Chapter 18

Akkadian in Syria and Canaan

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1. Akkadian as a *lingua franca*

Throughout the second millennium BCE, Akkadian expanded in its written form well beyond its original Mesopotamian frontiers. Accordingly, it is usually considered that, in the course of that millennium, this language was used as a *lingua franca* in the Ancient Near East by a large number of countries. However, it gained this status after a long, slow process whose roots are probably to be found in previous millennia and in which political, economic, and cultural factors played a part.¹

Akkadian gained the status of the language used for diplomacy in the Ancient Near East in the first half of the second millennium BCE, in the period of the Amorite kingdoms or the “Mari period” (Old Babylonian period), a status it retained for several centuries. The golden age of Akkadian as a *lingua franca* and the language of diplomacy in the Ancient Near East lasted throughout the second half of the second millennium BCE, especially during the so-called “Amarna period” (14th century BCE) and until ca. the 12th century BCE. The geographical boundaries of international relations in the preceding “Mari period” were now considerably extended and incorporated Egypt, Canaan, Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean. The great political powers of this period (Egypt, Babylonia, Hatti, and occasionally Mittani and Assyria) were intertwined by means of close and continuous diplomatic contacts. In general, the roots of the “Amarna system” lie in the preceding “Mari period”, in which diplomatic procedures had been established as well as the essential elements of the political and juridical terminology that then became fully mature in the second half of the millennium. On the whole, and in spite of very different international backgrounds, both periods shared important aspects in how these states managed their foreign affairs. They resulted in generally stable geopolitical structures based on the development of reliable systems of international relations resulting from intense diplomatic activity and in

¹ On the topic of Akkadian as a *lingua franca* see Wilfred H. van Soldt, “Akkadian as a Diplomatic Language,” in *The Semitic Languages. An International Handbook*, ed. Stefan Weninger *et al.* (Berlin-Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 405–15; Juan-Pablo Vita, “Akkadian as a *Lingua Franca*,” in *A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Languages*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), 357–72.

which Akkadian had an essential role.

As Akkadian expanded beyond the geographical area where it was spoken, it came into contact with both Semitic (e.g., Amorite, Ugaritic, Canaanite) and non-Semitic languages (e.g., Hittite, Hurrian) (see section 4.1). These languages were often spoken by societies who had not previously developed a script system for their native languages. Given the new situation, extra-Mesopotamian scribes adopted at times Mesopotamian cuneiform script to write texts only in Akkadian. On other occasions, they used the Mesopotamian script to write texts both in Akkadian and in the local language. In both cases Akkadian became imbued, to various degrees, with the diverse local languages it came into direct contact with. A significant result of this process was that, quite often, Akkadian acted as a sort of “contrast medium”, bringing to light languages (Semitic and non-Semitic, such as Amorite and Kassite respectively) which had not been recorded in writing up until that moment and which would otherwise have probably gone totally unnoticed.

2. Syria and Canaan: Main Archives

In the context sketched out above, a large number of sites in Syria and Canaan have provided cuneiform texts from the second millennium BCE. The number of texts found varies, depending on the case from one tablet or several up to large archives.² In the following paragraphs the focus is on the archives that we consider to be the most significant for the purposes of this volume.³ In terms of geography, the description will be from the Euphrates up to the Mediterranean and from north to south.

2.1. Emar

² The archive of Mari, one of the largest and most important in terms of history and language, has been described in [chapter 17](#) of the present volume.

³ Detailed accounts of all the sites in Syria and Canaan that have produced cuneiform texts in the second millennium BCE can be found in Karel van der Toorn, “Cuneiform Documents from Syria-Palestine. Texts, Scribes, and Schools,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 116 (2000): 97–113; Eva von Dassow, “Canaanite in Cuneiform,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124 (2004): 666–73; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “Why Did They Write? On Empires and Vassals in Syria and Palestine in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Theory and Practice of Knowledge Transfer. Studies in School Education in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, ed. W. S. van Egmond and W. H. van Soldt (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 103–13; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Extent of Literacy in Syria and Palestine during the Second Millennium B.C.E.,” in *Time and History in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Lluís Feliu, Jaume Llop, Adelina Millet Albà and Joaquín Sanmartín (Winona Lake, Wis.: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 19–31; Manfred Weippert, “Keilschrift in Kanaan. Mesopotamische Keilschrift und akkadische Sprache im 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. in Palästina,” in *Sprachen in Palästina im 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, ed. Ulrich Hübner and Herbert Niehr (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2017), 27–43; Wayne Horowitz, Takayoshi Oshima and Seth L. Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan. The Next Generation* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 10–18. Still useful is the panoramic view of the history of Syria and Canaan by Horst Klengel, *Syria. 3000 to 300 BCE. A Handbook of Political History* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992).

The archaeological excavations carried out since 1972 in Meskene Qadime, ancient Emar, in the Syrian Middle Euphrates, have brought to light about 1,200 texts and fragments written mainly in Akkadian and found in a dozen archives at various points on the tell.⁴ These texts can be dated to the 14th and 12th centuries BCE and they enable us to study the political and social organization as well as the languages used in a Syrian kingdom already referred to by the Eblaite sources from the 3rd millennium BCE.⁵ The Akkadian texts are of different genres, and they have an added ingredient of interest: they also attest to the local language of Emar, currently known as “Emarite”.⁶ Two thirds of the texts published⁷ consist of legal documents regarding private law.⁸ Legal texts from Emar correspond, in turn, to two different scribal traditions, known as “Syrian” and “Syro-Hittite”, each with their own palaeographic and grammatical characteristics.⁹ The ratio between both traditions is approximately one to one. In terms of absolute chronology, the documents of Syrian tradition span from the early 14th century to the mid 13th century, while the Syro-Hittite tradition starts ca. 1275 and ends with the fall of the city in about 1175 BCE.¹⁰ The corpus of administrative texts from Emar consists of approximately 175 documents, chronologically corresponding to the final stages of the history of the city.¹¹ These documents also reflect the aforementioned

⁴ On this see the study by Manfred Dietrich, “Die akkadischen Texte der Archive und Bibliotheken von Emar,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 22 (1990): 25–48. A small number of documents were also in Hittite and in Hurrian.

⁵ A full and updated bibliography on all aspects of the studies of Emar can be found in Betina I. Faist, Josué-Javier Justel, Ferhan Sakal and Juan-Pablo Vita, “Bibliografía de los estudios de Emar (8),” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 49 (2018): 95–108 (with references to the previous seven instalments of that bibliography).

⁶ On this see Eugen J. Pentiuc, *West Semitic Vocabulary in the Akkadian Texts from Emar* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001).

⁷ Most of the texts found were discovered in what are called “Area M and A”; for details see Yoram Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars of the City of Emar in the Late Bronze Age* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 10–12.

⁸ Cf. Sophie Démare-Lafont, “Éléments pour une diplomatie juridique des textes d’Émar,” in *Trois millénaires de formulaires juridiques*, ed. Sophie Démare-Lafont and A. Lemaire (Geneva: Droz, 2010), 43.

⁹ Regarding these two scribal traditions, see the relevant clarifications produced by Daniel Fleming and Sophie Démare-Lafont, “Tablet Terminology at Emar: ‘Conventional’ and ‘Free Format,’” *Aula Orientalis* 27 (2009): 19–26, with preceding bibliography. See also recently Yoram Cohen, “An Overview on the Scripts of Late Bronze Age Emar,” in *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. Elena Devecchi (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 33–45.

¹⁰ Yoram Cohen and Lorenzo d’Alfonso, “The Duration of the Emar Archives and the Relative and Absolute Chronology of the City,” in *Control, Interaction, and Interdependence. The City of Emar among the Late Bronze Age Empires (14th–12th centuries BC)*, ed. Lorenzo d’Alfonso, Yoram Cohen and Dietrich Sühnle (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 24; Yoram Cohen, “Problems in the History and Chronology of Emar,” *KASKAL* 10 (2013): 289.

¹¹ Betina I. Faist, “Scribal Traditions and Administration at Emar,” in *Control, Interaction, and Interdependence. The City of Emar among the Late Bronze Age Empires (14th–12th centuries BC)*, ed.

Syrian and Syro-Hittite traditions.¹² As for other genres in the text corpus of Emar, the situation can be summed up as follows: ca. 70 lexical texts, ca. 320 literary and ritual texts,¹³ ca. 20 preserved letters.

The texts of Emar are matched by the archives from Ekalte (Tell Munbāqa; about one hundred texts, mostly legal documents)¹⁴ and Azû (Tell Hadidi; 15 unpublished tablets),¹⁵ also from the Middle Euphrates and the Late Bronze Age. These places maintained a close relationship between each other,¹⁶ and their tablets have characteristics that are similar to the “Syrian tradition” of Emar.¹⁷

2.2 Alalah

Towards the west and located next to the river Orontes, Alalah (Tell ‘Aṭḥana) was the capital of a country called Mukiš, a vassal of the kingdom of Yamḥad in the Old Babylonian period and of Mittani in the 15th century BCE.¹⁸ In levels VII and IV of the city important royal archives have been found.¹⁹ At present the archive from level VII contains 472 texts (198 found in the palace and the temple),²⁰ of which 286 have been

Lorenzo d’Alfonso, Yoram Cohen and Dietrich Sürenhagen (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 201: “roughly between the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 12th century BCE”.

¹² Faist, “Scribal Traditions”.

¹³ Approximately 20 literary and 300 ritual texts are preserved. Jun Ikeda, “A New Contribution to Northwest Semitic Lexicography,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 60 (2003): 273, observes that “The religious texts were composed in Emar, while the literary texts were not”.

¹⁴ Edited by Walter Mayer, *Tall Munbāqa - Ekalte – II. Die Texte* (Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 2011). See also Eduardo Torrecilla, *Late Bronze Age Ekalte: Chronology, Society, and Religion of a Middle Euphrates Town* (Saarbrücken: Scholar’s Press, 2014).

¹⁵ On this see recently Eduardo Torrecilla, “Divine Names in the Tall Hadidi/Azû Texts,” *KASKAL* 14 (2017): 1–14; Eduardo Torrecilla and Yoram Cohen, “A Mittani Letter Order from Azu (HAD 8) and its Implications for the Chronology and History of the Middle Euphrates Region in the Late Bronze Age,” *Revue d’assyriologie* 112 (2018): 149–58.

¹⁶ Mayer, *Tall Munbāqa*, 12.

¹⁷ See also Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 12–13, who mentions other sites in the vicinity of Emar that have produced a few documents.

¹⁸ On the history of Alalah see Frank Zeeb, *Die Palastwirtschaft in Altsyrien nach den spätaltbabylonischen Getreidelieferlisten aus Alalah (Schicht VII)* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2001), 67–124, Eva von Dassow, *State and Society in the Late Bronze Age. Alalah under the Mittani Empire* (Bethesda, Maryland: CDL-Press, 2008), 12–67, and Jacob Lauinger, *Following the Man of Yamhad. Settlement and Territory at Old Babylonian Alalah* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015).

¹⁹ On this see the following observations by van Soldt, “Why Did They Write?,” 110: “[in Alalah] the most important assemblages of texts were found in levels VII and IV. When we look at the political situation it is important to note that writing is attested here in periods during which a foreign dynasty ruled the city and when the town was a vassal of a larger empire... writing was apparently introduced at Alalah after the Aleppo dynasty started its reign there”. On the other hand, the total number of documents from levels I to III and V to VI is as follows: one letter, twelve administrative documents, five school texts (two of which are in Hittite), and three legal documents, cf. Eva von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV in Archaeological Context,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 338 (2005): 19–20, Chart B.

²⁰ Jacob Lauinger, “An Excavated Dossier of Cuneiform Tablets from Level VII Alalah?” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 362 (2011): 24; Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 45.

published.²¹ Most of the archive (274 texts) comprises administrative texts (164) and legal documents (110),²² as well as three letters, a scholarly text and one inscription.²³ They belong to five separate archives²⁴, were composed from the late 18th to the 17th centuries BCE and constitute our main source concerning the kingdom of Yamḥad.²⁵ Probably this level was destroyed in the early 16th century BCE by Ḫattusili I.²⁶

Level IV has produced 273 tablets the excavation numbers and tablet publication numbers of which are known.²⁷ Dated in the 15th century BCE, almost all of them were found in the palace and in the building known as a “fortress” or “castle”.²⁸ The archive comprises administrative documents (census lists, registers, rosters of individuals, ration lists), legal documents (22 contracts plus eight legal documents other than a contract), letters (9), incantations, omens, bilingual hymns (9), treaties between Alalah and another kingdom (2).²⁹ Most of the texts can be grouped into a series of archives, reconstructed by Eva von Dassow,³⁰ who notes that “The tablet finds in the Level IV palace represent the remains of several archives, which, like those found in Fortress Room W1, date largely to Niqmepa’s reign and are missing substantial parts of their original contents”.³¹ The invasion of Syria by Šuppiluliuma I ended this phase in the history of Alalah.³²

²¹ Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 41. Lauinger (*ibid.*) makes the following specification regarding the 186 unpublished texts: “With the proviso that this number constitutes five tablets and most likely only 12-15 discrete envelopes”; *ibid.*, 42: “these comprise three administrative texts and envelope fragments that originally encased legal texts”.

²² See also Zeeb, *Die Palastwirtschaft*, 30–66.

²³ Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 42, as well as a text classified as “other” and five as “unclear”. On the administrative texts from Alalah see also **chapter 13** (section 2.1) in the present volume.

²⁴ Lauinger, “An Excavated Dossier”, 24–25; Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 47.

²⁵ Lauinger, “An Excavated Dossier”, 21 and 22; Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 50–56.

²⁶ von Dassow, *State and Society*, 15. However, see also the comments by Lauinger, *Following the Man*, 203–8.

²⁷ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 9; note her comment (*ibid.*) that “in this total, fragments originally recorded separately and later joined are counted individually”.

²⁸ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 20.

²⁹ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 9; figures taken from *ibid.*, 10–18, Chart A. On the legal texts see also Christian Niedorf, *Die mittelbabylonischen Rechtsurkunden aus Alalah (Schicht IV)* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008).

³⁰ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 31–49.

³¹ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 49; this scholar (*ibid.*, 52) provides the following possible explanation: “hostilities could have not only caused the destruction of the Alalah IV palace, but compelled Ilmilimma to move the seat of government out of the city of Alalah. If so, he probably moved from Alalah to the city of Mukis. The archives would have moved at that time, too: documents that remained important and current would have been recovered and relocated to Mukis, while documents that were out of date or no longer valid-like Niqmepa’s treaty with Tunip would have been left behind in Alalah, where they were found during Woolley’s excavations”.

³² von Dassow, *State and Society*, 63.

Lastly, from Alalah also comes the inscription of king Idrimi, a 15th century BCE ruler of Alalah,³³ found in a building of level IB (ca. 1200).³⁴ It is a seated statue of the king and the whole body is covered by an inscription of 104 lines in which this person gives a first person account of his career. It is a document of inestimable historical value, written by a scribe called Šarruwa.³⁵

2.3 Ugarit

In terms of geographical area, political power and military capacity, Ugarit (Ras Shamra, also located in the modern Syrian Arab Republic) was an average sized kingdom by the standards of Syria in the second millennium BCE, yet a leading one in economic terms. It vanished (like Emar) from history in the early 12th century BCE, swept away by the wave of the so-called “Sea Peoples”, a time which witnessed the collapse of the main Late Bronze Age Syrian centres and the disappearance of the kingdom of Hatti.³⁶ The kingdom of Ugarit, located on the shores of the Mediterranean, was contemporary with Emar, with whom direct and close trading relations were maintained.³⁷ It is the only kingdom in Late Bronze Age Syria to have yielded abundant literature written in the local language (Ugaritic). A large part of these texts were found in the royal palace, in those labelled West, East, South, South-East and Central Archives;³⁸ the remainder were discovered in a series of archives located right inside the city of Ugarit³⁹ and in the North Palace in the local coastal settlement of Ras Ibn Hani.⁴⁰

³³ On Idrimi see von Dassow, *State and Society*, 23–45.

³⁴ Which Woolley considered to be an annexe to the temple of that level, although Idrimi belongs to the end of level V, i.e. some 300 years earlier, cf. Gary H. Oller, “The Inscription of Idrimi: A Pseudo-Autobiography?” in Dumu-e2-dub-ba-a. *Studies in Honour of Åke W. Sjöberg*, ed. Hermann Behrens, Darlene Loding and Martha T. Roth (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 412.

³⁵ Cf. lines 98–99 of the text. Jacob Lauinger, “The Electronic Idrimi”, provides the most recent edition of the text as well as the most relevant bibliography. To this can now be added Jacob Lauinger, “Discourse and Meta-Discourse in the Statue of Idrimi and its Inscription,” *Maarav* 23 (2019): 19–38, and Kathryn McConaughy Medill, “The Idrimi Statue Inscription in its Late Bronze Age Scribal Context,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 382 (2019): 243–59.

³⁶ On the history of Ugarit, see Itamar Singer, “A Political History of Ugarit,” in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Wilfred G. E. Watson and Nicolas Wyatt (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 603–733; Jacques Freu, *Histoire politique du royaume d’Ugarit* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006).

³⁷ Cf. Yoram Cohen and Itamar Singer, “A Late Synchronism between Ugarit and Emar,” in *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context. A Tribute to Nadav Na’aman*, ed. Yairah Amit et al. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 123–39; Florence Malbran-Labat and Carole Roche, “Urtēnu Ur-Tešub,” in *Le royaume d’Ougarit de la Crète à l’Éuphrate. Nouveaux axes de recherche*, ed. Jean-Marc Michaud (Sherbrooke: GGC Éditions, 2007), 63–104.

³⁸ Presented and described in Sylvie Lackenbacher, “Les archives palatiales d’Ugarit,” *Ktema* 26 (2001): 79–86; Sylvie Lackenbacher, “Quelques remarques à propos des archives du palais royal d’Ougarit,” in *Le mobilier du palais royal d’Ougarit*, ed. Valérie Matoïan (Lyon: Maison de l’Orient et de la Méditerranée, 2008), 281–90.

³⁹ Known as “House of Rašapabu”, “House of Rapanu”, “House of Urtēnu”, “Maison du Lettré”, etc. A description and overall view of these archives is available in Gregorio del Olmo Lete, *The private archives of Ugarit* (Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2018), to be supplemented by

Ugarit has yielded instances of various scripts (such as Egyptian hieroglyphs or Cypro-Minoan script) and languages (such as Hurrian or Hittite), but mostly texts in Ugaritic (the local language) and in Akkadian (a non-local language). Akkadian texts found in Ras Shamra-Ugarit comprise a wide range of genres. In a recent study, Robert Hawley provides the following rough approximation of the distribution of the Akkadian cuneiform corpus from Ras Shamra by text type:⁴¹ 1. *Ephemera* and texts from daily life: 1.1. Administrative lists and accounts (about 200), 1.2. Cultic records and memoranda (about 10), 1.3. Legal texts (about 400), 1.4. Letters (about 400). 2. Traditional and scholarly texts: 2.1. Elementary pedagogical texts (about 500); 2.2. Thematic lists of knowledge (about 10); 2.3. Poetry and “literature” (about 50). 3. Miscellaneous: unclassified, fragmentary, illegible, etc. (about 600). This means that in Ugarit there was an approximate total of 2170 Akkadian texts and fragments.⁴² They

Valérie Matoïan, “La maison dite ‘de Rashapabou’: inventaire des objets découverts lors de la fouille de l’édifice et essai d’interprétation,” in *Études ougaritiques* III, ed. Valérie Matoïan and Michel Al-Maqdissi (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 157–202. Still important for an overall view of the archives of Ugarit is Wilfred H. van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker, 2001). See also the study by Françoise Rougemont and Juan-Pablo Vita, “Palais et archives: organisation administrative des palais dans le monde mycénien et à Ougarit”, in *Palais sans archives, archives sans palais. Palais, archives et territoires en Orient et en Égée*, *Topoi* Suppl. 16, ed. Françoise Rougemont (Lyon), in press.

⁴⁰ Most of the Akkadian texts found in Ugarit have been published in Jean Nougayrol, *Le Palais Royal d’Ugarit* III (Paris: Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1955); Jean Nougayrol, *Le Palais Royal d’Ugarit* IV (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1956); Jean Nougayrol, *Le Palais Royal d’Ugarit* VI (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1970); Jean Nougayrol, “Textes suméro-accadiens des archives et bibliothèques privées d’Ugarit,” in *Ugaritica* V, by Jean Nougayrol, Emmanuel Laroche, Charles Vroilleaud and Claude F. A. Schaeffer (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1968), 1–446; Daniel Arnaud, Béatrice André-Salvini, Sylvie Lackenbacher and Florence Malbran-Labat, “Première partie: les textes accadiens,” in *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville*, ed. Pierre Bordreuil (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1991), 15–138; Daniel Arnaud, Béatrice André-Salvini, Sylvie Lackenbacher, Florence Malbran-Labat and Mirjo Salvini, “Seconde partie: une bibliothèque au sud de la ville. Textes de la ‘Maison d’Ourtenou’ trouvés en 1986, 1088 et 1992”, in *Études ougaritiques I. Travaux 1985-1995*, ed. Marguerite Yon and Daniel Arnaud (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2001), 235–339; Daniel Arnaud, *Corpus des textes de bibliothèque de Ras Shamra-Ougarit (1936-2000) en sumérien, babylonien et assyrien* (Sabadell-Barcelona: Editorial Ausa, 2007); Sylvie Lackenbacher and Florence Malbran-Labat, *Lettres en akkadien de la ‘Maison d’Urtēnu’. Fouilles de 1994* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016). In addition, besides a high number of texts written in Ugaritic and in the alphabetic cuneiform script, Ras Ibn Hani has provided a small lot of Akkadian texts: four administrative texts, two letters and three school texts (two tablets have part of the list *ḪAR-ra=ḫubullu* and of a *S^a Vocabulary*), as well as seven fragments of indeterminate genre, published or re-published by Carole Roche-Hawley in Pierre Bordreuil, Dennis Pardee and Carole Roche-Hawley, *Ras Ibn Hani II. Les textes en écritures cunéiformes de l’âge du Bronze récent (fouilles 1977 à 2002)* (Beirut: Presses de l’Ifpo, 2019), 283–96.

⁴¹ Robert Hawley, “On the transmission of knowledge and lore in the alphabetic tradition of Ugarit,” in *Devins et lettrés dans l’orbite de Babylone: Travaux réalisés dans le cadre du projet ANR Mespériph 2007–2011*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: de Boccard, 2015), 69; Robert Hawley, Dennis Pardee and Carole Roche-Hawley, “The Scribal Culture of Ugarit,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* (2015): 232.

⁴² On the Akkadian of Ugarit see also **chapter 4** in the present volume.

range from the 14th century BCE to the destruction of the kingdom in the early 12th century BCE.

The archives of Ugarit are also an essential source for the study of Akkadian in other areas of Syria and Canaan and in the Hittite world,⁴³ since they contain a large number of texts (chiefly letters) from other kingdoms. The publication of the Akkadian letters discovered in the “House of Urtēnu”, for example, gives us (among others) letters that came from Ḫatti, Karkemiš,⁴⁴ Tarḫuntašša, Kizzuwatna, Alašiya,⁴⁵ Egypt,⁴⁶ Ušnatu, Qadeš, Byblos, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre.⁴⁷ The archives of Ugarit therefore are also a primary source for the history of the Ancient Near East in that period.

2.4. Qaṭna

In central Syria, towards the south, Qaṭna (Tell el-Miṣrifeh, actually in Syria) had been well-known since the end of the 19th century, from several letters in the Amarna archive (14th century BCE),⁴⁸ as well as from inventories from the 15th century BCE that list jewels and precious objects dedicated to Ninegal, the local goddess.⁴⁹ New excavations in the royal palace have brought to light an archive from the Late Bronze Age (14th century BCE), which is highly important for both history and language. The archive comprises letters (5), legal documents (6), administrative texts (40), as well as about ten texts of uncertain genre. The letters and at least one of the legal texts had been written outside Qaṭna, in areas between Alalakh and Qaṭna known as Ni’a and Nuhašše.⁵⁰

2.5. Hazor, Megiddo, Aphek, Taanach, Kumidu, Amarna Letters

⁴³ See [chapter 19](#) in the present volume.

⁴⁴ On the Akkadian of Karkemiš see John Huehnergard, “The Akkadian Dialects of Charchemish and Ugarit” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1979). See also section 4.3.6 of [chapter 13](#) in the present volume.

⁴⁵ On the Akkadian of Alašiya see Zipora Cochavi-Rainey, *The Alashia Texts from the 14th and 13th Centuries BCE. A Textual and Linguistic Study* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003).

⁴⁶ See [chapter 20](#) in the present volume.

⁴⁷ Lackenbacher and Malbran-Labat, *Lettres en akkadien de la ‘Maison d’Urtēnu’*.

⁴⁸ On the Amarna letters that can be considered as from Qaṭna see Juan-Pablo Vita, *Canaanite Scribes in the Amarna Letters* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2015), 12–14; Jana Mynářová, “Amarna Texts from the Northern Levant: The Qaṭna Palaeography in Context,” in *Current Research in Cuneiform Palaeography 2. Proceedings of the Workshop organised at the 64th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Innsbruck 2018*, ed. Elena Devecchi, Jana Mynářová and Gerfrid G.W. Müller (Gladbeck: PeWe-Verlag, 2019), 87–103.

⁴⁹ On this see the study by Frederick Mario Fales, “Rileggendo gli inventari di Qatna,” *KASKAL* 1 (2004): 83–127. For a new duplicate of Inventory II see Thomas Richter in *Das Archiv des Idadda. Die Keilschrifttexte aus den deutsch-syrischen Ausgrabungen 2001–2003 im Königspalast von Qatna*, by Thomas Richter and Sarah Lange (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 170–72. The archaeological context of the inventories is described by Peter Pfälzner in *ibid.*, 170.

⁵⁰ Edition of the archive and general commentary in Thomas Richter and Sarah Lange, *Das Archiv des Idadda. Die Keilschrifttexte aus den deutsch-syrischen Ausgrabungen 2001–2003 im Königspalast von Qatna* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012). On the texts from Qaṭna see also section 4.3.6. in [chapter 13](#) in the present volume.

Towards the south, in Northern Canaan, Hazor (Tell el-Qedah) has so far provided eighteen texts or fragments in various genres (liver models, school tablets, administrative documents, letters, court records, fragments of a law collection, etc.),⁵¹ although not all of them were actually written there.⁵² By and large they display a close relationship with the contemporary archive of Mari (sections 3.5 and 4.5). Most of the texts belong to the Middle Bronze Age⁵³ and a few to the Late Bronze Age.⁵⁴ Even though they are only a few, this lot of texts forms an archive of great historical significance and shows the existence of an important kingdom, fully integrated into the politics and international trade of the period.⁵⁵

From second millennium BCE Canaan have come other important texts, most of which can be dated to the Late Bronze Age. Highly significant, therefore, are a few texts that are the product of training of scribes. From Megiddo, for example, comes a fragment of a western version of the Mesopotamian Gilgamesh Epic,⁵⁶ and both Aphek and Ashqelon have provided lexical fragments (see section 3.5). However, the largest number is formed by the correspondence. In Aphek itself, a letter was found that had been sent (ca. 1230 BCE) by the governor (*šaknu*) of Ugarit to the Egyptian governor of Canaan.⁵⁷ Earlier in time (15th century BCE) is a group of nine letters (several

⁵¹ See the edition by Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 63–88. Here we cite the texts from Hazor using the numbering in this edition.

⁵² This applies, for example, to the letters Hazor 12 (Middle Bronze Age) and Hazor 10 (Late Bronze Age) or to the administrative document Hazor 11 (Late Bronze Age). On the texts from Hazor see also sections 2.1 and 4.3.7 in **chapter 13** in the present volume.

⁵³ Hazor 2-3 and Hazor 17 (liver model fragments); Hazor 7 (administrative document); Hazor 8 (letter fragment); Hazor 5 (court record); Hazor 18 (fragments from a law collection; on this text see also Filip Vukosavović, “The Laws of Hazor and the ANE Parallels,” *Revue d’assyriologie* 108, 2014: 41–44; Weippert, “Keilschrift in Kanaan,” 32–34); Hazor 9 (prism fragment: combined multiplication table); Hazor 1 (inscribed vessel).

⁵⁴ Hazor 14 (administrative document), Hazor 16 (administrative docket); Hazor 6 (school tablet with excerpt from *ḪAR-ra=ḫubullu*); Hazor 13 (fragment of stone bowl). Other texts are of uncertain date, cf. Hazor 4 (handle of a jug with two seal impressions), Hazor 15 (letter fragment, “Most likely Middle Bronze Age”, Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 83; in fact, it could be an administrative tablet, cf. *ibid.*, 84).

⁵⁵ On this see the conclusions of Wayne Horowitz, Takayoshi Oshima and Filip Vukosavović, “Hazor 18: Fragments of a Cuneiform Law Collection from Hazor,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 62 (2012): 175 (“Thus, the Laws of Hazor, inscribed on Hazor clay, may be viewed as further evidence of the position of Hazor as a kind of Babylon/Hattuša of the cuneiform far west – in other words, a city of the first and most important rank ruled by a great king”) and of Weippert, “Keilschrift in Kanaan,” 34 (“Hazor war vielmehr die einzige palästinische Stadt, die...fest in das damalige mesopotamisch-ostmediterrane Staatensystem eingebunden war...”). On the direct political relations between Hazor and Mari see Dominique Charpin and Nele Ziegler, *Mari et le Proche-Orient à l’époque amorrite. Essai d’histoire politique* (Paris: SEPOA, 2003), 25 and 196.

⁵⁶ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 105–8; Stéphanie Anthonioz, “Miroir d’une transmission du *Gilgameš* akkadien en périphérie (deuxième partie),” in *Devins et lettrés dans l’orbite de Babylone: Travaux réalisés dans le cadre du projet ANR Mespériph 2007–2011*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: de Boccard, 2015), 47–49.

⁵⁷ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 32–35.

incomplete) found in Taanach, from neighbouring localities, intended for the governor of the city so that he would address various issues.⁵⁸ In Kāmid el-Lōz (Kumidu) eight letters from the 14th century BCE have been found that confirm that town to be one of the main Egyptian administration centres of the time.⁵⁹ Two of them originate from Egypt and are sent by the pharaoh to the kings of Damascus and Šaza'ena (concerning the *ḥapīrū*), two (one from Byblos) are addressed to the “great man” or “magnate” (LÚ.GAL) to deal with various political and military matters, three have unknown senders and addressees, and another, addressed to a person from Amurru, was probably sent by a “magnate”.⁶⁰

However, the most important archive, by far, contains the so-called “El-Amarna Letters”, found in about 1887 in Tell El Amarna, the site of Akhetaten, the capital of ancient Egypt under pharaoh Amenophis IV.⁶¹ This correspondence, a total of ca. 350 letters and fragments,⁶² constitutes the main documentation on international relations in the ancient Near East in the 14th century BCE, but also the main documentation on the history and language of Syria and Canaan in the same century.⁶³ In fact, it is a composite corpus. A smaller part of the archive comprises letters from the principal empires and kingdoms of that time (including Egypt, Babylonia, Mittani, Hatti or Assyria); letters from various Syrian kingdoms in the Middle Orontes, from Amurru and neighbouring kingdoms, from the Beqa', from southern Syria, Phoenicia, and

⁵⁸ Connected with money, weapons, timber, myrrh, captives, etc. They have been re-edited in Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, texts 1, 2, 3 (135–42), 5, 6 (144–47), 8, 8A, 9, 10, 11 (149–52). See also Angelika Berlejung, “Briefe aus dem Archiv von Taanach,” in *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments. Neue Folge. Band 3. Briefe*, ed. Bernd Janowski and Gernot Wilhelm (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), 230–34; Regine Pruzsinszky, “A Fruitful Collaboration between E. Sellin and B. Hrozný during His Viennese Years: The Cuneiform Texts from Tell Taanach and Their Impact on Syro-Levantine Studies,” in *Hrozný and Hittite. The First Hundred Years*, ed. Ronald I. Kim, Jana Mynářová and Peter Pavúk (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 78–91.

⁵⁹ These letters, together with a wide study of their archaeological and historical context, have been collected together in Rolf Hachmann, *Kāmid el-Lōz. 20. Die keilschriftbriefe und der Horizont von el-Amarna* (Bonn: Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, 2012). See also the comments by Vita, *Canaanite Scribes*, 36–38.

⁶⁰ Also a fragmentary text in an unknown genre (possibly a school exercise) was discovered, cf. Nadav Na'aman, “On Two Tablets from Kāmid el-Lōz,” *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 42 (2005): 313–14.

⁶¹ For a detailed account of the discovery of the archive see Jana Mynářová, *Language of Amarna – Language of Diplomacy. Perspectives on the Amarna Letters* (Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology, 2007), 11–39.

⁶² Mario Liverani, *Le lettere di el-Amarna. I. Le lettere dei “Piccoli Re”* (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1998), 51–52, reckons that the Egyptian chancery and the Syro-Palestinian kings could have exchanged about 3,000 letters; we would therefore have barely 10% of the original correspondence.

⁶³ The corpus has been re-edited by Anson F. Rainey, *The El-Amarna Correspondence* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). For a recent overall view of this archive see Jana Mynářová, “Egyptian State Correspondence of the New Kingdom: The Letters of the Levantine Client Kings in the Amarna Correspondence and Contemporary Evidence,” in *State Correspondence in the Ancient World. From New Kingdom Egypt to the Roman Empire*, ed. Karen Radner (London-New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 10–31.

Palestine make up the largest single group.⁶⁴

3. Scribes and Schools⁶⁵

3.1. Schools in the Western Periphery

The main channels through which Akkadian spread towards the Eastern and Western Peripheries were essentially schools for scribes.⁶⁶ The impact of Mesopotamian schools and culture on the Western Periphery is quite evident in various archives in Syria and Canaan and Anatolia in the late Bronze Age, as well as in contemporary Egypt.⁶⁷ The teaching material they provide shows the presence of important scribal schools in the Mesopotamian tradition; in fact, our richest sources for school material in the Ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age are found in the western periphery. These texts date to the 13th century BCE and follow, generally speaking, the types of texts and the curriculum known in Mesopotamia. They also show a close similarity in respect of transmitting texts and their interrelationships, all of which indicates a fairly uniform school curriculum in the Syro-Anatolian area, although with some significant differences and local peculiarities.⁶⁸ It is quite possible that in this Western Periphery some of the material was taken directly from contemporary Mesopotamia; in fact, as we shall see, there is strong evidence for the presence of Assyrian and Babylonian scribes in these peripheral sources, who could have brought with them educational material on actual tablets, but also (perhaps mostly) in memorized form.

⁶⁴ William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore-London: The Johns Hopkins University Press); Liverani, *Le lettere di el-Amarna. 1*; Mario Liverani, *Le lettere di el-Amarna. 2. Le lettere dei "Grandi Re"* (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1999); Rainey, *The El-Amarna Correspondence*. See also Yuval Goren, Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na'aman, *Inscribed in Clay. Provenance Study of the Amarna Tablets and Other Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2004); Vita, *Canaanite Scribes*.

⁶⁵ See also [chapter 2](#) in the present volume.

⁶⁶ The introduction to this section is based on Wilfred H. van Soldt, "The Role of Babylon in Western Peripheral Education," in *Babylon. Wissenskultur in Orient und Okzident*, ed. Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum, Margarete van Ess and Joachim Marzahn (Münster: De Gruyter, 2011), 197–211; Vita, "Akkadian as a *Lingua Franca*," 360–62.

⁶⁷ Nick Veldhuis, *History of the Cuneiform Lexical Tradition* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 269. On Anatolia and Egypt, respectively, see also [chapters 19 and 20](#) in the present volume.

⁶⁸ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 241–42; Jeanette Fincke, "The School Curricula from Ḫattuša, Emar and Ugarit: A Comparison," in *Theory and Practice of Knowledge Transfer. Studies in School Education in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, ed. W. S. van Egmond and W. H. van Soldt (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 98–99; Tobias Simon Scheucher, "The Transmissional and Functional Context of the Lexical Lists from Ḫattuša and from the Contemporaneous Traditions in Late-Bronze-Age Syria" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2012); Maurizio Viano, *The Reception of Sumerian Literature in the Western Periphery* (Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2016); Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 270, 278. According to Veldhuis, *ibid.*, 279: "The similarities between lexical traditions from Ugarit, Emar (the 'Syro-Hittite' tradition), Ekalte, Alalakh, and Nuzi are to be attributed, ultimately, to Mitanni scribes".

3.2. Ugarit

Ugarit is the site with most lexical material,⁶⁹ so much so that the curriculum as we know it for Syrian texts is mainly based on the school texts of that place.⁷⁰ Almost all this material was written down in that city, apparently during the final 50 years of the kingdom⁷¹ and used for teaching Sumerian and Akkadian,⁷² although teaching material was also imported directly from Assyria and Babylonia;⁷³ in fact, in Ugarit there were

⁶⁹ Wilfred H. van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts and Scribal Education at Ugarit and its implications for the alphabetic literary texts,” in *Ugarit. Ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient. Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung. Band I. Ugarit und seine altorientalische Umwelt*, ed. Manfred Dietrich and Oswald Loretz (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995), 196–206, lists the following types of lexical text from Ugarit: Tu-ta-ti, Silbenalphabet A, Silbenvokabular A, Syllabary A (on which see also Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Ugarit Version of Syllabary A,” in *Studies in Ancient Near Eastern World View and Society: Presented to Marten Stol on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Robartus Johannes van der Spek, Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press 2008, 255–75; Carole Roche-Hawley, “On the Palaeographic ‘Syllabary A’ in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. Elena Devecchi, Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012, 131–33, 135–39), Sa Vocabulary (on which see recently John Huehnergard, “Ugarit S^a Voc. No. 30,” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 2019: 78), Weidner God List, Grammatical Texts, HAR-ra=*hubullu* (1, 2, 3-5a, 5b-7, 8-9, 10, 11-12, 13[a-b], 14-15, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21a, 21b-22, 23, 24, on which see also Marie-Françoise Besnier, “Remarques préliminaires sur la place des textes d’Emar et d’Ougarit dans l’établissement de la liste lexicale Urs-ra : *hubullu* III,” in *Scribes et érudits dans l’orbite de Babylone*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: De Boccard, 2012), 119–37), Lu (1, 2), “Lu Appendix”, Izi (1, 2), “Izi Appendix”, Diri (1, 2, 3), “Diri Appendix”; Table of Measures, Ea, Nigga, Erimḫuš (1, 2?), y otros clasificados como “Miscellaneous”. The table set out by van Soldt has now to be completed with lexical texts published after his article, which were discovered in the “House of Urtēnu”; see Béatrice André-Salvini, “Textes syllabiques en sumérien, babylonien, assyrien et hittite. 1. Textes lexicographiques,” in *Études ougaritiques I. Travaux 1985-1995*, ed. Marguerite Yon and Daniel Arnaud (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations 2001), 237–38 (André-Salvini identifies the following: Syllabaire Sa paléographie, LÚ : ša, liste divine, Début du syllabaire Sa, Silbenalphabet A, Hh XXIV?, Liste Weidner; copies have been published in Béatrice André-Salvini, “Textes lexicographiques de Ras Shamra-Ugarit (campagnes 1986-1992),” *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 46, 2004: 147–54; Béatrice André-Salvini and Mirjo Salvini, “Un nouveau vocabulaire trilingue sumérien-akkadien-hourrite de Ras Shamra,” *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 9 (1999): 3–40; Béatrice André-Salvini and Mirjo Salvini, “Additions and Corrections to SCCNH 9 (1998) 3–40,” *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 10 (1998): 434–35; Béatrice André-Salvini and Mirjo Salvini, “La colonne I du vocabulaire Sa trilingue RS 94-2939,” *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 41 (1999): 145–46. See also John Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989, 331–36; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 297–99. For the lexical texts of Ras Ibn Hani see note 42 above. On the other hand, as noted by Veldhuis, *ibid.*, 280, “many more [lexical texts from Ugarit] remain unpublished and are known exclusively from catalogs”. In neighbouring Siyannu, two lexical texts have been found (as yet unpublished) that “relate in format and contents to the Hattuša lexical material” (Veldhuis, *ibid.*, 302).

⁷⁰ van Soldt, “The Role of Babylon,” 207–8.

⁷¹ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts,” 174.

⁷² The lexical texts were found in three main archives, known as the “House of Rap’ānu”, “Maison-aux-tablettes” and the Lamaštu-archive, cf. van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts,” 178–80 and 194.

⁷³ Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 297–99; Arnaud, *Corpus des textes de bibliothèque*, 7–11; Carole Roche, “Jeux de mots, jeux de signes en Ougarit ou de l’influence des textes lexicaux sur les scribes de périphérie,” in *D’Ougarit à Jérusalem. Recueil d’études épigraphiques et archéologiques offert à Pierre Bordreuil*, ed. Carole Roche (Paris: De Boccard, 2008), 206–7; van Soldt, “The Role of Babylon,” 209–10.

scribes from Babylonia,⁷⁴ Assyria⁷⁵ and probably also from Hurrian speaking areas.⁷⁶ It is very likely that the private archives were also schools for scribes.⁷⁷ This material has enabled Wilfred H. van Soldt to reconstruct, to some extent, the scholastic curriculum developed there, which may have been as follows: Tu-ta-ti – Silbenalphabet/vokabular A – S^a Syllabary/Vocabulary – (paradigms) – Weidner God List – (?) – ḪAR-ra=*hubullu* – Lu – Izi – Diri.⁷⁸ It shows that although the lexical tradition followed in Ugarit was not the same as in Nippur,⁷⁹ in general it certainly seemed to follow the curriculum of Mesopotamian towns in the Old Babylonian period such as Uruk or Sippar Amnanum.⁸⁰ In addition, the Mesopotamian material was adapted significantly to local requirements. In this way, for example, in Ugarit columns were added in Hurrian and Ugaritic to the polyglot Syllable Vocabulary A (Sa Voc.), the languages of

⁷⁴ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 179; Florence Malbran-Labat, “Langues et écritures à Ougarit,” *Semitica* 49 (1999): 100; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Palaeography of Two Ugarit Archives,” in *Theory and Practice of Knowledge Transfer. Studies in School Education in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, ed. W.S. van Egmond and W.H. van Soldt (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 173–77.

⁷⁵ Malbran-Labat, “Langues et écritures,” 100; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “Naḥiš-Šalmu, an Assyrian Scribe Working in the ‘Southern Palace’ at Ugarit,” in *Studies Presented to Klaas R. Veenhof on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Wilfred H. van Soldt *et al.* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2001), 429–44; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Orthography of Ugaritic Words in Texts Written by the Assyrian Scribe Naḥiš-Šalmu,” in *Ex Mesopotamia et Syria Lux. Festschrift für Manfred Dietrich zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Oswald Loretz, Kai A. Metzler and Hanspeter Schaudig (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2002), 685–97; van Soldt, “The Palaeography of Two Ugarit Archives,” 172–3; Yoram Cohen, “An Assyrian Teacher at Ugarit? A New Reading of the Colophon of *Šimā Milka* (‘Hear The Advice’) from the *Maison aux Tablettes*,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 74 (2017): 274–83.

⁷⁶ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 182; Malbran-Labat, “Langues et écritures,” 100–1. Concerning the scribes of Ugarit generally see *id.*, *ibid.*, 180–83; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “School and Scribal Tradition in Ugarit,” in *Cultures and Societies in the Middle Euphrates and Habur Areas in the Second Millennium BC I. Scribal Education and Scribal Traditions*, ed. Shigeo Yamada and Daisuke Shibata (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), 149; Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley, “An Essay on Scribal Families, Tradition, and Innovation in Thirteenth-Century Ugarit,” in *Beyond Hatti. A Tribute to Gary Beckman*, ed. Billie Jean Collins and Piotr Michalowski (Atlanta: Lockwood Press, 2013), 255–64; Hawley, Pardee and Roche-Hawley, “The Scribal Culture of Ugarit,” 229–67. We are beginning to identify the hands of different scribes, as shown by the study by Françoise Ernst-Pradal, *Scribes d’Ougarit et paléographie akkadienne. Les textes juridiques signés* (Leuven: Peeters 2019).

⁷⁷ Christopher M. Monroe, *Scales of Fate. Trade, Tradition, and Transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean ca. 1350 – 1175 BCE*. (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009), 141–42; Carole Roche-Hawley, “Scribes, Houses and Neighborhoods at Ugarit,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 44 (2013): 421; del Olmo Lete, *The private archives of Ugarit*, i.a. 58, 59, 83–84.

⁷⁸ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 174, marking as unclear: Ea, Table of Measures, Grammatical Texts, Nigga, Erimḥuš. On this see also Fincke, “The School Curricula from Ḫattuša, Emar and Ugarit,” 91–92; Carole Roche-Hawley, “Mesopotamian Cuneiform at Ugarit: Learning versus Using,” in *Devins et lettrés dans l’orbite de Babylone*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: De Boccard, 2015), 59–80; van Soldt, “School and Scribal Tradition in Ugarit,” 146–47.

⁷⁹ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 182.

⁸⁰ Nick Veldhuis, “Old Babylonian School Curricula,” in *Cultures and Societies in the Middle Euphrates and Habur Areas in the Second Millennium BC I. Scribal Education and Scribal Traditions*, ed. Shigeo Yamada and Daisuke Shibata (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), 1–12.

students,⁸¹ e.g. [sign] nu: [Akk.] *a-bu* : [Hurr.] *at-ta-ni* : [Ug.] *a-da-nu*, “father”.

In virtually the same archives that provided lexical material were found a relatively high number of religious and literary texts: incantations (e.g. against Lamaštu, against *šimmatu*, against *šamānu*), hemerologies, prayers, hymns, omen texts (e.g. *šumma izbu*, Enuma Anu Enlil), literature (e.g. Poem of Early Rulers, Ludingira, a text close in content to *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*, a possible excerpt from a flood story, the Gilgameš Epic), etc.⁸² They are not original compositions and they contain mistakes, which has led van Soldt to conclude that “it would seem likely that this category of texts was not copied for its own sake but was used as study material for apprentice scribes...in order for them to practise the acquired knowledge of Sumerian and Akkadian in context”.⁸³

Based on what has been said about Ugarit, van Soldt suggests that in the Western Periphery, education was divided into two phases.⁸⁴ In the first, the student wrote out exercises and word lists, and this phase was further subdivided into three steps; Step 1: writing techniques (Syllable Alphabet A, Syllabary A, followed by personal names or other exercises, like paradigms); Step 2: various lists: the Weidner God List, Metrological tables and Grammatical texts; Step 3: Hh, Lu, Izi, Diri, probably also Nigga. In the second phase, the scribe wrote out religious and literary texts. In turn, this curriculum directly influenced the organization of teaching the local cuneiform alphabetic script and the Ugaritic language in Ugarit. This meant that the structure of the alphabetical scribal curriculum itself was a calque on the Mesopotamian curriculum, although its content was distinctly local.⁸⁵

3.3. Emar

As we have seen (section 2.1), in Emar there were two different scribal traditions, known as “Syrian” and “Syro-Hittite”, that also correspond to two successive historical

⁸¹ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 175.

⁸² Cf. van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts”, 176–8 and 207–8 (Appendix II); Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 337–38; van Soldt, “School and Scribal Tradition in Ugarit,” 147–48. This set of texts has been collected in Arnaud, *Corpus des textes de bibliothèque*; on the Gilgameš Epic see also Anthonioz, “Miroir d’une transmission du *Gilgameš*,” 54–57, on *šumma izbu* also Marie-Françoise Besnier, “Diffusion et transmission de la série *šumma izbu*: les textes de la ‘périphérie’ au Bronze récent,” in *Devins et lettrés dans l’orbite de Babylone: Travaux réalisés dans le cadre du projet ANR Mespériph 2007–2011*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: de Boccard, 2015), 256–59, 289–92. See also the study by Yoram Cohen, *Wisdom from the Late Bronze Age* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013).

⁸³ van Soldt, “Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts,” 178.

⁸⁴ van Soldt, “The Role of Babylon,” 208–9.

⁸⁵ Robert Hawley, “On the Alphabetic Scribal Curriculum at Ugarit,” in *Proceedings of the 51st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*, ed. Robert D. Biggs, Jennie Myers and Martha T. Roth (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008), 57–67; Roche-Hawley and Hawley, “An Essay on Scribal Families,” 255–64; van Soldt, “School and Scribal Tradition in Ugarit,” 150–51.

periods.⁸⁶ As a result, there were two different schooling traditions, although they were both based on the Old Babylonian educational institutions and curriculum, which they shared with other contemporary sites in the Western Periphery, especially Ugarit and Hattuša.⁸⁷ Just like in those and other places in this peripheral zone, in Emar also there is evidence for some scribes from Mesopotamia.⁸⁸ On the other hand, unlike in other towns in Syria and Canaan, in Emar it has been possible to identify a private house that functioned as a school, a library and an archive, in which all the scholarly material and the exercise tablets from official excavations were found.⁸⁹ However, we do not know at what date and by which routes this school material reached Emar.⁹⁰

The Syrian school material preserved includes lexical lists (ḪAR-ra=*hubullu*,⁹¹ S^a Vocabulary, the sag-tablet), omen compendia (extispicy omen compendia, the sipa compendium, the kak.ti compendium), the Lunar Signs omen, incantations (the *manna lušpur* incantation), and a literary composition (the “Benediction for a King”).⁹² Some of these tablets would be used as reference material, but others can be considered rather as “work in progress” copies.⁹³ According to Yoram Cohen, “The ‘Syrian’ school curriculum commenced with basic compositions such as the ḪAR-ra=*hubullu* lexical list, in its unilingual (i.e. Sumerian) edition...and other lexical lists such as the Sa

⁸⁶ The fundamental book on scribes and schools in Emar is Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*. See also, more recently, Yoram Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background of the Scribal School at the City of Emar in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Theory and Practice of Knowledge Transfer. Studies in School Education in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, ed. W.S. van Egmond and W.H. van Soldt (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 115–27; Yoram Cohen, “The Scribal Traditions of Late Bronze Age Emar,” in *Cultures and Societies in the Middle Euphrates and Habur Areas in the Second Millennium BC I. Scribal Education and Scribal Traditions*, ed. Shigeo Yamada and Daisuke Shibata (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), 119–31. On the scribes and the two lexical texts from Ekalte see Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 93–97, and Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 300–1, respectively.

⁸⁷ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 27, 241. On the similarities and differences between the lexical texts from Emar and Ugarit see van Soldt, “The Role of Babylon”, 209–10; Fincke, “The School Curricula”; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 280.

⁸⁸ On the scribe called Kidin-Gula, from North Babylonia or the Mid-Euphrates region and who was directly involved in the training of local scribes, see Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 183–89; Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background,” 122. For two other foreign scribes, one possibly Assyrian, see *id.*, *ibid.*, 116–17.

⁸⁹ This is the temple known as “Temple M₁”, in Area M, although there no basis, either archaeological or textual, for considering it to be a temple. This dwelling contained the documents pertaining to the Zū-Ba‘la family, but also to other people. For more detail see Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 54–55.

⁹⁰ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 242.

⁹¹ Hh I, Hh III-V_a, Hh V_b-VII, Hh VIII-IX, Hh X, Hh XI-XII, Hh XIII, Hh XIV-XV, Hh XXII, cf. Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 134; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 285.

⁹² Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 145; Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background”, 117–20. For the lexical texts from Emar see also Merijn Gantzert, *The Emar Lexical Texts. Part 1. Text Edition*. Maastricht: Uitgeverij Boekenplan, 2008; Merijn Gantzert, *The Emar Lexical Texts. Part 2. Composite Edition*. Maastricht: Uitgeverij Boekenplan, 2008; Merijn Gantzert, *The Emar Lexical Texts. Part 3. Structural Analysis*. Maastricht: Uitgeverij Boekenplan, 2008; Merijn Gantzert, *The Emar Lexical Texts. Part 4. Theoretical Interpretation*. Maastricht, 2011. PhD; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 280–97.

⁹³ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 146.

Vocabulary. It also included a variety of extispicy omens (such as those of the liver)...Some complete manuscripts, obviously not scribal exercises, were deposited as library copies. Such is the sag-tablet...and the “Benediction for a King”.⁹⁴

The Syro-Hittite educational material is much more abundant. The first phase of teaching (cf. section 3.2) started with the lexical lists, which in Emar are represented by copies of Silbenvokabular A, Palaeographic Syllabary A,⁹⁵ the S^a Vocabulary, and the Weidner god list.⁹⁶ The scribes then moved on to 𐎶AR-ra=*hubullu* (with two columns for Sumerian and Akkadian),⁹⁷ lú=*ša*⁹⁸ and izi=*išātu* lexical lists, to which were added the diri=*watru* and ní-ga=*makkūru* lexical lists. All the lists are either unilingual (a Sumerian column only) or bilingual (columns in Sumerian and Akkadian); unlike in Ugarit (section 3.2) and Canaan (section 3.5), the texts do not have additional columns in the local language, although sometimes there are occasional glosses, mostly in Akkadian or West Semitic, which function as synonyms for the Akkadian terms to which they refer.⁹⁹ The second phase of schooling (section 3.2) included learning technical literature, which in Emar is represented by omens (*iqqur-īpuš* omens, celestial omens, *šumma immeru* omens, *šumma izbu* omens, physiognomic omens, medical omens),¹⁰⁰ incantations (e.g. Udug-ḫul incantation, incantation against *šimmatu*, two medico-magical incantations),¹⁰¹ and literary compositions (The “Ballade”, The “Fowler”, Enlil and Namzitarra, *šima milka*, the Epic of Gilgameš, The Disputation between the Date-palm and the Tamarisk, The Letter of Šîn-iddinam to Utu).¹⁰² Their relative scarcity indicates that they may be library copies or else the work of advanced

⁹⁴ Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background”, 119.

⁹⁵ Carole Roche-Hawley, “On the Palaeographic ‘Syllabary A’ in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. Elena Devecchi (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 126–30, 135–39.

⁹⁶ For more detail on the lexical texts from Emar see Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 195–208. For the section of the curriculum that corresponds to the lexical lists see *id. ibid.*, 195.

⁹⁷ Hh I, Hh II, Hh III-V_a, Hh V_b-VII, Hh VIII-IX, Hh X, Hh XI-XII, Hh XIII, Hh XIV-XV, Hh XVI, Hh XVII, Hh XVIII, Hh XIX, Hh XX, Hh XXI-XXII, Hh XXIII-XXIV cf. Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 202–5. This version of 𐎶AR-ra=*hubullu* is more recent than the one used by “Syrian” scribes, cf. Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background”, 122. See also Cohen, “The Scribal Traditions of Late Bronze Age Emar”, 123; Besnier, “Remarques préliminaires,” 119–37; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 287–94; Jan Gerrit Dercksen, “New Fragments and Joins to Published Emar Tablets,” *KASKAL* 16 (2020): 33–35.

⁹⁸ See the edition of lists LU I from Emar in Carole Roche-Hawley, “Étude épigraphique des manuscrits des listes LU I d’Emar,” in *Scribes et érudits dans l’orbite de Babylone*, ed. Carole Roche-Hawley and Robert Hawley (Paris: De Boccard, 2012), 53–117.

⁹⁹ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 196; Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 293–94; Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background,” 123: “this phenomenon as far as can be judged is typical only to the Emar lexical lists, and within, specifically to those written in the Syro-Hittite tradition”.

¹⁰⁰ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 208–14; Besnier, “Diffusion et transmission,” 254–56, 282–88.

¹⁰¹ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 214–19.

¹⁰² Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 219–24. On these compositions see also Cohen, *Wisdom from the Late Bronze Age*; Stéphanie Anthonioz, “Miroir d’une transmission du *Gilgameš*,” 51–54.

students.¹⁰³ In general, it seems that the differences that can be seen in the scholarly material between the two scribal traditions reflect a certain degree of vitality in the transmission of schools texts to Emar, as happened also elsewhere in the Western Periphery.¹⁰⁴

3.4. Alalah

Levels I/II and II/III in Alalah have provided four tablets of the lexical series HAR-ra=*hubullu*: AIT 445 (HAR-ra=*hubullu* 7: leather; metals), AIT 446 (HAR-ra=*hubullu* 6: pots), AIT 447 (HAR-ra=*hubullu* 10: stones; plants) and A03-R1001+ (HAR-ra=*hubullu* 11: birds).¹⁰⁵ The first three are very close to traditions from Ugarit and Emar (Syro-Hittite tradition),¹⁰⁶ whereas A03-R1001+ has a much closer resemblance to an Old Babylonian tablet from Ur (UET 7, 92).¹⁰⁷ Later, a fragment of tablet I of Diri (AIT 13062)¹⁰⁸ and a fragment from the obverse of an exemplar of Syllabary A (AIT 22997)¹⁰⁹ were discovered. In contrast, from Level IV have come fragments of three incantation tablets (AIT 448, AIT 449, AIT 450), two omen tablets (AIT 451, AIT 452), and two bilingual hymns (AIT 453, 453a),¹¹⁰ discovered in the same archaeological context.¹¹¹ Eva von Dassow notes that they form “a group distinct in content from any tablets found within the palace or elsewhere in Level IV” and that they must have belonged to the library of a scribe with specialized training, located in a building next to

¹⁰³ Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 219, 237.

¹⁰⁴ Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background,” 123.

¹⁰⁵ Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 300. AIT 445 and AIT 446 belong to Level I/II, AIT 447 to Level II/III (von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 19), whereas the find-spot for A03-R1001+ “cannot be related to any archaeological context” (Jacob Lauinger, “Epigraphic Finds from the Oriental Institute’s 2003 Excavations at Alalah,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 64, 2005: 54).

¹⁰⁶ Veldhuis, *Lexical Tradition*, 300.

¹⁰⁷ Jacob Lauinger, “Epigraphic Finds,” 55.

¹⁰⁸ Eva von Dassow, “Diri and Sa at Alalah,” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 2017: 95: “entries 108-124 in the canonical recension or entries 96-103 in the Ugarit recension (MSL XV, pp. 70, 108), with some omissions and variations”.

¹⁰⁹ von Dassow, “Diri and Sa at Alalah,” 95: “The surviving lines, flanked by traces of other columns, correspond to Sa entries 251-258 (MSL III, pp. 31-32)”. Both fragments probably belong to Level IV, cf. *ibid.*, 96. von Dassow (*ibid.*) also notes that these lexical fragments “do not suffice, however, to attest the training of the scribes who worked at Alalah IV. Wherever they learned their trade, their instruction required many more tablets”.

¹¹⁰ As well as two unidentified fragments; cf. von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 40. AIT 450: “Incantation...But only the ideograms naming deities can be read” (Donald J. Wiseman, *The Alalah Tablets*, London: The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1953, 114); AIT 451: “Omen related to an eclipse” (*id.*, *ibid.*); AIT 452: “Omen text interpreting the meaning of an eclipse...[AIT] 451 may follow (but does not join) this tablet” (*ibid.*); AIT 453: “Bilingual Hymn to the Sun-god. Sumerian with, at least in part, Akkadian translation” (*ibid.*, 115); AIT 453a: “Bilingual Hymn. Unidentified and possibly to be compared with [AIT] 453” (*ibid.*, 115).

¹¹¹ von Dassow, “Archives of Alalah IV,” 14 (“Palace courtyard (Room 1)”), 27 (“in the courtyard facing the palace entrance”).

the palace.¹¹² This set of lexical and literary texts provides evidence, therefore, of the two phases in the training of a scribe in the Western Periphery (section 3.2).¹¹³

3.5. Hazor, Ashkelon, Aphek

The Mesopotamian school tradition is very evident also in Canaan, the examples being few but eloquent. The discovery in Hazor of a prism fragment datable to the Middle Bronze Age, containing part of a combined multiplication table and created *in situ* (Hazor 9),¹¹⁴ was a strong indication of the possible presence there of a scribal school in this period. Later, three liver model fragments also from the Middle Bronze Age (Hazor 2, Hazor 3, Hazor 17)¹¹⁵ and a school tablet with an excerpt from *ḪAR-ra=ḫubullu* from the Late Bronze Age (Hazor 6)¹¹⁶ show that, in effect, Hazor had a school of scribes throughout the second millennium.¹¹⁷ This school was open to outside influence: some palaeographic traces in the multiplication table connect this text directly with the scribal tradition of Mari,¹¹⁸ and the excerpt from *ḪAR-ra=ḫubullu* is a western parallel of the type already known from Ugarit and Emar.¹¹⁹

Lexical fragments found in Ashkelon and Aphek show that, as in other peripheral sites, in Canaan they also made the necessary adaptations of the material to local teaching requirements. The fragment from Ashkelon, datable to ca. the 13th century BCE,¹²⁰ only preserves part of two columns, but in all likelihood the text had three columns, for entries in Sumerian, Akkadian, and the local Northwest Semitic language;

¹¹² Known as “Suite C1-D1”; detailed information on the archaeological context is given in von Dassow, “Archives of Alalāḫ IV,” 48, where she also notes that “these remnants of a scholar's library might be associated with Kabiya, the priest whose tablets were found inside that structure”.

¹¹³ For other aspects relating to the scribes of Alalāḫ in the Late Bronze Age, where they surely enjoyed high status, see von Dassow, *State and Society in the Late Bronze Age*, 86, who also notes (*ibid.*, 243 n. 10) that “No study has been undertaken to identify different scribal hands, or different scribal habits, in this group of tablets or any other ‘unsigned’ Alalāḫ IV tablets”. On the scribe called Šarruwe in connection with the Inscription of Idrimi see *ead.*, *ibid.*, 29–33; Lauinger, “Discourse and Meta-Discourse”, and McConaughy Medill, “The Idrimi Statue Inscription”.

¹¹⁴ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 75–77.

¹¹⁵ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders. *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 64–66, 85–86.

¹¹⁶ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders. *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 70–72.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Yoram Cohen, review of *Cuneiform in Canaan. Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society 2006), by Wayne Horowitz, Takayoshi Oshima and Seth Sanders, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 349 (2008): 83; Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars*, 48.

¹¹⁸ Wayne Horowitz, “A Combined Multiplication Table on a Prism Fragment from Hazor,” *Israel Exploration Journal*, 47 (1997): 195.

¹¹⁹ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 71, who also point out that this fragment “could be from a Sumerian-only forerunner to Urra on one column, or from a bilingual, or perhaps even trilingual, forerunner written over multiple subcolumns, for which we now have only part of the Sumerian”.

¹²⁰ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders. *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 40.

in fact, almost all the entries preserves the Northwest Semitic *yarḥu*, “month”.¹²¹ This tablet is a parallel to HAR-ra=*hubullu* I, which matches the Emar version exactly.¹²² Similarly, Aphek has provided us with a fragment of a lexical text that also dates to the 13th century BCE,¹²³ in which the five preserved lines reveal that the text was also arranged in three columns: the first for the Sumerian term, the second for the Akkadian version and the third for the version in the local (Northwest Semitic) language (e.g. [Sum.] [gešti]n.meš : [Akk.] *ka-ra-nu* : [NWS] *ye-nu*, “wine”). From Aphek also we have a second lexical fragment, contemporary with the previous one.¹²⁴ It only preserves part of two columns, but there are some indications that it, too, was trilingual (Sumerian, Akkadian and Northwest Semitic).¹²⁵ Compared to the Mesopotamian models, these texts from Aphek show more freedom than the other lexical text from the periphery.¹²⁶

Based on the lexical documents from Hazor, Ashkelon and Aphek, together with the fragment of the Gilgamesh Epic from Megiddo (section 2.5), it could be accepted that centres of cuneiform literacy existed in several other city-states of Canaan from the Middle Bronze Age to the close of the Late Bronze Age.¹²⁷

3.6. Amarna Letters

The *Amarna Letters* also seem to reveal indirect evidence of lexical texts in Canaanite scribal centres during the 14th century BCE. Indications of this are provided by a number of glosses that appear to be unnecessary from a practical point of view, although they could have been extracted from the lexical lists that the scribes had used when being taught, in order to hint at their professional background, their training as writing professionals, and their scribal expertise.¹²⁸ Consequently, these glosses could

¹²¹ John Huehnergard and Wilfred van Soldt, “A Cuneiform Lexical Text from Ashkelon with a Canaanite column,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 49 (1999): 191; Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 40.

¹²² Huehnergard and van Soldt, “A Cuneiform Lexical Text,” 191.

¹²³ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 30: ca. 1230 BCE.

¹²⁴ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 27.

¹²⁵ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 28–29.

¹²⁶ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 28: “Upon closer examination...it becomes clear that the tablet is not part of the traditional Sumero-Akkadian lexical list genre”.

¹²⁷ For much the same view see already Hayim Tadmor, “A Lexicographical Text from Hazor,” *Israel Exploration Journal*, 27 (1977): 101–2; Cohen, “The Historical and Social Background”, 123.

¹²⁸ On this see the detailed study by Juan-Pablo Vita, “On the Lexical Background of the Amarna Glosses,” *Altorientalische Forschungen* 39 (2012), 278–86; also Juan-Pablo Vita, “Language Contact between Akkadian and Northwest Semitic Languages in Syria-Palestine in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Semitic Language in Contact*, ed. Aaron M. Butts (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 390. On this see also the comments by Jacob Lauinger, “On UD = *tu* in the Levantine Correspondence from Tell el-Amarna,” in *Keilschriftliche Syllabare. Zur Methodik ihrer Erstellung*, ed. Jörg Klinger and Sebastian Fischer (Gladbeck: PeWe-Verlag, 2019), 49–50.

somehow directly reflect elements from the lexicographical education of the scribes and may be of assistance in the identification of underlying lexical texts. As an example, see the following case, from a letter from Megiddo: *ù la-a-mi ni-le-ú ZÚ.SI.GA ba-qa-ni: qà-šf-ra ù la-a-mi ni-le-ú a-ší KÀ a-bu-ul-lí: ša-aḥ-ri iš-tu pa-ni 1la-ab-a-ya*, “And we cannot do the plucking, and we cannot go out of the gate because of Lab’aya” (EA 244: 13–17).¹²⁹ On this, Shlomo Izre’el comments: “The scribe of this letter interestingly uses tripartite gloss sets. It reminds us of the trilingual vocabularies used in cuneiform schools, where each lexeme is represented by a Sumerian logogram, its Akkadian counterpart, and finally the local word, the latter two in syllabic writing...The employment of such tripartite gloss sets is understandable in the context of cuneiform scribal education”.¹³⁰

4. Akkadian in Syria and Canaan

4.1. Introduction

As we have already seen (section 1), in Syria and Canaan, Akkadian came into contact with other Semitic languages, that is, with genetically related languages, a linguistic situation with peculiar issues.¹³¹ These were languages such as Emarite, Ugaritic and Canaanite, belonging to the Northwest Semitic sub-family and corresponding to clearly differentiated geographical, social and political environments.¹³² It also came into contact with Hurrian, an agglutinative and ergative language belonging to the Hurro-Urartian family, unrelated to the Semitic and Afro-Asiatic languages,¹³³ resulting in what is called “Hurro-Akkadian”. However, it should be remembered that Akkadian was not a language spoken in the societies of

¹²⁹ Identified by Shlomo Izre’el, “Canaanite Varieties in the Second Millennium BC: Can We Dispense with Anacronism?,” *Orient* 38 (2003): 91; see also Vita, “Language Contact,” 391–92.

¹³⁰ Izre’el, “Canaanite Varieties,” 91. It should also be borne in mind that some of these scribes came from outside this geographical area, cf. Vita, *Canaanite Scribes*, 144. See also Cohen, *Wisdom from the Late Bronze Age*, 224–29, on the proverbs and proverbial sayings in the Amarna Letters (*ibid.*, 225: “The proverbs in the Amarna letters definitely stand out as a unique collection, for such a concentration of wisdom sayings is not found outside this corpus”).

¹³¹ As expounded by Patience Epps, John Huehnergard and Na’ama Pat-El, “Introduction: Contact Among Genetically Related Languages,” *Journal of Language Contact* 6 (2013): 209–19.

¹³² On this see Vita, “Language Contact”. No texts are preserved in Emarite or in Canaanite; our knowledge of these languages is limited to the linguistic elements preserved in the Akkadian texts written in Emar and in various localities in Canaan. Ugaritic, in turn, is attested to not only in Akkadian texts but above all in hundreds of texts written entirely in that language, using a specific alphabet. As previously seen (section 3.4), the writing of Ugaritic was also taught in schools largely following the Mesopotamian curricular model.

¹³³ Mauro Giorgieri, “Schizzo grammaticale della lingua hurrica,” in *La civiltà dei hurriti* (Naples: Macchiaroli Editore, 2000), 171–295; Ilse Wegner, *Einführung in die hurritische Sprache*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007).

Emar, Ugarit, Alalah or Canaan. In those places, therefore, there was absolutely no prolonged and significant contact between two linguistic communities interacting in the same area. Contact between Akkadian and the aforementioned languages occurred only within communities of scribes, that is, inside small communities of specialized professionals, and therefore it can be described as written language contact.¹³⁴ The mother tongue of those scribes was Northwest Semitic or Hurrian, but their language for study, work and prestige was Akkadian.¹³⁵

The sections that follow focus on the various forms of Akkadian used in Emar, Ugarit and (very briefly) Hazor, as well as those called “Hurro-Akkadian” and “Canaano-Akkadian”.¹³⁶ The description will focus on purely grammatical aspects, and will have to be brief and impressionistic, so that only those aspects that differ from standard Babylonian Akkadian will be mentioned.

4.2. Emar

The Akkadian language used in Emar has been studied comprehensively by Stefano Seminara.¹³⁷ Seminara considers the Syrian tradition to be the product of an Old Babylonian tradition, although it is not possible to establish exactly when it was brought to the city.¹³⁸ This tradition is marked, among other elements, by a tendency towards the classical language (understood as a continuation of the Old Babylonian canon), but also by allowing to glimpse a series of elements that can be interpreted as the vernacular and show that the written cuneiform culture of Emar certainly goes back to the 3rd millennium BCE. In fact, in Emar we need to take into account the influence on

¹³⁴ Alexander Andrason and Juan-Pablo Vita, “Contact Languages of the Ancient Near East - Three more Case Studies (Ugaritic-Hurrian, Hurro-Akkadian and Canaano-Akkadian),” *Journal of Language Contact* 9 (2016), 297–99.

¹³⁵ The prestige of Akkadian amongst these communities of scribes produced a second peculiarity in this type of linguistic contact concerning writing: scribes in Syria and Canaan in the Late Bronze Age did not seem to think of using the Mesopotamian logo-syllabic script for writing local Northwest Semitic languages. This fact may concern, in the ancient Near East of the second millennium BCE, only these types of language and certainly does not affect non-Semitic languages such as Hurrian or Hittite. At least in the cases of Ugarit and Canaan, scribes demonstrated that this procedure was feasible though it was not exploited. Inhibiting factors must therefore have been in play that prevented Northwest Semitic languages from being written in the Mesopotamian cuneiform script. On these matters see, generally, Vita, “Language Contact”.

¹³⁶ On the Akkadian of Karkemiš see Huehnergard, “The Akkadian Dialects of Charchemish and Ugarit”.

¹³⁷ Stefano Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar* (Rome: Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza”, 1998), 326–28. The indexes to the texts quoted in this book can be found in Josué J. Justel and Bárbara Solans, “L'accadico di Emar by S. Seminara: an ‘Index of texts’ and Other Resources,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 48 (2017): 273–362. For other, more specific studies on the Akkadian of Emar, see paragraph 6 “Lenguas y epigrafía” in the bibliography compiled by Faist, Justel, Sakal and Vita, “Bibliografía de los estudios de Emar (8)”.

¹³⁸ Stefano Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 326–28. Even so, for the arrival of this tradition in Emar he proposes (*ibid.*, 327) the 16th century BCE as the *terminus ante quem* and the period of the archives of Mari as the *terminus post quem*.

Akkadian of Emarite, the local Northwest Semitic language,¹³⁹ even though no text in that language has ever been preserved.¹⁴⁰ Onto this double foundation (local tradition and Syrian tradition) somewhat later came the Syro-Hittite tradition, bearing the imprint of Middle Babylonian, but also combined with linguistic features of the Western periphery.

Among the phonological features, cases of *š* + dental can be mentioned: legal texts in the Syrian tradition preserve the *š* (e.g. *iš-tú-ur*, “he wrote”, TmE 91a 47:7), in texts in the Syro-Hittite tradition there is usually the change of *š* > *l* (e.g. *al-ta-kán-šu*, “I placed it” < **aštakan-*, Emar 6/3 30:5); instead, the preposition *ištu* is usually written as *iš-tu* in both traditions.¹⁴¹ The change of *w* > *m* is found in texts of the Syro-Hittite tradition (e.g. *muš-šur*, “he will be free”, Emar 6/3 177:21’). Also evident is the partial lack of differentiation (or the confusion) between voiceless, voiced and emphatic consonants in the same set,¹⁴² a feature shared with what is called “Hurro-Akkadian” (see section 4.4). Mimetic, in general, tends to be preserved only as a fossilized writing or historical spelling in formulaic contexts (e.g. Syrian tradition *iš-tu U₄-mi an-ni-im*, “from this day”, Emar 6/3 34:1, as against Syro-Hittite tradition *iš-tu U₄-mi an-ni-i*, Emar 6/3 181:1).

The nominative of the 3sg.m of the independent personal pronoun has the allomorphs *šū* (Babylonian form) and *šūt* (Assyrian form). The first form is always found in *ummā šū(-ma)*, the introductory formula for direct speech, and the second acts as a copula in nominal clauses.¹⁴³ The frequent spelling *ni-e-nu* for the 1pl suggests that it is the Assyrian form *nēnu* (vs Bab. *nīnu*). In general, the 3pl.m form *šunu* is used both for the masculine and for the feminine. Generally speaking, there is a lack of morphological distinction between gen., dat. and acc.; as in Middle Babylonian, the paradigm of the gen.-acc. tends to converge in the dative (that is, with the consonant -*š*-, e.g. 2sg.m *kāša*, 3sg.f *šāši*, 3pl.m *šāšunu*). Regarding the pronominal suffixes in the gen., the 1sg exhibits a clear tendency to the reduction of the allomorph -*ī* to one only, -*ja*. As happens in peripheral Akkadian, the 3sg.f morpheme -*ši*, which in Akkadian is only used for the acc., is extended to the gen., partly replacing the suff. -*ša*. The dual

¹³⁹ The Emarite linguistic material was compiled and studied in Pentiuc, *West Semitic Vocabulary*. See also Vita, “Language Contact,” 377–80, with previous bibliography. The personal names were studied by Regine Pruzsinszky, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Emar* (Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 2003).

¹⁴⁰ On the possible reasons for this circumstance see Vita, “Language Contact,” 380–82.

¹⁴¹ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 470–75.

¹⁴² Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 211.

¹⁴³ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 239: “My explanation of this apparent anomaly is based on its formulaic character in the Emarite way of using Akkadian”.

pronoun probably occurs in the two forms *-šinī* and *-šumā*. The 3pl.f. suffix *-šina* occurs rarely, often replaced by the masc. form *-šunu*. In the acc., the form *-šunu* (as against the more frequent form *-šunūti*) could be either an Assyrianism or an extension of the gen. to the acc.

In nouns, case endings are generally kept, although the system does exhibit some instability.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, the acc. ending can be expressed by using one of the three vowels *-a*, *-i*, *-u*, which means that the acc. of e.g. *bītu*, “house” appears as *É-ta*, *É-ti* or *É-tu₄* (depending on the habits of each scribe). Similarly, alongside the gen. in *-i* there are quite a few forms ending in *-u* or *-a*. As for number, just like in other peripheral Akkadian dialects, the masculine plural sometimes ends in *-ūtu*, belonging to the plural of adjectives. In the formation of the *status constructus* without pronominal suffixes, alongside traditional Akkadian forms, and certainly due to the influence of the local language,¹⁴⁵ forms occur in which the *nomen regens* has the same ending as in the *status rectus*, e.g. nom. KIŠIB-*ku* PN, “the seal of PN” (TmE 91a 63:27), acc. [tu]p-*pa* [m]PN, “the tablet of PN” (TmE 92a 11:37), a feature that has good parallels in the Akkadian of Ugarit (section 4.3). This tendency continues in forms of the *status constructus* with pronominal suffixes, e.g. ŠÀ-*bu-šu*, “his heart” (Emar 6/3 9:31.109). Conspicuous in genitival constructions (especially in the Syro-Hittite tradition) is the construction *nomen regens*-pron. suff. + *ša* + *nomen rectum*, e.g. *a-na* DUMU.MÍ-*ša ša* FPN, “as a daughter of FPN” (Emar 6/3 216:6), widespread especially in peripheral Akkadian.¹⁴⁶

As for the verb, the frequent use of *tV-* forms in the verbal prefix of the 3sg.f may have been preferred (as in Ugarit) due to its similarity with the corresponding prefix in the local language.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps once again due to local influence,¹⁴⁸ the dual is used in both traditions, but not consistently: when there are two subjects, the verb may agree in the dual, singular or plural.

In the system of tenses, unlike other peripheral Akkadian dialects, the stative shows no sign of interference between the Akkadian stative and the Northwest Semitic

¹⁴⁴ Which Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 300, ascribes to the possible influence of the local spoken language.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Pentiuc, *West Semitic Vocabulary*, 245–46.

¹⁴⁶ A construction that Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 325, considers to be “a common feature (a sort of isogloss) of all North-West Akkadian, which must have had local developments that differed from one region to another”.

¹⁴⁷ See Pentiuc, *West Semitic Vocabulary*, 246–48.

¹⁴⁸ See the examples of the dual in verbal forms with Akkadianized patterns in Pentiuc, *West Semitic Vocabulary*, 246–47.

perfective.¹⁴⁹ The alternation between verbs in the preterit and in the perfect in the same syntactic context is not modal but temporal.¹⁵⁰ In general terms, the preterit expresses earlier or collateral actions that are secondary in respect of the time when the main action is set, although there are also quite a number of exceptions.¹⁵¹

The ventive is governed more by rules than by the meaning of the verb. This means that its position is always in front of certain pronominal suffixes but is omitted before others, in this way simplifying and reducing the functional eclecticism of the Akkadian ventive.¹⁵² The ending *-u* of the subordination marker is used in free alternation with $\emptyset$, probably due to the influence of the local language. On the other hand, and unlike standard Akkadian, the prohibitive is formed not only by means of the particle *lā* + present, but also with the particles *ul* and *lū lā*, although all three forms are semantically and functionally equivalent.

As in other peripheral Akkadian dialects, in Emar there is confusion between the G and D conjugations, while N is unproductive: it does not occur very often, exhibits morphological anomalies (e.g. preterit *ipparas* instead of *ipparis*), is used more as a reflexive than as a passive, etc.

Unlike other types of peripheral Akkadian of that time, the Akkadian of Emar tends (with some exceptions) to keep to the Akkadian rule of placing the verb in final position in a sentence.¹⁵³ On the other hand, logical coordination by means of the enclitic conjunction *-ma* is quite rare.¹⁵⁴

4.3. Ugarit

In Ugarit, the Mesopotamian tradition of writing cuneiform had a direct impact on several aspects of the alphabetic Ugaritic texts. Scribes preferred to use clay tablets to write alphabetic texts in Ugaritic, the local language, and, as a result, the alphabetic symbols came to look like cuneiform signs, which were also used for writing down some texts in Akkadian.¹⁵⁵ As in Akkadian, texts in the alphabetic script ran from left to right.¹⁵⁶ Even though the archives of Ugarit date between the 14th century and the early 12th century BCE (section 2.3), these traits derive from a centuries-old tradition in the

¹⁴⁹ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 362–65.

¹⁵⁰ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 369.

¹⁵¹ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 369.

¹⁵² Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 387 and 389.

¹⁵³ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 592.

¹⁵⁴ Seminara, *L'accadico di Emar*, 547.

¹⁵⁵ See **chapter 4** in the present volume.

¹⁵⁶ Except for a few instances of texts written in the so-called “short alphabet”.

use of the Mesopotamian cuneiform script and of the Akkadian language.¹⁵⁷

For the Akkadian of Ugarit the grammars by John Huehnergard¹⁵⁸ and Wilfred H. van Soldt¹⁵⁹ are available.

The Akkadian dialect of Ugarit can be classified as belonging to Middle Babylonian, with features inherited from Old Babylonian, some Assyrian elements, influences from Hurrian and Ugaritic, and other features that are unique to this dialect.¹⁶⁰ These linguistic influences are directly linked to the political situation at each historical moment. Thus, Hurrian influence was particularly strong in the first period of the archives of Ugarit, when Mittani was a great power. After the defeat of Mittani, the rise of Assyria brought about a stronger influence of both Assyrian and Babylonian on the Akkadian used at Ugarit.¹⁶¹

Mimation is not used regularly at the end of a word and, as in Emar, it is only indicated explicitly in certain fixed phrases (e.g. *iš-tu U₄-mi an-ni(-i)-im*, “from this day”).¹⁶² With a few exceptions, initial *w* does not appear in non-canonical texts, whereas the representation of intervocalic *w* oscillates between the use of the sign PI for *wv* and a spelling with *m*-signs (e.g. *a-wa-te^{meš}*, “words”, PRU 3 107:19, but *a-ma-te^{meš}*, Ug 5 28 r.5’).¹⁶³ In some cases, the gen.-acc. anaphoric pronoun is written *šu-wa-ti* (as in Assyrian).¹⁶⁴ Just as in other types of peripheral Akkadian, when a root-final dental or sibilant is in contact with the -š of third person pronominal suffixes, it is not usually represented by the expected phonetic realization -ss- (e.g. ^{lú}*mu-ut-ša*, “her husband”,

¹⁵⁷ A journey such as the one made by king Zimri-Lim of Mari to Ugarit, in about 1765 BCE (Pierre Villard, “Un roi de Mari à Ugarit,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 18, 1986: 387–412; Singer, “A Political History,” 616–18), for example, must certainly have generated a considerable flow of correspondence between both royal courts.

¹⁵⁸ John Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*.

¹⁵⁹ van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*.

¹⁶⁰ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 271–84, 224 (“to a limited degree the Akk. dialect of Ugarit may be considered a pidginized language, like all WPA dialects (though obviously not to as great an extent as in the southern, Canaanizing dialects)”; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Syllabic Akkadian Texts,” in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. W. G. E. Watson and N. Wyatt (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 42.

¹⁶¹ van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 522–23; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Akkadian of Ugarit: Lexicographical Aspects,” *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici* 12 (1995): 208–9; van Soldt, “The Syllabic Akkadian Texts,” 45. On the other hand, as could only be expected, Akkadian also left an imprint on the Ugaritic lexicon; see in detail Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Lexical Studies in Ugaritic* (Sabadell-Barcelona: AUSA Editorial, 2007), 65–118.

¹⁶² Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 99–100; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 409.

¹⁶³ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 100–1 and 109–10; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 389.

¹⁶⁴ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 100–1 and 109; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 399.

PRU 3 64:21.26¹⁶⁵). The treatment of *š* before dentals is not consistent¹⁶⁶ (e.g. *iš-tu* occurs more often for writing the preposition *ištu*, but there are also examples of *ul-tu*).¹⁶⁷ As in Emar, and in general, in “Hurro-Akkadian”, the signs for voiced, voiceless and emphatic stops are used indiscriminately, although this feature is less pronounced than in other more northern dialects of Akkadian.¹⁶⁸

In pronouns, the gen. suffix of the 1cs is usually *-ia*.¹⁶⁹ In the 3sg.f, alongside the form *-ša*, some non-standard forms are also used (*-š-* after dentals/sibilants, *-s-* not after dentals/sibilants, *-ša* for acc. and *-ši* for gen.) that reflect the reduction of allomorphy, due in part to the interference of the linguistic substrate.¹⁷⁰

Nouns and adjectives tend to be declined correctly, but there are quite a few incorrect examples (e.g. acc. sg. GAL-*tu*, “large”, Ug 5 28 r.18'; in bound forms e.g. É-*tu*₄ PN, PRU 3 51:18.19).¹⁷¹ The masc. pl. has endings *-ū* and *-ī*, but they are less common than the endings *-ūtū/-ūtī* peculiar to the adjective.¹⁷² In Ugaritic nouns, the Ugaritic endings *-ūma* and *-īma* are also found (e.g. *ia-ši-ru-ma*, “potters”, PRU 3 195b B i 12; bound forms *-ū* and *-ī*).¹⁷³ In most cases, and in line with the usage in Emar, for example, the noun retains a case-ending in bound forms, almost always with the correct vowel (e.g. *ni-id-nu* LUGAL, “gift of the king”, PRU 3 65b:14; *a-na ni-id-ni* FPN, “as FPN's gift”, PRU 3 52:19).¹⁷⁴ This feature also occurs frequently in sg. bound forms before suffixes (e.g. *pil-ku-šu-nu*, “their *pilku*-service”, PRU 3 141:7),¹⁷⁵ while some forms are pure Ugaritic (e.g. ^{lu}*ḥa-ma/am-ru-ú* = *ḡam(a)ru-hu*, “his apprentice”, PRU 6 79:11.13).¹⁷⁶

In the verb, the marker of the 3fs almost always has the prefix *t-*; in G it appears as

¹⁶⁵ On this form and spelling see the comments by Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 103. See also van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 387.

¹⁶⁶ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 111–12.

¹⁶⁷ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 186–87; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 385.

¹⁶⁸ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 33–35, 281.

¹⁶⁹ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 125: *-ī* is normally used only in the vocative forms of *bēlu* and *abu*; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 401.

¹⁷⁰ Discussion in Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 129; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 403–4.

¹⁷¹ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 143–45; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 412–17.

¹⁷² Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 145–46; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 426–28.

¹⁷³ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 147–48; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 427–28. See also John Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 296–97; Josef Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik. Zweite, stark überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 293–94.

¹⁷⁴ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 149–52; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 417–25.

¹⁷⁵ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 152–54. Cf. also Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary*, 296–97.

¹⁷⁶ For syll. *-ú* = Ugaritic *-hu* see also Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary*, 293; Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik*, 214, 221.

ti- and (more often) as *ta-*, but both forms never appear together in the same text.¹⁷⁷ The prefix *na-* of the 1cp is also found once, probably due to the influence of the local substrate.¹⁷⁸ In the 3mp, the endings *-ū* and *-ūni* (plural ventive in Akkadian) seem to be interchangeable (see below).¹⁷⁹ The forms of the preterit and the perfect are also practically interchangeable, although there is a tendency to use either one or the other in specific circumstances, with certain verbs.¹⁸⁰ The future is sometimes expressed by the preterite, a feature probably to be ascribed to Ugaritic influence.¹⁸¹ The function of the Akkadian ventive as marking the 1cs dative is replaced in Ugarit by the acc. suffix (*-anni/-vninni*, which also includes the morpheme of the ventive). In letters, it marks the direction towards a certain point close to the speaker and the direction towards the addressee, whereas in legal texts it seems to be meaningless.¹⁸² The subordination marker *-u* is hardly ever used.¹⁸³

Possibly due to the Ugaritic substrate, some verbal forms that never occur in D in standard Akkadian are found in the Akkadian of Ugarit (e.g. *li-ra-ḥi-iṣ-šu*, “may he inundate him”, PRU 3 76a:9.13).¹⁸⁴ Some forms in N are Ugaritic words or have a Ugaritic morphology (e.g. suffix-conj. *na-ap-ṭa-ru* = *napṭarū*, “they have exchanged(?)”, PRU 3, 89a:5).¹⁸⁵

In terms of syntax,¹⁸⁶ the word order in clauses is more flexible than in standard Akkadian and the verb is seldom placed at the end.¹⁸⁷ Instances where syntax follows the order subject – verb – object – indirect object (instead of the habitual Babylonian order subject – object – indirect object – verb) may generally be explained by the direct

¹⁷⁷ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 159; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 431: “Texts from the reigns of Niqmaddu II and Niqmepa’ only have *ta-*, whereas those from the reign of ‘Ammitamru II have either *ta-* or *ti-*, the latter mostly before a syllable containing *-a-*, in accordance with Barth’s law”.

¹⁷⁸ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 159; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 432.

¹⁷⁹ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 160.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 249–55; cf also van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 506.

¹⁸¹ van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 496, 501.

¹⁸² Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 168: “Indeed, the only discernible distinction in the use of the two endings *-ū* and *-ūni* is that the latter is not attested before pronominal suffixes...It seems likely, therefore, that the scribes considered *ū* and *-ūni* to be variant markers of plurality; if so, we may view the free alternation of the two endings as a reduction of allomorphy, i.e., loss of the ventive ~ non ventive contrast”.

¹⁸³ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 169.

¹⁸⁴ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 173.

¹⁸⁵ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 175. The verbal forms with Ugaritic morphology are collected in Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary*, 319–25.

¹⁸⁶ See also Florence Malbran-Labat, “Éléments de la structure du discours dans l’akkadien d’Ugarit,” *GLECS* 31 (1995): 87–106 + 83–85.

¹⁸⁷ van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 518; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 477–81, 485.

influence of Ugaritic.¹⁸⁸ Even so, the word order in verbal clauses varies between letters and legal texts, although the reason for this is not clear; letters show a clear preference for verb-final clauses, whereas the legal texts present much greater variation.¹⁸⁹ As in Emar, the enclitic particle *-ma* does not seem to be function as a coordinating conjunction.¹⁹⁰

As we have seen, the influence of Ugaritic on the morphology and grammar of the Akkadian of Ugarit is evident at various levels,¹⁹¹ but it also obvious in the lexicon.¹⁹² The impact of Ugaritic is particularly noticeable in texts used in daily life, especially in legal and economic documents. In legal texts, the local linguistic background is noticeable in the use of specialized vocabulary —augmented by the Syro-Babylonian legal tradition and by local technical terms— and in verbal morphology, using mixed verbal forms.¹⁹³ The influence of Ugaritic is even stronger, at all levels, in the syllabic administrative texts.¹⁹⁴

4.4 Hurro-Akkadian

Broadly speaking, the Akkadian of Alalah belongs to the tradition of Babylonian Akkadian: of Old Babylonian in the tablets from level VII and of Middle Babylonian in those from level IV.¹⁹⁵ It also shares a considerable number of the elements that define

¹⁸⁸ See in detail Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 217–24; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 475–90, 518.

¹⁸⁹ Although the sequences S-O-V-A and S-V-O(-A) predominate; analysis and detailed discussion in Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 220–24.

¹⁹⁰ Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 203–4, 241; van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 512, 514–15 (where he discusses possible similarities with the use of *-m* in Ugaritic).

¹⁹¹ van Soldt, “The Syllabic Akkadian Texts,” 45 and 44: “Ugaritic influence, already strong at the beginning of the historic period, becomes stronger as time passes...In the older texts the Ugaritic influence is mainly noticeable in syntax, but gradually it also becomes stronger in morphology”. See also van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 506–7. Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 280–81, summarizes the traits of Akkadian in Ugarit which may have a Ugaritic foundation; on this see also Michael Streck, “Babylonian and Assyrian,” in *The Semitic Languages. An International Handbook*, ed. Stefan Weninger *et al.* (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 377.

¹⁹² In the glossary of Ugaritic words in syllabic texts compiled by Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary*, 103–89, there are approximately 290 entries found in all genres of Akkadian texts. See also van Soldt, “The Akkadian of Ugarit: Lexicographical Aspects,” 211–12; Vita, “Language Contact,” 384–86.

¹⁹³ On this matter, see the detailed analysis by Malbran-Labat, “Langues et écritures à Ougarit,” 78–87.

¹⁹⁴ To the extent that it may be claimed that in most of these documents and despite the script used, the language transcribed was not Akkadian but Ugaritic; see Malbran-Labat, “Langues et écritures à Ougarit,” 96. Carole Roche, “Language and Script in the Akkadian Economic Texts from Ras Shamra,” in *Society and Administration in Ancient Ugarit*, ed. Wilfred H. van Soldt (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2010), 119.

¹⁹⁵ George Giacomakis, *The Akkadian of Alalah* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1970, 17); Daniel Arnaud, “Le dialecte d’Alalah: un examen préliminaire,” *Aula Orientalis* 16 (1998): 147–48. Although the possibility poses questions (cf. Mark Weeden, *Hittite Logograms and Hittite Scholarship*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011, 65–70; Mark Weeden, “Hittite Scribal Culture and Syria: Palaeography and Cuneiform Transmission,” in *Cultures and Societies in the Middle Euphrates and Habur Areas in the Second Millennium BC I. Scribal Education and Scribal Traditions*, ed. Shigeo Yamada and Daisuke Shibata, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016, 160), the ductus of Akkadian texts from level VII of

the Akkadian of Ugarit and Emar and, to a certain extent, also reflects the influence of the local NWS language,¹⁹⁶ an influence that in the case of the Inscription of Idrimi shows interesting similarities with Canaano-Akkadian.¹⁹⁷ However, perhaps the most striking aspect of the Akkadian of Alalah is the influence of the local Hurrian substrate.¹⁹⁸ In fact, the Hurrians formed one of the most important civilizations of the Ancient Near East, expanding from the region of the Lower Zab (east of the Tigris) as far as north Syria and south-east Anatolia.¹⁹⁹ Texts in Hurrian increased and spread significantly, especially throughout the whole second half of the second millennium, its maximum expansion corresponding to the zenith of the kingdom of Mittani, in about the 14th century BCE.²⁰⁰ The deep differences in language between Akkadian and Hurrian prevented the Hurrian scribes from being able to adopt the Akkadian syllabary directly, instead having to make a series of adaptations that indicate careful forethought regarding the problems (phonetic and others) involved.²⁰¹ The result was the development of a variant of Akkadian that was strongly influenced by Hurrian on several levels (phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon) and is called

Alalah is a serious candidate for the source of Hittite cuneiform, see Theo van den Hout, “The Ductus of the Alalah Texts and the origin of Hittite Cuneiform,” in *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. Elena Devecchi (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2012), 147–70.

¹⁹⁶ An aspect explored by Arnaud, “Le dialecte d’Alalah”, 143–86. Even so, the Akkadian of Alalah requires new, up-to-date research, the grammar by Giacomakis, *The Akkadian of Alalah*, needs to be completely revised. However, that research would also have to depend, to a large extent, on a new edition of the corpus of the Akkadian of Alalah, a task that, so far, has been only partially completed; on this see the comments by Eva Dassow, “Genres of Texts and Archives of Tablets,” *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 110 (2015): 189–90.

¹⁹⁷ On this see the study by McConaughy Medill, “The Idrimi Statue Inscription,” 243–59; cf. *ibid.*, 256: “although the ISI [= Idrimi Statue Inscription] comes from a site dominated by Hurro-Akkadian texts, its non-standard verb forms are not Hurro-Akkadian. Instead, the scribe’s use of calqued perfects, hybrid perfects, and hybrid imperfects suggests that the code of the inscription should be connected with Canaano-Akkadian, although the differences between the Canaano-Akkadian code and the code of the ISI—most notably the presence or absence of West Semitic borrowings and differing conventions for the writing of the hybrid imperfects—show that a distinction should be drawn between them”.

¹⁹⁸ Similarly, Jussi Aro, “Remarks on the Language of the Alalah Texts,” *Archiv für Orientforschung* 17 (1954-1956): 365, had already concluded that “On the whole the language of Alalah texts may be characterized as Mitanni Akkadian”. See also the Hurrian elements identified by Giacomakis, *The Akkadian of Alalah*, e.g. 32, 45–46. For a critical evaluation of both these contributions see Ignacio Márquez Rowe, “Notes on the Hurro-Akkadian of Alalah in the Mid-Second Millennium B.C.E.,” *Israel Oriental Studies*, 18 (1998): 63.

¹⁹⁹ Mauro Giorgieri, “Diffusion et caractéristiques de la culture écrite d’origine hurrite dans le Proche-Orient asiatique et à Ougarit,” in *Les écritures mises au jour sur le site antique d’Ougarit (Syrie) et leur déchiffrement*, ed. Pierre Bordreuil et al. (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2013), 157–85.

²⁰⁰ Mauro Giorgieri, “Bedeutung und Stellung der ‘Mittanischen’ Kultur im Rahmen der Kulturgeschichte Vorderasiens,” in *Motivation und Mechanismen des Kulturkontaktes in der Späten Bronzezeit*, ed. Doris Prächel (Vicchio, Florence: LoGisma editore, 2005), 77–101.

²⁰¹ Giorgieri, “Bedeutung und Stellung,” 89–91; Wilfred H. van Soldt, “The Adaptation of the Cuneiform Script to Foreign Languages,” in *The Idea of Writing: Play and Complexity*, ed. A. de Voogt and I.L. Finkel (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 117–22.

“Hurro-Akkadian”,²⁰² observable especially in the archives of Mittani,²⁰³ Nuzi,²⁰⁴ Alalah and Qatna. Thomas Richter summarises the general characteristics of this type of Akkadian as follows: a) the apparent arbitrary nature of writing voiceless, voiced and emphatic consonants; b) the occasional interchange in the sequence subject-object and in the use of the prefixes and suffixes of the finite verb as well as in affixing accusative suffixes; c) mistakes in the use of cases for nouns; d) confusion between masculine and feminine, especially in the use of possessive suffixes; e) the presence of what is called resumptive *u*, “and”.²⁰⁵

In Alalah it is evident that the process of Hurritization becomes more intense from level VII to level IV, a process that, in the words of Eva von Dassow, “should...be viewed as primarily a process of acculturation, spurred by political developments...the local population was assimilating the language and culture of its Hurrian members. This process intensified with the incorporation of Alalah into the Mittani Empire”.²⁰⁶ The texts reflect this development in, for example, an increase in the number of Hurrian personal names, of Hurrian words, in the use of Hurrian suffixes (e.g. names for professions with the Hurrian suffix *-uh(u)li*, also used with non-Hurrian terms),²⁰⁷ in aspects of grammar and syntax, as well as the occasional use of Hurrian glosses to translate words written logographically or in Akkadian.²⁰⁸ Likewise, and probably due

²⁰² In this regard see the definition of “Hurro-Akkadian” by Mauro Giorgieri, “Bedeutung und Stellung,” 93.

²⁰³ Hans-Peter Adler, *Das Akkadische des Königs Tušratta von Mitanni* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 1976).

²⁰⁴ Gernot Wilhelm, *Untersuchungen zum Hurro-Akkadischen von Nuzi* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Kevelaer, Butzon & Bercker, 1970); Streck, “Babylonian and Assyrian,” 376–77 (summary of grammatical interference from Hurrian on the Akkadian of Nuzi).

²⁰⁵ Thomas Richter, “Hurriter und Hurritisch im bronzezeitlichen Syrien,” in *Motivation und Mechanismen des Kulturkontaktes in der Späten Bronzezeit*, ed. Doris Prächel (Vicchio, Florence: LoGisma editore, 2005), 162. Even so, the description of this type of Akkadian can be slightly modified (cf. Juan Oliva, “Hurro-Akkadian from Late Bronze Age Syria Reconsidered: Qatna TT1 and Al.T. 297,” *Aula Orientalis* 34, 2016: 143) or another approach can be proposed (cf. Eva von Dassow, “Peripheral Akkadian Dialects, or Akkadography of Local Languages?” in *Proceedings of the 53e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale. Vol. 1, Part 2: Language in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Leonid Kogan et al. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010, 905: “It may be hypothesized...that the ‘Hurro-Akkadian’ of Nuzi, Alalah, and Qatna represents the Akkadography of Hurrian”).

²⁰⁶ von Dassow, *State and Society*, 76, adding (*ibid.*) that “As Draffkorn demonstrated, there was evidently no social differentiation between Hurrian(ized) and non-Hurrian(ized) members of Alalah’s population”.

²⁰⁷ von Dassow, *State and Society*, 73–74. For level VII see also Juan Oliva, “Consideraciones sobre el hibridismo hurro-semítico en Alalah VII,” *Veleia* 16 (1999): 19–32.

²⁰⁸ von Dassow, *State and Society*, 74–75. On the use of glosses, see the study by Eva von Dassow, “Gloss Marking and the Language of the Alalah IV Texts,” in *Palaeography and Scribal Practices in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age*, ed. Elena Devecchi (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten 2012), 201–16; cf. *ibid.*, 212: “At Alalah during the 15th century, the mark : was not specialized for marking glosses or other words extrinsic to the language of writing, though as a mark

to the ergative system of Hurrian, in Alalāḥ an object often has the case of the subject.²⁰⁹ Also attributable to Hurrian influence is the occasional lack of agreement in cases of antecedent and pronoun (e.g. the use of the fem. plural independent pronoun *ši-na-ti* and of the suffixed *-ši-na* referring to a man and a woman),²¹⁰ the use of object-subject-verb word order (e.g. PN₁ PN₂ *a-na a-bu-šu i-pu-uš*, “PN₂ has adopted PN₁ as his father”, ALT 16:2-3)²¹¹ or the prevalent use of the permansive.²¹² These elements indicate that Hurrian was, along with the local West Semitic language, one of the main languages of Alalāḥ IV.²¹³

The process of interaction between Akkadian and Hurrian is considerably closer and deeper in the case of five letters found in Qatna, in 2002, written in the second half of the 14th century.²¹⁴ These letters were not written at Qatna itself, but in the areas between Alalāḥ and Qatna known as Ni’a and Nuhašše.²¹⁵ In these texts almost every sentence in the Akkadian frame code contains some Hurrian traits—found in a general ratio of 5 to 1.²¹⁶ This evident predominance of Akkadian over Hurrian suggests that

of emphasis it could be used this way. This particular usage subsequently became generalized in Syro-Canaanite scribal practice”, *ibid.*, 213: “they did not use : as a linguistic signal”.

²⁰⁹ Ignacio Márquez Rowe, “Notes on the Hurro-Akkadian of Alalāḥ,” 72.

²¹⁰ Márquez Rowe, “Notes on the Hurro-Akkadian of Alalāḥ,” 73.

²¹¹ Márquez Rowe, “Notes on the Hurro-Akkadian of Alalāḥ,” 70–71.

²¹² Márquez Rowe, “Notes on the Hurro-Akkadian of Alalāḥ,” 75. On the possibility that some of these characteristics could be explained as the influence of the local West Semitic substrate, see the discussion in *ibid.*, 70 and 77; von Dassow, *State and Society*, 74 n. 183 and 75 n. 185.

²¹³ von Dassow, *State and Society*, 75; von Dassow, “Gloss Marking”, 204: “most of the tablets found at Alalāḥ were written by local scribes who would appear, on the basis of the Hurrian features of the texts they produced, to have been native speakers of Hurrian”. In *State and Society*, 76, she considers that the scribes of Alalāḥ IV had read these texts “not in Hurrianized Akkadian, but in Hurrian”, a conclusion that she modifies slightly in “Gloss Marking”, 204: “While I do not believe the evidence shows that a Hurro-Akkadian language existed, except as an artifact of writing, neither am I certain that the scribes of Alalāḥ IV uniformly understood what they wrote in Hurrian – or even that they necessarily understood themselves to be writing in any particular language”; further on, *ibid.*, 214, she notes that the scribes “mixed Hurrian and Akkadian vocabulary and grammar, though without consistently producing hybrid Hurro-Akkadian forms. Were they writing texts in Hurrianized Akkadian, then, or writing Hurrian by means of Akkadography?”. Referring to the function of glosses in the texts from level IV, she concludes (*ibid.*, 215) that “rather than functioning in the first instance to represent language, writing and the written text serve as an intermediary for recording or conveying information to be interpreted in (a) language. On this theory, the scribes of Alalāḥ IV did not habitually use : to mark words extrinsic to the language of writing, because they did not conceptualize writing as a means to represent language per se and, accordingly, they did not differentiate Hurrian and Akkadian in their writing”.

²¹⁴ Apart from the letters, this archive includes other genres such as juridical and administrative texts that can be considered as indigenous to Qatna. On these letters see also the studies by Juan Oliva, “Hurro-Akkadian from Late Bronze Age Syria”; Juan Oliva, “On the Order of Shuppiluliuma in Syria. Reading the Hurrian of the Qatna Letter TT1,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 46 (2015): 299–319; Juan Oliva, “Zum Hurritischen und zum Akkadischen des Qatna-Briefes TT2 mit historischer Einzelauswertung,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 48 (2017): 391–411, and Juan Oliva, “Der Hurro-akkadische Brief TT3 aus Qatna unter neuem Blick,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 49 (2018): 251–59.

²¹⁵ These four polities formed a continuum of Hurrianized principalities in northern Syria.

²¹⁶ Thomas Richter, “Qatna in the Late Bronze Age. Preliminary Remarks,” *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 15 (2005): 114; Thomas Richter, “Die Texte des Idadda-Archivs,”

Akkadian is most likely the matrix code of framing, whereas Hurrian corresponds to the embedded code. The evidence strongly suggests that this type of Hurro-Akkadian can be viewed as a semi-advanced mixed language, even more than as exhibited by the texts from Nuzi and Alalah.²¹⁷ When they appear overtly, such (still secondary) Hurrian elements are typically verbal, i.e. inflected verbs (e.g. *ù šu-nu-ti iš-tu qa-ti KÚR^{na-ak-ri}-šu-nu : eḫ-lu-ša₁₀-ap*, “And *I have saved* [two idols] from the hands of their enemies”, TT 2:19-21).²¹⁸ From the qualitative perspective, the frame also seems to be provided by the Akkadian system. For example, the grammatical core of the sentence (e.g. the first verb, pronouns, conjunctions and word order) is Akkadian, which thus constitutes the matrix for the insertion of the Hurrian element (e.g. the second verb).²¹⁹ Additionally, Hurrian is found in glosses that translate Akkadian nominal phrases, prepositional phrases or verbal forms (e.g. *ù i-na-an-na ḥa-an-nu-ut-ti it-ti NAM.RA.MEŠ : ša₁₀-ri-ni-ra i-ti-iq*, “and just then Ḥannutti passed by with the booty : booty”, TT 2:36-38).²²⁰ The third type of Hurrian trait corresponds to mixed Hurro-Akkadian verbal forms. Although superficially all the components of these constructions are Akkadian (i.e. both the stem of the verb and the suffixed subject marker), such formations seem to be bilingual hybrids: it is the deep structure of these composites that mirrors the structure of the Hurrian verb. In these instances, the language shift marker (i.e. the gloss sign) is not present.²²¹

in *Das Archiv des Idadda. Die Keilschrifttexte aus den deutsch-syrischen Ausgrabungen 2001–2003 im Königspalast von Qatna*, by Thomas Richter and Sarah Lange (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 30.

²¹⁷ For more details concerning the viewpoint, analysis and conclusions presented in this paragraph concerning the letters found in Qatna see Alexander Andrason and Juan-Pablo Vita, “Contact Languages,” 308–16. Instead, Krzysztof J. Baranowski, “New Light on Peripheral Akkadian from Qatna: Texts between Language and Writing System,” *Altorientalische Forschungen* 45 (2018): 22–35, presents another perspective and different conclusions: “the characterization of these documents as written in Akkadian (or ‘Hurro-Akkadian’) is illusory. A closer perusal of the originals and additional considerations cast serious doubts on their ‘Akkadian’ language...In my opinion, these features are not simply an indication of a low level of linguistic competence in the scribes. Their combination shows that the scribes tried to encode the message of the letters using sequences of Akkadian words and phrases rather than composing a coherent text that would be read in Akkadian” (*ibid.*, 24); consequently, “given that the primary setting of the formation of linguistic usages attested in the Qatna texts was scribal education, explanations based on second language acquisition framework are to be favored” (*ibid.*, 28); “The Akkadian stratum of these texts exhibits features typical of second language learners’ interlanguage, such as limited repertoire of standard phrases or lexical innovations. In this context, the recourse to Hurrian constitutes a remedy of the limited knowledge of the Akkadian target language” (*ibid.*, 34).

²¹⁸ Thomas Richter, “Das ‘Archiv des Idadda’. Bericht über Inschriftenfunde der Grabungskampagne 2002 in Mišrife/Qatna,” *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient- Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 135 (2003): 175; Giorgieri, “Bedeutung und Stellung,” 96; Richter, “Die Texte des Idadda-Archivs,” 48–49; Andrason and Vita, “Contact Languages,” 310.

²¹⁹ Sometimes, however, the order can be inverted and it is the Hurrian verb that precedes the Akkadian verb (see example TT 3:30-31 in Richter, “Die Texte des Idadda-Archivs,” 38, 46, 57).

²²⁰ Thomas Richter, “Die Texte des Idadda-Archivs,” 49.

²²¹ See Richter, “Qatna in the Late Bronze Age,” 112; Andrason and Vita, “Contact Languages,” 311–12.

4.5. Hazor, Canaanite-Akkadian

The texts from the Middle Bronze Age found in Hazor belong to the Old Babylonian tradition of Akkadian and, in fact, show close relationship with the Old Babylonian archive of Mari (section 2.5). However, the Akkadian that they use shows signs of development from canonical Old Babylonian as well as elements that could be due to the influence of local language.²²² Mimation, for example, is used erratically, e.g. nom. LUGAL-um, “king” (Hazor 2a, liver model)²²³ and acc. šu-ma-am, “a name” (Hazor 3f) 4, liver model),²²⁴ whereas mimation is absent from Hazor 17 b-d (also a liver model).²²⁵ The influence of the local NWS language is evident, for example, in the feminine gender ascribed to URU, “city” in URU DINGIR.MEŠ-ša i-tu-ru-ni, “The city, its gods will return there” (Hazor 3g)²²⁶ or the construct form di-na PN, “the lawsuit of PN” (Hazor 5:7), where the noun preserves the vowel of the case-ending,²²⁷ as would also happen later (as we have seen) in other types of peripheral Akkadian.

The Syro-Palestinian *Amarna letters* provide evidence for the considerably increased influence of the local NWS language on written Akkadian during the 14th century BCE in over sixty places in Syrian kingdoms in the Middle Orontes, in Amurru, the Beqa‘, southern Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine (section 2.5).²²⁸ It is, therefore, a very heterogeneous corpus in terms of political history, but also very fragmented in respect of language. With some exceptions, these are small corpora that, taken as a whole, were written by over one hundred different scribes²²⁹ and which, as far as possible, are preferably to be studied individually.²³⁰ However, these corpora share enough linguistic

²²² See the evaluation previously made by William W. Hallo and Hayim Tadmor, “A Lawsuit from Hazor,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 27 (1977): 10, concerning the text Hazor 5 (a lawsuit): “The command of classical Old Babylonian grammar and orthography is good, with only one or two possible lapses or signs of West Semitic influence”. See also Anson F. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by the Scribes from Canaan. Vol. II. Morphosyntactic Analysis of the Verbal System*. Leiden: Brill, 1996, 29.

²²³ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 65.

²²⁴ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 66. Mimation is also consistent in Hazor 5:8, ‘u’-ra-am še-ra-am ša di-na-am (cf. l. 3 di-nam).

²²⁵ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 86.

²²⁶ Horowitz, Oshima and Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan*, 66. Possibly the spelling id^l-dan^l in Hazor 3f) 4 may also be due to the influence of the local language, cf. *ibid.*: “Note the apparent Assyrian form *iddan* rather than Babylonian *inaddin*. This might in fact be the present-future form in the local language”.

²²⁷ Hallo and Tadmor, “A Lawsuit from Hazor,” 9, consider that “Another ‘provincialism’ may underlie the curious form of the construct state *di-na* (for expected *di-in*)”; however, as we have seen, this type of the construct is found later in the Akkadian texts from Emar and Ugarit.

²²⁸ See the table in Vita, *Canaanite Scribes*, 124–8.

²²⁹ Vita, *Canaanite Scribes*, 140.

²³⁰ See Josef Tropper and Juan-Pablo Vita, *Das Kanaan-Akkadische der Amarnazeit* (Ugarit-Verlag, Münster 2010), 25, for the corresponding bibliography of the principal linguistic studies on the corpora from Byblos, Gezer, Jerusalem, Tyros, Aschqelon, Akko, Megiddo, Sichem, and Amurru.

features to form, as a whole, what has been called “Canaano-Akkadian”.²³¹ In general, the language used in these letters is Akkadian based on an ancient Babylonian dialect,²³² but they were written by autochthonous Syro-Palestinian scribes, whose mother tongue was a NWS language that is quite often reflected in the Akkadian they use, whether morphologically, syntactically or lexically. Consequently, Anson F. Rainey describes the language used in these letters as a hybrid made up of three layers:²³³ 1) basic Old Babylonian, 2) local modifications, and 3) purely Northwest Semitic elements. As well as Old Babylonian, the letters also use (sometimes jointly) the Middle Babylonian and Middle Assyrian dialects.²³⁴ The “local modifications” would be expressions that are neither Babylonian nor Canaanite, but reflect Canaano-Akkadian mixed forms. The purely NWS features present in the letters reflect the oldest linguistic characteristics of the Canaanite family. Thus, NWS languages or local dialects appear in two main forms in this hybrid language: 1) Canaanite lexemes may appear in the middle of a sentence either independently or acting as glosses, translating a preceding word or phrase (e.g. *ÌR-ka a-nu-ki* [WS /ʾanōki/], “I am your servant”, EA 287:66; *ù SAG.DU-nu : ru-šu-nu* [WS /rōšu-nū/] *i-na qa-te-ka*, “and our head is in your hand”, EA 264:18);²³⁵ 2) more frequently, however, the local language is apparent through forms which hybridise Canaanite and Akkadian elements, particularly frequent in the verbal system. Generally, scribes took a verbal base attested to in Akkadian and combined it with Canaanite prefixes and suffixes; in the resulting form, Canaanite affixes predominated in terms of expressing time and aspect, the Akkadian verbal base being of little relevance in that

²³¹ Essential studies: Anson F. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by the Scribes from Canaan. 4 vols.* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Shlomo Izre’el, *Canaano-Akkadian* (München: LINCOM Europa, 2005); Tropper and Vita, *Das Kanaano-Akkadische*; Krzysztof J. Baranowski, *The Verb in the Amarna letters from Canaan* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016).

²³² Anson F. Rainey, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by the Scribes from Canaan. Vol. II. Morphosyntactic Analysis of the Verbal System* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 17–32.

²³³ Anson F. Rainey, “The Hybrid Language Written by Canaanite Scribes in the 14th Century BCE,” in *Proceedings of the 53e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale. Vol. 1, Part 2: Language in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Leonid Kogan et al. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 852.

²³⁴ Rainey, “The Hybrid Language,” 853; According to Rainey, *ibid.*, 855, this hybrid language “was a real dialect alongside Middle Babylonian and Middle Assyrian”.

²³⁵ This glosses could incorporate —or not— a so-called “gloss-wedge” or “Glossenkeil”. On the phenomenon of codeswitching in the Canaanite glosses existing in these letters see Shlomo Izre’el, “The Amarna Glosses: Who Wrote What for Whom?” *Israel Oriental Studies* 15 (1995): 101–22; Agustinus Gianto, “Amarna Lexicography: The Glosses in the Byblos Letters,” *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici* 12 (1995): 65–73; Tropper and Vita, *Das Kanaano-Akkadische*, 26–27; Alexander Andrason and Juan-Pablo Vita, “From Glosses to the Linguistic Nature of Canaano-Akkadian,” *Folia Orientalia* 51 (2014): 155–75. On NWS lexemes in lexical texts from the 13th century BCE in Aphek and Ashkelon see above section 3.5.

sense²³⁶ (e.g. *da-ag-la-ti₇ ki-ia-am ù da-ag-la-ti₇ ki-ia-am ù la-a na-mi-ir*, “I looked this way, and I looked that way, and there was no light”, EA 292:8-10).²³⁷

As a result, Canaano-Akkadian is the product of the coexistence and interaction of two Semitic languages and does not constitute a cohesive linguistic system.²³⁸ It is an example of the situation where two different linguistic systems interacted, producing a novel grammatical organization, and is thus typically analysed within a language-contact framework. Yet, the exact linguistic nature of this language has been the subject of quite varied proposals and continues to be debated.²³⁹ This morphosyntactic phenomenon seems to go back to at least the 15th century BCE, as shown by the letters of Taanak (section 2.5)²⁴⁰ and, to some extent, by the Idrimi Statue Inscription (section 4.4);²⁴¹ however it seems to disappear completely in the 13th century, as shown, for example, by the letters from Sidon and Beirut found in Ugarit.²⁴²

The historical events that resulted in the destruction of kingdoms such as Ugarit, Emar and Hattuša in the 12th century BCE also meant that Mesopotamian cuneiform writing was no longer valued in the western periphery and the end of Akkadian as a

²³⁶ See in detail Rainey *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. Vol. II*, Izre’el, *Canaano-Akkadian*; Baranowski, *The Verb in the Amarna letters*. Also, amongst others, von Dassow, “Canaanite in Cuneiform,” 644–47; Tropper and Vita, *Das Kanaano-Akkadische*.

²³⁷ Akk. *dagālu* “to look”; *qatl-ātī* (*qatl+ā+ītī*), cf. Rainey *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. Vol. II*, 285; Tropper and Vita, *Das Kanaano-Akkadische*, 70–71.

²³⁸ Izre’el, *Canaano-Akkadian*, 3, appropriately describes the situation as follows: “The CanAkk texts are characterized by inherent variation. Variation may be geographically dependent. It may depend on the scribal tradition of different cities, but also on imported traditions or variant local ones ... Geographic variation is dependent upon scribal traditions and scribal education. By and large, there is correlation between the provenance of a letter and its linguistic structure. The farther south one travels in Canaan the more remote becomes a CanAkk text from Akkadian, and the closer it becomes to the Canaanite vernacular of that region”.

²³⁹ Regarding the various proposals of linguistic classification of Canaano-Akkadian and relevant bibliography, see in detail Tropper and Vita, *Das Kanaano-Akkadische*, 20–24; Andrason and Vita, “From Glosses,” 155–75. More significant studies: Agustinus Gianto, “Amarna Akkadian as a Contact Language,” in *Languages and Cultures in Contact*, ed. Karel van Lerberghe and Gabriela Voet (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 123–32; von Dassow, “Canaanite in Cuneiform”; Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009); Rainey, “The Hybrid Language”; Shlomo Izre’el, “Canaano-Akkadian: Linguistics and Sociolinguistics,” in *Language and Nature. Papers Presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach and Na’ama Pat-El (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 171–218; Baranowski, *The Verb in the Amarna letters*, 36–61.

²⁴⁰ Rainey *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets. Vol. II*, 31–32; Andrason and Vita, “Contact Languages,” 323 and 328.

²⁴¹ McConaughy Medill, “The Idrimi Statue Inscription”.

²⁴² On this see Daniel Arnaud, “Le jargon épistolaire de Sidon à la fin de l’âge du Bronze récent,” in *Études ougaritiques I. Travaux 1985-1995*, ed. Marguerite Yon and Daniel Arnaud (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2001), 291–322; Juan-Pablo Vita, “The Akkadian of the King of Beirut in the Late Bronze Age,” in *Bēl Lišāni: papers in Akkadian Linguistics presented to John Huehnergard on the occasion of his retirement*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee and Na’ama Pat-El (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020), in press.

lingua franca on such a large scale as in previous centuries. In the following centuries, Mesopotamian cuneiform writing and Akkadian continued to be essential tools for communication in the Ancient Near East, but they shared the stage with scripts such as the linear alphabets and languages such as Aramaic.²⁴³

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²⁴³ Margaretha Folmer, “Aramaic as *Lingua Franca*,” in *A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Languages*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), 373–99.

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