a: 224–26; Ismail 2010: 435–38; Hess 2017f: 267–68

**Secondary literature:** Albright 1937: 200; Dhorme 1924: 11; Bonkamp 1939: 271, 276; Gadd 1940: 122; Albright 1946: 11, 14–15, 17, 21–23; Edel 1948: 13, 20–21; Gelb 1961: 42; Helck 1962: 466–67; Kitchen 1962: 15, 29, 32; Campbell 1964: 79, 112, 115; Klengel 1964: 65–66, 74; Buccellati 1967: 69; Klengel 1969: 145, 164, 166, 168, 193–94, 197, 202–4, 238, 259, 264–65, 276–80, 282–83, 287, 293, 300, 428; Kühne 1973: 10, 53; McCarter 1973: 15–18; Kufeldt 1974: 95; Goetze 1975: 12; Naʾaman 1975: 183; Edel 1976: 109, 128; Liverani 1976b: 338; Halpern 1979: 133; Pintore 1983: 327–29, 331–32; Edzard 1985: 250; Swiggers 1985: 58; Rainey 1989–1990: 65; Cochavi-Rainey 1990b: 7, 9–13, 15–21; Hess 1990; Singer 1990: 140–42; Mangano 1990: 148; Naʾaman 1990b: 405; Izreʾel 1991: 1.118; Lemche 1991: 34; Stieglitz 1991: 45–46; Zorn 1991: 129–38; Freu 1992: 76; Galán 1992: 288; Gestoso Singer 1992a: 26; 1992b: 65; Klengel 1992: 110, 161–62, 164–66, 175–76; Galán 1993: 174; Hess 1993a: 49, 71–72, 98, 110, 141; Zaccagnini 1993: 63; Liverani 1994: 215; Naʾaman 1994: 402; Izreʾel 1995b: 2414; Moran 1995: 568–69; Rainey 1995–1996: 118; Zewi 1995: 683; Rainey 1996a: 2.199, 293, 3.103–4; 1996c: 7; Gianto 1997; Giles 1997: 164, 182, 231–32; Cohen 2000: 89–90; David 2000: 60, 62; Freu 2000: 33–34; Westbrook 2000: 38; Liverani 2001: 164; Rainey 2002a: 67; Bodi 2003: 31–32; Bryce 2003: 154–56; Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2004: 25–26; Liverani 2004a: 128, 139, 141, 144; Mabie 2004: 119; Ouda 2004: 40, 46, 56; Bryce 2005: 174–75; Morris 2005: 73; Rainey 2006b: 81, 86; van der Westhuizen 2006: 514; Abrahams and Coulon 2008: 22; Gestoso Singer 2008: 76; Mynářová 2009: 112; von Dassow 2010: 913; Morris 2010: 420, 424, 427, 430; Podany 2010: 279; Pryke 2010: 35–36, 240, 274–76; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 97–98, 101–5, 107–19, 120–27, 130–35, 137–38, 140–43, 145–47, 150, 153, 155–56, 158–59, 160, 165, 167–73, 175–79, 180–7, 202–3, 206, 258–59; Halpern 2011: 150, 154; Tarawneh 2011: 273; van der Westhuizen 2012: 374–415; Cordani 2013: 50; Gromova 2013: 106; Mynářová 2013a: 85; Bryce 2014: 59; Marzahn 2015: 154; Morris 2015: 174; Vita 2015a: 40–41; Benz 2016: 107, 172, 176; Breier 2016: 21–22; Lemche 2016: 140–41; Yoder 2017–2019: 46; Breier 2018: 460, 463; Morris 2018: 139, 174, 176; Abo-Eleaz 2019: 10, 18; Zangani 2019: 418; Kilani 2020: 171, 173; Abo-Eleaz 2021a: 4; 2021b: 83; Breier 2021a: 43–44; 2021b: 210, 218, 220, 225; Langer 2021: 181; Mynářová 2021a: 120; Liverani 2021b: 192, 196; 2021c: 103, 106, 110, 114; 2021d: 215; Abo-Eleaz 2022: 99, 103–4; De Magistris 2023: 161; Lauinger 2024a: 195; Pfoh 2024: 161

Obverse

001 [a-na<sup>m</sup>a-zi-ri] ʿLU<sub>2</sub> URU<sup>u</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-mu-ur-ra qi<sub>2</sub>-bi<sub>2</sub>-  
ʿma<sup>21</sup>

002 [um-ma-a]-ʿmiʿ LUGAL EN-ka um-ma-a  
LU<sub>2</sub> URU<sup>u</sup>gub<sub>ub</sub>-la

003 [iq-ba]-ʿak<sup>1</sup>-ku ša a-ḥu-šu i-na ba-a-bi it-ta-  
su<sub>2</sub>-uk-šu

(o 001) Speak [to ʿAdiri], the ruler of (the city of) Amurru, [a message] from the king, your lord, saying: The ruler of Byblos [spoke] to you, the one whose brother threw him out from the gate, [saying]: “Take me away and bring me into my city! [There is much sil]ver

21. The URU determinative before the toponym is confirmed by collation of the WSR photographs. See Benz (2016: 176–79) for discussion of the significance of this toponym instead of the usual KUR, with reference to previous literature.

- 004 [um-ma-a] 'le'-qa<sub>2</sub>-an-ni u<sub>3</sub> šu-ri-ba-an-ni  
i-na URU.KI-ia (there), so let me give it to you. Look, there is much of everything, [but i]t is not (here) with me." In this manner he spoke to you.
- 005 [ma-ad KU<sub>3</sub>].BABBAR' u<sub>3</sub> lu-'ud'-di<sub>3</sub>-na-  
ak-ku an-nu-u<sub>2</sub> mi-im-ma ma-ad
- 006 [u<sub>3</sub> i]'-ia'-nu it-ti-ia šu-u<sub>2</sub> ki-na-an-na iq-ba-  
ak-ku
- 
- 007 [u<sub>2</sub>]-'ul' at-ta<sub>2</sub> ta<sub>2</sub>-ša-pa-ar a-na LUGAL  
EN-ka (o 007) Were you, yourself, [n]ot sending messages to the king, your lord, [sa]ying: "I am your servant like each of the *loyal* city rulers [who] is inside his city?" But you are committing a crime [on acc]ount of capturing the city ruler whose brother threw him out from the gate, *outside* of his city.
- 008 [um]'-ma'-a IR<sub>3</sub>-ka a-na-ku ki-i gab<sub>2</sub>-bi  
<sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-meš'</sup> ha-za-nu'-te. MEŠ' ba<sub>2</sub>-nu-ti<sup>22</sup>
- 009 [ša] i-na lib<sub>3</sub>-bi URU.KI-šu' u<sub>3</sub>' te-ep-pu-uš  
he-e-ša
- 010 [a]-na la-qe<sub>2</sub>-e <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup> ha-za-an-na ša ŠEŠ-šu i-na  
'ba<sub>2</sub>-a'-bi<sup>23</sup>
- 011 iš-tu URU.KI-šu it-ta-su<sub>2</sub>-uk-šu
- 
- 012 u<sub>3</sub> i-na <sup>uru</sup> ši<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>2</sub>-na a-ši-ib u<sub>3</sub>' ta<sub>2</sub>'-at-ta<sub>2</sub>-  
di<sub>3</sub>-in-šu (o 012) He was staying in Sidon, but you handed him over to the city rulers according to your (own) plan. Did you not know the dishonesty of the men?
- 013 a-na <sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-meš'</sup> ha-za-nu-u<sub>2</sub>-ti ki-i te<sub>4</sub>-e-mi-ka<sup>24</sup>
- 014 u<sub>2</sub>-ul ti-i-de<sub>9</sub> sa<sub>3</sub>-ar-ru-ut-ta<sub>2</sub> ša LU<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ
- 
- 015 'šum'-ma IR<sub>3</sub> ša LUGAL at-ta<sub>2</sub> ki-i ki-i-it-ti<sup>25</sup>
- 016 am-mi<sub>3</sub>-ni la-a ta<sub>2</sub>-a-ku-ul kar-ši<sub>2</sub>-i-šu a-na  
pa-ni' LUGAL' EN-ka (o 015) If you were the king's servant loyally, Why did you not denounce him before the king, your lord, saying: "This city ruler has sent a message to me, saying: 'Take me away to you and bring me into my city!'"
- 017 um-ma-a <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup> ha-za-an-nu an-nu-u<sub>2</sub> il-tap-ra-  
an-ni um-ma-a
- 018 le-qa<sub>2</sub>-an-'ni' a-na ka-a-ša u<sub>3</sub> šu-ri-ba-an-ni  
i-na URU.KI-ia
- 
- 019 u<sub>3</sub> šum-ma te-'te-pu-uš ki'-i ki-it-ti u<sub>3</sub> u<sub>2</sub>-ul  
ki-i-na (o 019) And if you did act loyally, then all of the words that you sent were not true. Regarding them, indeed, the king made mention, saying: "Everything that you said is insincere."
- 020 gab<sub>2</sub>-bi a-wa-te. MEŠ ša taš<sub>3</sub>-pur UGU-ši-na  
šar-ru-um-ma LUGAL
- 021 iḥ-su<sub>2</sub>-us um-ma-a la-a šal-mu gab<sub>2</sub>-bu ša  
taq<sub>2</sub>-bu-u<sub>2</sub>
- 

22. Or possibly *pa-nu-ti*, "previous city rulers."

23. Possibly there is a play on two of the meanings of *leqû*, "to save" and "to capture." Rib-Adda, the ruler of Byblos asked 'Adiri to "save" (*leqû*) him, but the pharaoh accuses 'Adiri of "capturing" (*leqû*) him and then handing him over to his enemies. An approximate rendering in English might be something like: "The ruler of Byblos [spoke] to you..., [say- ing]: Take me in and bring me into my city.... But you are committing a crime [on acc]ount of taking away the city ruler."

24. Izre'el (1991: 1.118) suggests that the *-ûtu* suffix on <sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-meš'</sup> *ha-za-nu-û-ti* is the abstract suffix and not the plural suffix because it is written with a TI sign as opposed to a TE sign as in line 8. Accordingly, he translates, "you have ap- pointed him mayor (lit. you have given him to mayoralty) at your initiative."

25. Context requires that *kī kitti* has the same sense as the attestation of the same phrase in the first line of the next section (line 19); cf. Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 124. Mynářová (2013a: 85) suggests this sense of *kittu* may signify actual legal provisions.

- 022  $u_3$   $a$ - $nu$ - $ma$  LUGAL  $iš$ - $me_2$   $um$ - $ma$ - $a$   $šal$ - $ma$ - $a$ - $ta_2$   $it$ - $ti$   $LU_2$   $q_2$ - $id$ - $ša$ <sup>26</sup>
- 023 NINDA.ĤLA KAŠ.MEŠ'  $i$ '- $ti$   $a$ - $ha$ - $mi$ - $iš$   $ta_2$ - $ak$ - $ka_3$ - $a$ - $la$   $u_3$   $ki$ '- $i$ - $na$
- 024  $am$ - $mi_3$ - $ni$   $te$ '- $ep$ - $pu$ '- $uš$   $ki$ - $na$ - $an$ - $na$   $am$ - $mi$ - $ni$   $šal$ - $ma$ - $a$ - $ta_2$
- 025  $it$ - $ti$   $LU_2$   $ša$  LUGAL  $iš$ - $še_2$ - $el_2$   $it$ - $ti$ - $šu$   $u_3$   $šum$ - $ma$
- 026  $te$ - $te$ - $pu$ - $uš$   $ki$ - $i$   $ki$ - $it$ - $ti$   $u_3$   $ta_2$ - $am$ - $mar$   $te_4$ - $em$ - $ka$   $u_3$   $te_4$ - $em$ - $šu$
- 027  $i$ - $ia$ - $nu$   $la$ - $a$   $tak_2$ - $la$ - $ta_2$   $a$ - $na$   $a$ - $ma$ - $te$ .MEŠ  $ša$   $te$ - $ep$ - $pu$ '- $uš$   $ul$ '- $tu$   $pa$ - $na$ - $nu$ <sup>27</sup>
- 028  $mi$ - $nu$ - $u_2$   $in$ - $ne_2$ '- $pu$ '- $ša$ - $ak$ - $ku$   $i$ - $na$   $lib_3$ - $bi$ - $šu$ '- $nu$
- 029  $u_3$ '  $u_2$ - $ul$ '  $it$ - $ti$  LUGAL' EN- $ka$   $at$ - $ta_2$

(o 022) Now, the king heard as follows: You are at peace with the ruler of Qidšu. You were eating food (and) beer with each other! And (the words) are true! Why were you acting in this manner? Why are you at peace with a ruler with whom the king has quarreled? If you had acted loyally, you would have seen your plan and his (i.e., the king's) plan were at odds (lit., you would have seen there is no "your plan and his plan"). You are not reliable concerning the matters that you were doing previously. What was done to you in their midst so that you are not with the king, your lord?

- 030  $a$ - $mur$ '  $an$ - $nu$ - $ut$ - $ti$   $ša$  [ $u_2$ ]- $la$ - $am$ - $ma$ - $du$ '- $ka$ '  $a$ - $na$   $ša$ - $šu$ - $nu$ <sup>28</sup>
- 031  $a$ - $na$ '  $lib_3$ - $bi$   $i$ - $ša$ - $ti$   $a$ - $na$   $na$ - $sa_3$ '- $ki$ '  $u_2$ - $ba$ - $u_2$ - $ka$   $u_3$   $qa_2$ - $lu$ <sup>29</sup>
- 032  $u_3$   $at$ - $ta_2$   $mi$ - $im$ - $ma$   $ta_2$ - $ra$ - $am$   $dan$ - $niš_2$

(o 030) Look, these are the ones about whom [I] am informing you: They will seek for you in order to throw (you) into the fire, and they will roast (you), but you (still) desire possessions very much.

- 033  $u_3$   $šum$ - $ma$   $te$ - $ep$ - $pu$ - $uš$   $IR_3$ - $ta_2$   $a$ - $na$  LUGAL EN- $ka$
- 034  $u_3$   $mi$ - $na$ - $a$   $ša$   $u_2$ - $ul$   $ip$ - $pu$ - $ša$ - $ak$ - $ku$  LUGAL  $a$ - $na$   $ka_3$ - $a$ - $ša$
- 035  $šum$ - $ma$ '  $aš$ - $šum$ '  $mi$ '- $im$ - $ma$   $ta_2$ - $ra$ - $am$   $e$ - $pe_2$ - $ši$   $an$ - $mu$ - $ut$ - $ti$ <sup>30</sup>
- 036  $u_3$   $šum$ - $ma$   $ta_2$ - $ša$ - $ak$ - $ka_3$ - $an$   $an$ - $mu$ - $ut$ - $ti$   $a$ '- $wa$ - $te$ '.MEŠ
- 037  $sa_3$ - $ar$ - $ru$ - $ut$ - $ti$   $i$ - $na$   $lib_3$ - $bi$ - $ka$   $u_3$   $i$ - $na$   $ha$ '- $aš$ - $ši_2$ '- $in$ - $ni$
- 038  $ša$ ' LUGAL  $ta_2$ - $ma$ - $at$   $qa$ - $du$   $gab_2$ '- $bi$   $ki$ '- $im$ - $ti$ - $ka$

(o 033) If you do your service for the king, your lord, What is that which the king will not do for you, yourself? If because of possessions, you desire to do these things, and if you plan these things, dishonest matters, then you, together with all your family, will die by the king's axe.

26. Collation of the WSR photograph confirms that the fifth sign is an acceptable, if cramped, LUGAL, contra Rainey's (2015: 1240) emendation, LUGAL!( $LU_2$ ).

27. Or read  $dag$ - $la$ - $ta_2$  for a stative of  $dagālu$ , "to look at, pay attention to."

28. Or take  $lamādu$  as 3mp, "These are the ones who are teaching you for themselves," with Moran (1992: 249) and Liverani (1998c: 280).

29. Or possibly take  $qa_2$ - $lu$  as a form of  $qālu$ , "to pay attention, be(come) silent," with Liverani (1998c: 280–81), though the context suggests a form of  $qālū$ , "to roast, burn."

30. Or  $e$ - $pe_2$ - $ši$   $li_3$ - $mu$ - $ut$ - $ti$ , "to do evil deeds," so Moran (1992: 250 with n. 9) but cf. Rainey's (2015: 1511–12) note to the line. The CAD has accepted both readings; cf. CAD S s.v.  $sarrūtu$  mng. a ( $anmātu$ ) and CAD A/2 s.v.  $amatu$  A mng. 2c; CAD E s.v.  $epēšu$  mng. 2c; and CAD R s.v.  $rāmu$  A mng. 1e ( $lemuttu$ ).

- 039  $u_3$  *e-pu-uš* IR<sub>3</sub>-*ta<sub>2</sub>* *a-na* LUGAL EN-*ka* '  $u_3$  '  
*bal-ṭa-ta<sub>2</sub>*<sup>31</sup>  
040  $u_3$  *ti<sub>7</sub>-i-de<sub>9</sub>* *at-ta<sub>2</sub>* *ki-i* LUGAL *la-a* *ḥa-ši-iḥ*<sup>32</sup>  
041 *a-na* KUR *ki-na-aḥ-ḥi* *gab<sub>2</sub>-ba<sub>2</sub>-ša* *ki-i* *i-ra-*  
*u<sub>2</sub>-ub*

(o 039) Do your service for the king, your lord, so that you will live! You, yourself, know that *the king does not desire that he become angry with the entire land of Canaan.*

- 042  $u_3$  *ki-i taš<sub>3</sub>-pur* *um-ma-a* *lu-ma-šer<sub>9</sub>-an-ni*  
LUGAL EN-*ia*  
043 MU.KAM\* *ša-at-ta<sub>2</sub>* *an-ni-ta<sub>2</sub>*  $u_3$  *lu-ul-'* *li'* -[*ka<sub>3</sub>*]  
044 *i-na* *ša-at-ti* *ša-ni-ti* *a-na* *ma-ḥar* LUGAL  
'EN'-[*ia*]  
045 *ia-nu-um-ma* DUMU-*ia* *ma-ri-ia* *a*-[*na* LUGAL  
*li-il-li*]-'*ka<sub>3</sub>*'<sup>33</sup>

Reverse

- 046 '  $u_3$  ' *a-nu-ma* 'LUGAL EN'-*ka* *i-te-ez-ba<sub>2</sub>-*  
'*ak-ku*' [*i-na*]  
047 MU.KAM\* -*ti* *ša-at-ti* *an-ni-ti* *ki-i* *ša* *taq<sub>2</sub>-bu-u<sub>2</sub>*  
048 ' *aḥ-ka<sub>3</sub>* *at-ta<sub>2</sub>* *šum-ma* DUMU-*ka* *šu-pur*  
049  $u_3$  *ta<sub>2</sub>-mar* LUGAL *ša* *gab<sub>2</sub>-bi*  
'KUR.KUR.ḪI.A *i-bal'-lu-ṭu<sub>3</sub>*  
050 *a-na* *a-ma-ri-šu*  $u_3$  *la-a* *ta<sub>2</sub>-qab<sub>2</sub>-'* *bi* *um'-*  
*ma-a*  
051 *lu-ma-šer<sub>9</sub>*, MU.KAM\* *ša-at-ta<sub>2</sub>* *an-ni-ta<sub>2</sub>* *ap-pu-*  
*na-na*  
052 *a-na* *a-la-ki* *a-na* *ma-ḥar* LUGAL EN-*ka*  
*i-ia-nu-um-ma*  
053 DUMU-*ka* *uš-še-er* *a-na* LUGAL EN-*ka* *ki-i-*  
*mu-'* *u'-ka*  
054 *i-ia-nu* *li-il-li-ka<sub>3</sub>*

(o 042) Because you sent a message, saying: "The king, my lord, should release me this year (Akk. gloss: year), so that I may co[me] in the next year to the king, [my] lord; if not, [let] my son (Akk. gloss: my son) [co]me t[o the king]," now, the king, your lord, has left you off (the list of those coming) this year (Akk. gloss: year) just as you said. Come yourself or send your son so that you will see the king with respect to whom all the lands live by seeing him! But do not say, "He should release (me) this year (Akk gloss: year)." Moreover, if it is not possible to go to the king, your lord, dispatch your son to the king, your lord, instead of you! If it is not possible, he should come.

- 055  $u_3$  *a-nu-ma* LUGAL EN-*ka* *iš-me<sub>2</sub>* ' *ki-i taš<sub>3</sub>-'*  
*pur* *a-na* LUGAL  
056 *um-ma-a* *lu-ma-šer<sub>9</sub>-an-ni* LUGAL EN-'*ia*'  
*mḥa-an-ni*  
057 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup>DUMU KIN *ša* LUGAL *ša-ni-ia-nu*  
058  $u_3$  *lu-še-bi-il* <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup>*meš* *a'-ia'-be<sub>2</sub>-e'* *ša'* LUGAL  
*a-na* ŠU-*ti-šu*  
059 *a-nu-ma* *it-ta-al-ka<sub>3</sub>-ak-ku* *ki-i* *ša* *taq<sub>2</sub>-bu-u<sub>2</sub>*  
060  $u_3$  *šu-bi-la-aš-šu-nu-ti*  $u_3$  1<sup>en</sup> *la-a* *te-ez-zi-ib*  
061 *i-na* *lib<sub>3</sub>-bi-šu-nu* *a-nu-ma* LUGAL 'EN'-*ka*  
*ul-te-bi-la-ak-ku*

(r 055) Now, the king, your lord, heard that you sent a message to the king, saying: "The king, my lord, should dispatch Hanya, the king's messenger, to me for a second time, so that I may send enemies of the king into his control." Now, he is coming to you just as you said, so send them and do not leave out one from among them! Now, the king, your lord, is sending you the names of the king's ene<m>ies on a tablet via Hanya, the king's messenger. Send the[m] to the king, your

31. For a similar modal sequence involving a *qatal* form of *balṭu*, see EA 123: 33–35, discussed by Baranowski (2016b: 162).

32. Halpern (2011: 154–55) suggests "the king does not lack/is not lacked for (any of) the whole land of Canaan when he is angry/hungry (or: there is anger, hunger)." See his discussion of another attestation of *ḥašḥu* + *ana* and a possible "pun on famine (W. Sem *r'b*)."

- 062 šu-mu ša<sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-meš</sup> a-ia-<be<sub>2</sub>>-e ša LUGAL i-na  
lib<sub>3</sub>-bi ṭup-pi<sub>2</sub>  
063 a-na ŠU-ti<sup>m</sup> ḥa-an-<sup>r</sup> ni<sup>lu<sub>2</sub>ʾ</sup> DUMU<sup>r</sup> KIN<sup>r</sup> ša  
LUGAL  
064 u<sub>3</sub> šu-bi-la-aš-<sup>r</sup> šu-nu<sup>l</sup> -[ti] a-na LUGAL EN-  
ka  
065 u<sub>3</sub> 1<sup>en</sup> la-a te-ez-zi-ib i-na<sup>r</sup> lib<sub>3</sub>-bi-šu-nu  
066 u<sub>3</sub> ŠER<sub>3</sub>.ŠER<sub>3</sub> URUDU lu-u<sub>2</sub> ša-ak-nu i-na  
NUNUZ GIR<sub>3</sub>.MEŠ-šu-nu<sup>33</sup>  
067 a-mur LU<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ ša tu-še-eb-be<sub>2</sub>-el<sub>2</sub> a-na  
LUGAL EN-li<sub>2</sub>-ka  
068 <sup>m</sup>ša-ar-ru qa-du gab<sub>2</sub>-bi DUMU.MEŠ-šu  
069 <sup>m</sup>tu-u-ia  
070 <sup>m</sup>le-e-ia qa-du gab<sub>2</sub>-bi DUMU.MEŠ-šu  
071 <sup>m</sup>pi-iš-ia-ri qa-du gab<sub>2</sub>-bi DUMU.MEŠ-šu  
072 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup> ḥa-at-nu ša<sup>m</sup> ma-an-ia qa-du  
DUMU.MEŠ-<sup>r</sup> šu<sup>r</sup>  
073 qa-du DAM.MEŠ-ti-šu<sup>aš-ša-te-e-šu</sup>  
074 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup> pa-ma-ḥa-a ša ḥa-an-ni-pa i-de<sub>4</sub>-e-i-u<sub>2</sub><sup>34</sup>  
075 ša šu u-ba<sub>2</sub>-a-ra il-ta<sub>2</sub>-na-aš  
076 <sup>m</sup>da-a-šar-ti-i<sup>m</sup> ba<sub>2</sub>-a-lu-u<sub>2</sub>-ma  
077 <sup>m</sup>ni-im-ma-ḥe-e<sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup> ḥa-ba<sub>2</sub>-tu<sub>3</sub> i-na KUR  
a-mur-ri šu-u<sub>2</sub>

- 078 u<sub>3</sub> lu-u<sub>2</sub> ti-i-de<sub>3</sub> i-nu-ma ša-lim LUGAL ki-  
ma<sup>d</sup> UTU-aš  
079 i-na AN<sup>sa-me-e</sup> ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ-šu<sup>giš</sup> GIGIR.MEŠ-  
šu ma-a-du  
080 i-na KUR UGU-ti<sub>3</sub> a-di KUR GAM-ti ši-it  
<sup>d</sup>UTU-aš  
081 [a]-<sup>r</sup> di<sup>r</sup> e-re-bi<sup>d</sup> UTU-ši ma-gal šul-mu

(rest of reverse blank)

lord, and do not leave out one from among them! Bronze chains should be placed on the ankle(s) of their feet. Look, the men whom you will send to the king, your lord: Šarru, together with all his sons; Tuya; Leya, together with all his sons; Pišyari, together with all his sons; the son-in-law of Many, together with his sons (and) together with his wives (Akk. gloss: his wives); {Egypt. the warrior} who knows {Can. impiety}; *the one who sneered at a foreign dignitary*; Dašarti (and) Ba'luma; Nib-maḥe—he is a bandit in the land of Amurru.

(r 078) You should know that the king is healthy like the sun in the heavens (Akk. gloss: the heavens). His troops (and) his numerous chariots from the Upper Land to the Lower Land, sunrise [t]o sunset, are very well.

33. The reading *erimmatu* goes back to Knudtzon (1915: 1.658 with n. c), though he translated “als Kette(n),” and he was followed by both Moran (1992: 249) and Rainey (2015: 806–7, 1512). Collation of the photograph supports the contention of Knudtzon et al. that the sign in question should not be read as UZU, as by Winckler and Abel (1889–1890: no. 95b), who were followed by CAD Š/2 s.v. *šēpu* mng. 1a6’.

34. For *pa-maḥru* as “a West Semitic word for warrior which had been borrowed into Egyptian,” and so appears here with the Egyptian definite article *pꜣ*, see Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 258–59, citing previous literature.

## EA 163

**Museum No.:** VAT 1885

**Copy:** Schröder 1915c: no. 87

**Photo:** CDLI

**Edition:** Knudtzon 1915: 1.658–61, 2.1269; Mercer 1939: 524–27; Rainey 2015: 808–9, 1513

**Translation:** Liverani 1998c: 282 (252)

**Secondary literature:** Klengel 1969: 195; Mangano 1990: 148; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 26–27; Ismail 2010: 439; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 100, 116, 120, 136, 146

Obverse

(beginning obverse missing)

001' [...] *pa-na* <sup>1</sup>SIG<sub>5</sub>.GA<sup>35</sup>

002' [...] *ša* <sup>1</sup>*gab*<sub>2</sub>'-*bi*

003' [KUR.KUR.ĤI.A *i-bal-lu-tu*<sub>3</sub> *a*]-<sup>1</sup>*na*' *a-ma-ri-šu*

004' [...] *aš*]-<sup>1</sup>*šum*' *be-lu-ti*

005' [...]

(rest of obverse missing)

Reverse

(beginning reverse missing)

001' [*u*<sub>3</sub> *lu-u*<sub>2</sub> *ti-i-de*<sub>4</sub> *i-nu-ma ša-lim* LUGAL]

002' [*ki-ma* <sup>d</sup>UTU-*aš i-na* AN] <sup>1</sup>*sa-me*' [ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ-*šu*]

003' [<sup>gis</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu ma-a*]-<sup>1</sup>*du*' *i-[na]* KUR <sup>1</sup>UGU-*ti*<sub>3</sub>'

004' [*a-di* KUR GAM-*ti*<sub>3</sub> *ši*]-<sup>1</sup>*it*' <sup>d</sup>UTU-*aš*

005' [*a-di e-re-bi* <sup>d</sup>UTU]-*ši ma-gal šul-mu*

(o 001') [...] *a good front* [... by mean]s of whose sight [al]l [of the lands live ... because] of the rule [...]

(r 001') [You should know that the king is healthy like the sun in the heavens] (Akk. gloss: the heavens). [His army (and) his chariots are extens]ive. Fr[om] the Upper Land [to the Lower Land], sun[ri]se [to s]un[set], they are very well.

## EA 190

**Museum No.:** AM 1893.1-41: 411

**Copy:** Sayce 1894: no.4

**Photo:** CDLI

**Edition:** Knudtzon 1915: 1.712–15, 2.1287; Mercer 1939: 572–73; Rainey 2015: 886–87, 1530

**Translation:** Moran 1992: 270; Knapp in Giles 1997: 419–20; Liverani 1998c: 290 (263); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 297; Ismail 2010: 474

**Secondary literature:** Sayce 1894: 35; Campbell 1964: 63, 126; Klengel 1969: 146; Na'aman 1975: 73–74\*; Hachmann 1982: 154; Mangano 1990: 148; Hess 1993a: 129; Na'aman 1997a; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 27; Vidal 2010a: 100–101; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 111; De Magistris 2023: 161

35. Perhaps restore a form of *dagālu* at the beginning of the line for the idiom, “to treat respectfully.” Cf. EA 120: 34.

## Obverse

(beginning obverse missing)

- 001' [... *uṣ-ṣur*] KUR LUGAL 'EN'-[*ka*]  
 002' [*u*<sub>3</sub> *uṣ-ṣur*<sup>m</sup>]'*pu*<sup>r</sup>-*ḥu-ri*<sup>'lu<sub>2</sub></sup>MAŠKIM<sub>2</sub>'-[*ka*']  
 003' [*lu na*]<sup>-</sup>*aṣ*<sup>r</sup>-*ra-ta* *u*<sub>3</sub> *uṣ-ṣur*<sup>r</sup>  
 004' [<sup>uru</sup>*qi*<sub>3</sub>-*id*]-*ši*<sup>ki</sup> *u*<sub>3</sub> *uṣ-ṣur*<sup>r</sup>  
 005' [<sup>uru</sup>*ku-mi*<sub>3</sub>]-*di*<sup>ki</sup> URU *ma-ša-ar*-[*ti*  
 LUGAL]

(o 001') [... guard] the land of the king, [your] lord, [and guard] Puhuru, [your] com[missioner]. You [should be on g]uard. Gua[rd Qade]sh, and guard [Kumi]du, the [king's] garris[on] city.

- 006' [*ša-ni-tam*] *ši-mu a-na a-wa-ti* 'LUGAL'  
 007' [*i-nu*]-*ma al-la-ka-ku-um*<sup>r</sup>  
 008' [*qa-du*] <sup>giš</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ-*ia* *u*<sub>3</sub> [*qa-du*]  
 009' [ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ] 'LUGAL'-*mi*<sub>3</sub> *u*<sub>3</sub> *qi*<sub>2</sub>-*ba*<sub>2</sub>  
 'UGU'<sup>36</sup>  
 010' [ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ka* *u*<sub>3</sub>] 'ERIN<sub>2</sub>'<sup>!</sup>.MEŠ'<sup>r</sup> *ka-ši*<sup>-</sup> *i*<sup>r</sup>  
 [*u*<sub>3</sub>]  
 011' [<sup>lu<sub>2</sub>-meš</sup>*su*]-*te*.MEŠ-*ši qa-du* 'LU<sub>2</sub>'<sup>r</sup>. [MEŠ]  
 012' [SA.GAZ].MEŠ-*ši qa-du* [...]  
 (rest of obverse missing)

(o 006') [Something else]: Obey the king's commands. [Whe]n I come to you [along with] my chariots and [*the ro*]yal [troops], give an order regarding [*your brothers*] and the Cushite troops [and] its [*Su*]teans together with its [*Habir*]u (and) together with [...]

## Reverse

(missing)

## EA 369

Museum No.: Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, E. 6753

Copy: Dossin 1934b: 127; Izre'el 1995a: 111–12

Photo: Dossin 1934a; Izre'el 1995a: 113–14

Edition: Dossin 1934b: 126, 128; Mercer 1939: 186–89; Rainey 1978b: 40–43; Izre'el 1995a: 109–18; Mynářová 2007: 258; Mandell 2015: 420–33; Rainey 2015: 1250–51, 1631–32

Translation: Dossin 1934a: 87–88; Alt 1936: 20; Albright 1955a: 487; Borger in Galling 1968: 24–25; Pintore 1973: 302; Seux 1977: 53; Engel 1983:67; Moran 1992: 366; Izre'el 1995b: 2415; Zaccagnini 1995: 52–54; Liverani 1998c: 99–100 (42); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 194–95; Rainey 2006b: 83; Ismail 2010: 648

Secondary literature: Maisler 1935: 38–40; Alt 1936; Fossey 1937; Ranke 1937: 90–92; Helck 1962: 263; Campbell 1964: 80, 97–98, 109, 127; Ross 1967: 65; Hachmann 1970: 64, 70, 81; Kufeldt 1974: 110–11, 190; Moran 1975a: 151–53; Zaccagnini 1976a: 485, 559; Pintore 1978: 146; Liverani 1979a: 32; Pintore 1983: 328; Knauf 1988: 107; Cochavi-Rainey 1990b: 9, 13–15, 20; Mangano 1990: 149, 183; Rainey 1991–1993: 108; Hess 1993a: 71–72, 112; Rainey 1996a: 2.202; Gianto 1997: 431; Giles 1997: 49; Harpine 1998: 85; Izre'el 1998: 426; Braun 1999: 86; Vita 2000a: 70–72, 75–76; Na'aman 2002: 77, 80; Izre'el 2003a: 73; von Dassow 2004: 655; Ouda 2004: 53, 111; Morris 2005: 248; Siddall 2005: 89; Gestoso Singer 2008: 33, 36, 94, 108; Mynářová 2009: 112; Podany 2010: 195; Vita 2010b: 872; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 100, 103–5, 110, 113–16, 118, 121, 126–27, 133, 136–37, 139, 150, 152, 166, 170, 174, 178, 183, 187, 201, 208, 262; Izre'el 2012: 182–83, 205; Mynářová 2014: 24; Na'aman 2014: 24; Morris 2015: 174; Vita 2015a: 82; Lauinger 2019a: 570, 572; Millek 2019:

36. The reading of the damaged sign as [LU]GAL follows Rainey (2015: 886) with hesitation; recollection is desirable. Perhaps restore [ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ *pi-ta-ti*]i? Rainey's translation omits UGU.

232, 235; De Magistris 2020: 304; Mynářová 2020: 425; Koch 2021: 43–44; Liverani 2021c: 105; 2021d: 215; Langer 2021: 184

## Obverse

- 001 *a-na* <sup>m</sup>*mil*-*ki*-*li* 'L<sub>2</sub>' <sup>uru</sup>*gaz*-<sup>r</sup>*ri*  
 002 *um-ma* LUGAL-*ma* *a-nu-um-ma* *ṭup-pa*  
*an-na-am*  
 003 *ul-te-bi-la-ak-ku* *a-na* *qa-be<sub>2</sub>-e*  
 004 *a-na* *ka-a-ša* *a-nu-um-ma*  
 005 *um-te-še-ra-ak-ku* <sup>m</sup>*ḥa-an-ia*  
 006 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup><UGULA> TUR<sub>3</sub> ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ *pi<sub>2</sub>-ṭa<sub>2</sub>-ti*  
 007 *qa-du* *mi-im-ma* *a-na* *la-qe<sub>2</sub>-e*  
 008 <sup>munus</sup>DE<sub>2</sub> : (GAM) *ša-q<sub>12</sub>-tu<sub>4</sub>* SIG<sub>5</sub><sup>37</sup>  
 009 KU<sub>3</sub>.BABBAR.ḪI.A KU<sub>3</sub>.GI.ḪI.A  
 GADA.MEŠ : (GAM) <sup>ma-al-ba-ši</sup>  
 010 <sup>na<sub>4</sub></sup>GUG '*ka*'-*li* NA<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ <sup>giš</sup>GU.ZA <sup>giš</sup>ESI.MEŠ  
 011 *qa-tam-ma* *ka*'-*li* *mi-im-ma* SIG<sub>5</sub>  
 012 ŠU.NIGIN<sub>2</sub>-*ma* *ša* 1 ME *šu-ši* *ti-ba-an*  
 013 ŠU.NIGIN<sub>2</sub>-*ma* <sup>munus</sup>DE<sub>2</sub> 40  
 014 40 'KU<sub>3</sub>'.BABBAR ŠAM<sub>2</sub> <sup>munus</sup>DE<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ  
 015 *u<sub>3</sub>* *uš-ši-ra* <sup>munus</sup>DE<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ  
 016 SIG<sub>5</sub> *da-an-ni-iš*  
 017 *ša* *za-pu-ur-ti* *i-ia-nu*  
 018 *i-na* *lib<sub>3</sub>-bi-šu-nu*  
 019 *u<sub>3</sub>* *li-iq-ba-ak-ku*  
 020 'LUGAL EN'-*ka*

## Bottom

- 021 *ši-ia-tu<sub>4</sub>* '*ba*'-*an*'-*tu<sub>4</sub>*'  
 022 KA *ši-pir<sub>6</sub>-ti*<sup>38</sup>

## Reverse

- 023 *iš-pu-ru-ka*  
 024 *u<sub>3</sub>* *lu-u<sub>2</sub>* *ti*'-*i*'-*de* *i-nu-ma*  
 025 *ša-lim* LUGAL '*ki-ma*' <sup>d</sup>UTU  
 026 ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ-*šu* '<sup>giš</sup>GIGIR'.MEŠ-*šu*  
 027 ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ-*šu* *ma-gal* *šul-mu*  
 028 *a-nu-um-ma* *yi*'-*ta*'-*din*  
 029 <sup>d</sup>*a-ma-nu* KUR *i-li-ti*  
 030 KUR *šap-li-ti* *ši-it* <sup>d</sup>UTU  
 031 *e-re-eb* <sup>d</sup>UTU *i-na* *šu-pa-al*  
 032 2 GIR<sub>3</sub> LUGAL

(rest of reverse blank)

(o 001) To Milki-'ili, ruler of Gezer, thus (says) the king: Herewith he is sending this tablet to you in order to command you.

(o 004) Herewith the king is dispatching to you Hanya, stable<master> of the regular troops, along with everything (needed) in order to acquire beautiful female cupbearer(s) (Akk. gloss: female cup-bearer): Silver, gold, linen garments (Can. gloss: garment), carnelian, all (types of precious) stones, an ebony chair; likewise, all of these things are high-quality. A total of 160 *deben* (in weight). Total: 40 female cupbearer(s). 40 (shekels of) silver is the purchase price of the female cupbearers. So send very beautiful female cupbearers with not a bad one among them so that the king, your lord, may say to you, "That was good," in accordance with the instructions that he sent to you.

(r 024) You should know that the king is healthy like the sun. His troops, his chariots, (and) his horses are very well. Now, Amon has bestowed the Upper Land (and) the Lower Lands, sunrise (to) sunset, beneath the two feet of the king.

37. But cf. the interpretation of Na'aman (2002: 77–78): "in order to acquire ...-women, tall and beautiful."

38. For *pi* as a preposition here, see Moran 1975a: 151–53. The attestation is cited by CAD P s.v. *pû* mng. 7, "wording, content of a document or inscription," usage a, "referring to a clay tablet," with cross-reference to Moran's article.

## EA 370

**Museum No.:** BM E134870

**Copy:** Gordon 1947: 15

**Photo:** Gordon 1947: pl. I; Pendlebury 1951: pl. LXXX (cf. p. 130); WSR

**Edition:** Gordon 1947: 4–6; Rainey 1978b: 44–45; Ouda 2004: 109–10; Mynářová 2007: 258; Rainey 2015: 1252–53, 1632

**Translation:** Moran 1992: 367; Liverani 1998c: 69–70 (5); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 269; Ismail 2010: 649

**Secondary literature:** Gordon 1934: 137; Campbell 1964: 80, 114; Gevirtz 1973a: 103; Pintore 1983: 328; Cochavi-Rainey 1990b: 14; Mangano 1990: 148; Hess 1993a: 90, 167; von Dassow 2004: 655; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2004: 27–28; Rainey 2006b: 83; Mynářová 2009: 112; Cochavi-Rainey 2011: 100, 105, 110, 114, 118, 120, 136, 139, 211; Mandell 2015: 502; Koch 2021: 43; Liverani 2021b: 193

## Obverse

001 *a-na* <sup>m</sup>*i-di<sub>3</sub>-ia* LU<sub>2</sub> <sup>uru</sup>*aš-qa<sub>2</sub>-lu-<sup>r</sup>na<sup>ki</sup>*

002 *qi<sub>2</sub>-bi<sub>2</sub>-ma um-ma* LUGAL-*ma a-nu-<sup>r</sup>ma*

003 *ṭup-pa an-na-a uš-te-bi-la-ku*

004 *qa<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>-e a-na ka-a-ša u<sub>3</sub> uš-šur*<sup>39</sup>

005 *lu-u<sub>2</sub> na-ša-ra-ta aš-ru* LUGAL

006 *ša it-ti-ka*<sup>40</sup>

(o 001) Speak to Yidya, the ruler of Ashkelon, thus (says) the king: Herewith he is sending this tablet to you as a command for you: “Be on guard! You should guard the king’s place that is by you.”

007 *a-nu-ma* LUGAL *um-te-eš<sub>17</sub>-<sup>r</sup>ši-[ra-ku]*<sup>41</sup>

008 <sup>m</sup>*i-ri-ia-ma-[aš-ša]*<sup>42</sup>

009 <sup>lu<sub>2</sub>?</sup>MAŠKIM<sub>2</sub>? *ša*<sup>43</sup> [LUGAL]<sup>43</sup>

(rest of obverse missing)

(o 007) Herewith the king is dispatchin[g to you] Iri-maya[šša], a commissioner of [the king ...]

## Reverse

(beginning reverse missing)

023' *u<sub>3</sub>' lu-u<sub>2</sub> [ti-i-de, i-nu-ma]*

024' *ša-lim* LUGAL *'ki-[ma* <sup>d</sup>UTU]

025' *i-na* AN <sup>sa-me<sup>r</sup>e<sup>3</sup></sup> [ERIN<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ-šu]

026' <sup>giš</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu ma'-a<sup>r</sup>du' [ma'-gal' šul'-mu]*<sup>44</sup>

027' *i-na* KUR UGU-*ti<sub>3</sub> 'a-di* [KUR GAM-*ti<sub>3</sub>]*

028' *ši-it* <sup>d</sup>UTU-*aš a-di e-re<sup>r</sup>eb* <sup>d</sup>UTU'-*aš*

029' *ma-gal šul-mu*

(r 023') [...]

[You] should [know that] the king is healthy li[ke the sun] in the heavens (Akk. gloss: the heavens). [His troops] (and) his numerous chariots are [*very well*]; from the Upper Land to [the Lower Land], sunrise to sunset, (all) is very well.

39. Rainey (2015: 1252 line 3) emends the text, adding <a-na> before *qa<sub>2</sub>-be<sub>2</sub>-e*, though that preposition is only present in this phrase in EA 369 and is also absent in EA 99 and 367. On the formula, see Moran’s introduction (1992: xxviii with n. 75).

40. On the Egyptian phraseology that underlies this formula, see Moran’s introduction citing previous literature (1992: xxviii–xxxi).

41. Collation of the WSR photographs confirms that third sign of the verb is *eš<sub>17</sub>* (=MEŠ) and not *eš*.

42. Following Hess (1993a: 90) in understanding a metathesis of MA and YA; cf. Iri-mayašša in EA 130: 11.

43. See Na’aman (1990b: 400) for an alternative reading of these signs as the title <sup>lu<sub>2</sub></sup>UGULA TUR, *akil tarbaši*, “stable master”; cf. EA 367: 8.

44. Cf. the note to EA 99: 28 against *mādu* in a predicative construction.

## EA 96

**Museum No.:** VAT 1238

**Copy:** Winckler and Abel 1889–1890: no. 82; Schröder 1915c: no. 49

**Photo:** CDLI; VAT

**Edition:** Winckler 1896: 188–91; Knudtzon 1915: 1.442–45, 2.1189–92; Mercer 1939: 332–35; Youngblood 1961: 395–402; 1962: 24–27; Mynářová 2007: 207; Rainey 2015: 540–41, 1441

**Translation:** Conder 1893: 88–89; Moran 1992: 170; Knapp in Giles 1997: 397; Liverani 1998c: 186 (148); Cochavi-Rainey 2005: 136–37; Ismail 2010: 320; Hess 2017b: 266–67

**Secondary literature:** Ebeling 1910: 77; Malamat 1961: 227; Campbell 1964: 55, 78, 80; Klengel 1969: 231, 427; Hachmann 1970: 81; Sivan 1984: 155; Rainey 1988: 219; Gestoso Singer 1992a: 21; Klengel 1992: 175; Rainey 1992a: 189; 1992b: 354; Hess 1993a: 132; Rainey 1993: 334; Zewi 1995: 661, 676; Rainey 1996a: 1.147, 2.277, 3.45, 87–88, 120, 143, 166, 178, 208–9; Klengel 1999: 190; Izre'el 2003a: 83; Goren, Finkelstein, and Na'aman 2003: 7–8; 2004: 116; Pryke 2010: 112–13; Dallaire 2014: 178; Mynářová 2014: 24; Mandell 2015: 341–42; Vita 2015a: 21; Gestoso Singer 2017a: 226–27; 2019: 176; Stahl 2020: 255; Gestoso Singer 2021: 63–64; 2022: 43

Obverse

- 001 [a]<sup>-r</sup> na<sup>r</sup> mri-ib-<sup>d</sup> IŠKUR  
 002 'DUMU'-ia qi<sub>2</sub>-bi<sub>2</sub>-ma  
 003 um-ma<sup>mlu<sub>2</sub></sup> GAL ERIN<sub>2</sub>-[MEŠ] 'AD'-ka-<sup>r</sup> ma<sup>r</sup>  
 004 a-bi-ka DINGIR.MEŠ-<sup>r</sup> nu<sup>r</sup>  
 005 šu-lum-ka šu-lum E<sub>2</sub>-ka  
 006 li-iš-al i-<sup>r</sup> nu<sup>r</sup>-ma  
 007 taq<sub>2</sub>-bu-u<sub>2</sub> la-a-mi  
 008 an-ti-in<sub>4</sub>-nu e-re-eb  
 009 LU<sub>2</sub>.MEŠ ša<sup>uru</sup> šu-mu-ri<sup>ki</sup>  
 010 [a-na] URU.KI-ia mu-ta-nu-mi  
 011 'i-na<sup>uru</sup> šu-mu-ri<sup>[ki]</sup>  
 012 mu-ta-nu-u<sub>2</sub> 'muḥ'-[hi]  
 013 'LU<sub>2</sub>'.MEŠ-u<sub>2</sub> u<sub>3</sub> i-na [muḥ]-<sup>r</sup> hi<sup>r</sup>  
 014 ANŠE.MEŠ ma-an-nu mu-[ta]-nu  
 015 muḥ-hi ANŠE.MEŠ [i]-nu-[ma]

Top

- 016 la-a ta-la-ku<sup>45</sup>

Reverse

- 017 ANŠE.MEŠ u<sub>3</sub> u<sub>2</sub>-<sup>r</sup> ba-u<sub>2</sub><sup>46</sup>  
 018 ANŠE.MEŠ LUGAL<sup>ri</sup>  
 019 u<sub>3</sub> u<sub>2</sub>-ul-la-a<sup>47</sup>  
 020 ḥal-qu<sub>2</sub> mi-im-mi

(o 001) Speak to Rib-Addi, my son, a message from the general, your [fa]ther (Akk. gloss: your father). May the god pay attention to you and your household.

(o 006) Inasmuch as you say, “I will not allow men of Šumur to enter [into] my city. An epidemic is in Šumur,” Is it an epidemic with regard to men or *with regard to* donkeys? What is the epidemic with regard to donkeys [th]a[t] the donkeys *did not go* (into the city)? *Did they seek for the king's donkeys? But no!* The king's possessions are lost; indeed, their owner sought them. If the king is the owner of the donkeys, seek for the king's donkeys! Why did you (pl.) act so toward servants of the king? Dispatch men here in order [t]o guard the city! Look, I have sent a message [t]o the king regarding you [so that] he may reply to me by tablet regarding all (of this).

45. For a discussion of the *ta-* prefix with a 3mp form, not citing this text, see Rainey 1996a: 2.44–45. Understanding a 3mp *yaqtul* verb follows Youngblood (1962: 24, 26); other editors restore *-[na]* at the end of the line for a 3mp *yatqulu* form.

46. The reading of the signs at the end of the line follows Youngblood (1961: 396) and seems to be supported by the available photograph; only the bottoms of four vertical wedges seem to be preserved, *contra* the copies' rendering of the traces.

47. Seeing an interjection here adapts a suggestion of Youngblood (1961: 401). See also Knudtzon's (1915: 1.445) translation.