

## AN ELAMITE DEPORTEE

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Mass deportation was an integral part of Neo-Assyrian military practice, and we are indebted to Bustenay Oded for a systematic and encompassing study about this phenomenon. Deportation had fairly diverse aims: to punish rebellion against the Assyrian authority, to weaken rival powers, to enlarge the Assyrian army and obtain new labour force, both specialized and unspecialized, to enlarge the populations of cities and strategic areas, and to repopulate destroyed, abandoned, or sparsely populated regions in order to enhance the economic activity.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from some letters and legal and administrative texts, the bulk of the information comes from royal inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> It is an honour and a pleasure to present Professor Oded on the occasion of his 75th anniversary with a still unpublished legal document from Ashur (VAT 9755), which confirms and complements data from this main source.

### *I. Description of the tablet*

The tablet was unearthed during the excavations of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft in Ashur between 1903 and 1914. Since the excavation number is no longer available, the exact spot where the tablet was found is unknown (but see below). Now, it is kept at the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, inventory number VAT 9755,

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<sup>1</sup> B. Oded, *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden, 1979), pp. 41–74. For a recent, albeit more restricted treatment of the subject see S. Lackenbacher, “Les étrangers dans l’empire néo-assyrien à travers la correspondance des Sargonides”, in J. J. Justel, J. P. Vita and J. Á. Zamora (eds.), *Las culturas del Próximo Oriente Antiguo y su expansión mediterránea* (Zaragoza, 2008), pp. 35–51.

<sup>2</sup> Oded, *ibid.*, pp. 6–16.

and belongs to a group of texts entrusted to the present writer for publication in the framework of the “Assur-Projekt” (Berlin) led by Prof. Dr. Johannes Renger.

The tablet has the common Neo-Assyrian format for conveyance documents: vertical shape with two stamp seal impressions between rulings at the top of the obverse. It measures  $9.6 \times 4.3 \times 2.5$  cm and is almost completely preserved. The surface of the obverse is slightly rubbed off, and the lower right corner of the reverse, as well as the top edge with the dating is damaged. A copy of the tablet will be published in *Neuassyrische Rechtsurkunden IV* (as a volume of the *Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*). As always, Evelyn Klengel-Brandt will contribute the corresponding catalogue of seal impressions.

The text records the sale of a woman and her daughter, who are characterized as Elamite captives (lines 12–15). Except for this rather unusual remark, the document shows the prevailing Neo-Assyrian legal formulary and is written in the Neo-Assyrian cuneiform script. It has already been cited in the literature.<sup>3</sup>

## II. Transliteration and translation of VAT 9755

- Obv. 1  $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NA} \\ 4 \end{array} \right] \left[ \text{KIŠIB} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{ŠU}^? \text{-rém}^? \text{-ni}^{?1} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x-x} \right]$   
 $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NA} \\ 4 \end{array} \right] \left[ \text{KIŠIB} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{x-x} \right] \left[ \text{x} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \text{x-x} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{d} \right] \left[ \text{x-x-x} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x} \right] \left[ \text{x} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{IR} \right] \left[ \text{XV} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x-x-x} \right]$   
 5  $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{si-lim-aš+šur} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x-x-x} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{GÌR.2-aš+šur} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{NINDA} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{qí-bit}^? \text{-aš+šur} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x-x} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{sa-kip-aš+šur} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{SIMUG.KÛ.GÌ} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{GIN}^? \text{-u}^? \text{-a}^? \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{x-x} \right]$   
 10  $\left[ \text{:} \right] \left[ \text{m} \right] \left[ \text{AD-GIŠ} \right] \left[ \text{LÚ}^* \right] \left[ \text{SIMUG.KÛ} \right]$   
 $\left[ \text{EN MUNUS SUM} \right] \text{-an}$

<sup>3</sup> K. Deller, “Review article of CAD A/I”, *Orientalia* 34 (1965), p. 264; E. Klengel-Brandt and K. Radner, “Die Stadtbeamten von Assur und ihre Siegel”, in S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds.), *Assyria 1995* (Helsinki, 1997), p. 142; K. Radner, *Die neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden als Quelle für Mensch und Umwelt* (SAAS VI; Helsinki, 1997), pp. 226, 246–247, 332–333, 354 n. 1935; G. Galil, *The Lower Stratum Families in the Neo-Assyrian Period* (CHANE 27; Leiden – Boston, 2007), pp. 32, 79, 159, 191, 239, 262 (referred to as VAT 9755, text No. 69, or family No. 97). *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (PNA), also makes reference to our text in several entries.

(two stamp seal impressions)

- <sup>[r̄]</sup>na-na-DINGIR-<sup>[aʔ]</sup>-<sup>[aʔ]</sup>DUMU.MUNUS  
 PAB 2 <sup>LÚ\*</sup>ZI.MEŠ <sup>[h̄u]</sup>-ub-tú  
 ša ELAM.<sup>[MA]</sup><sup>[KI]</sup> ša LUGAL  
 15 a-na <sup>URU</sup>ŠĀ.URU i-din-u-<sup>[ni]</sup>  
<sup>[ú]</sup>-piš-ma <sup>m</sup>man-nu-ki-aš+šur  
<sup>[x-x]</sup>-<sup>[x]</sup>-su-šú ina ŠĀ-bi  
 B.E. <sup>[1]</sup>MA.NA <sup>[KÛ.BABBAR]</sup>TA\* IGI <sup>[x]</sup>  
<sup>[il-qi kas-pu]</sup> <sup>[gam-mur]</sup>  
 20 <sup>[ta-d]</sup>in UN.MEŠ<sup>1</sup> za-<sup>[rip]</sup>-<sup>[pu]</sup>  
 Rev. <sup>[la-qi-ú]</sup> man-nu ša i-bal-<sup>[kât-u-ni]</sup>  
 aš+šur <sup>[d]</sup><sup>[UTU]</sup> lu EN de-<sup>[ni-šú]</sup>  
 5 MA.NA KÛ.BABBAR SU[M-an]  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>IGI-aš+šur-IGI.LAL  
 25 IGI <sup>m</sup>kan-dâl-a-nu <sup>LÚ\*</sup>Ī.DU<sup>8</sup>  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>qí-bit-aš+šur <sup>LÚ\*</sup>h̄a-za-nu  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>aš+šur-<sup>[É]</sup>-ka-la-<sup>[mur]</sup>  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>LAL-APIN-eš <sup>LÚ\*</sup><sup>[x]</sup>  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>rém-ana-aš+šur <sup>LÚ\*</sup>[x]  
 30 IGI <sup>m</sup>mu-SILIM-aš+šur [deleted sign(s)]  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>a-ta-’a-áš <sup>[LÚ\*]</sup><sup>[x]</sup>  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>EN-DINGIR-iq-bu-u-n<sup>[i]</sup>  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>šú-nu-<sup>[PAB]</sup>.MEŠ-<sup>[iá]</sup> [(x x)]  
 IGI <sup>m</sup>aš+šur-A-AŠ A <sup>m</sup><sup>[x]</sup>-<sup>[x-x]</sup>  
 35 IGI <sup>m</sup>NU-MAN-E <sup>LÚ\*</sup>[x-x-x]  
 IGI <sup>md</sup>XV<sup>1</sup>-MAN-DÛ [x x x]  
 IGI <sup>md</sup>PA-ZU [x x x]  
 (blank line)  
 T.E. <sup>[IT1]</sup>[x] U<sub>4</sub>.2.[KÁM]  
<sup>[lim-mu]</sup> <sup>m</sup>x-x-x-x-x

<sup>1</sup>[Seal of] Marduk<sup>2</sup>-rēmanni<sup>2</sup>, [profession]. <sup>2</sup>[Seal of PN + profession]. <sup>3</sup>[Ditto: PN + profession]. <sup>4</sup>Ditto: Urdu-Issār, [profession]. <sup>5</sup>[Ditto]: Silim-Aššūr, [profession]. <sup>6</sup>[Ditto]: Šēp-Aššūr, baker. <sup>7</sup>Ditto: Qibit<sup>2</sup>-Aššūr, [profession].

<sup>8</sup>Ditto: Šakip-Aššūr, goldsmith. <sup>9</sup>Ditto: Kēnū<sup>2</sup>a<sup>2</sup>, [profession].

<sup>10</sup>Ditto: Abu-lēšir, goldsmith. <sup>11</sup>Sellers (text has singular form) of the woman. (Two stamp seal impressions)

<sup>12</sup>Nanāia-ilā<sup>2</sup>? (and her) daughter, <sup>13</sup>a total of two persons, Elamite captives (text has singular form), <sup>14</sup>whom the king <sup>15</sup>has given to Libbi-āli (i.e. the city of Ashur) –

<sup>16</sup>Mannu-kī-Aššūr [son of...?] has treated (them as object of purchase) and thus bought (them) <sup>17</sup>for <sup>18</sup>one mina of silver from [...]. <sup>19</sup>The price [has been paid] completely. <sup>20</sup>The people are legally <sup>21</sup>acquired. Anyone who contra[venes] the agreement (shall get the following punishments): <sup>22</sup>Aššūr (and) Šamaš will certainly be [his] opponents in cou[rt]. <sup>23</sup>He [shall] pay five minas of silver.

<sup>24</sup>Witness: Pān-Aššūr-lāmur. <sup>25</sup>Witness: Kandalānu, door keeper. <sup>26</sup>Witness: Qibīt-Aššūr, mayor. <sup>27</sup>Witness: Aššūr-bētkā-lāmur. <sup>28</sup>Witness: Tuqūnu-ēreš, [profession]. <sup>29</sup>Witness: Rēmāni-Aššūr, [profession]. <sup>30</sup>Witness: Mušallim-Aššūr. <sup>31</sup>Witness: Ata'aš, [profession]. <sup>32</sup>Witness: Adi-ilu-iqbūn[i]. <sup>33</sup>Witness: Šunu-aḥḥē'a. <sup>34</sup>Witness: Aššūr-aplu-iddina, son of [...]. <sup>35</sup>Witness: Šalamšarri-iqbi, [profession]. <sup>36</sup>Witness: Issār-šarru-ibni, [...]. <sup>37</sup>Witness: Nabū-lē'i, [...]. <sup>38</sup>[Month of...], 2nd day, <sup>39</sup>[eponym year of...].

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#### Notes

7: Alternative reading:  $\lceil \text{ m } \rceil \lceil \text{ ki-din-aš+šur } \rceil$

18: There is not enough space for the common phrase TA\* IGI LÚ\*.MEŠ *an-nu-ti*. The preserved traces do not support unequivocally the alternative reading TA\* IGI-š*u-nu*.

### III. *The archival context*

As already mentioned, the excavation number of the tablet (Ass.-Nr.) is lost. Nevertheless, some clues to the document's archival context can be obtained by prosopographical analysis. It suggests – admittedly in rather broad terms and by no means cogently – a connection of VAT 9755 to the group of tablets known as N 2 according to O. Pedersén's classification of the Ashur material on the basis of the excavation records.<sup>4</sup> Most of these tablets (lexical lists, omen texts, incantations, etc.) belong to the library of a family of Assyrian scribes who lived next to the large ziqqurrat. There are also some archival texts (especially sale contracts), which have recently been published.<sup>5</sup> However, several tablets of N 2 have not yet been identified. While it cannot be ruled out that some of them are lost, others may still be among the texts whose excavation number is no longer preserved.

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<sup>4</sup> O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur*, II (Uppsala, 1986), pp. 29–34.

<sup>5</sup> B. Faist, *Alltagstexte aus neuassyrischen Archiven und Bibliotheken der Stadt Assur* (StAT 3; Wiesbaden, 2007), pp. 14–47.

A few men mentioned in VAT 9755 can be identified – not with absolute certainty owing to the absence of the respective fathers' names – with persons attested in N 2. Aššūr-bētkā-lāmūr and Ata'aš also appear as witnesses in StAT 3 2 (lines 20 and 26 respectively) dating to the post-canonical eponym year of Bēlšunu (648\* B.C.E.).<sup>6</sup> Because of the rarity of these names in the Neo-Assyrian onomastic material – the name Aššūr-bētkā-lāmūr occurs only in these two documents, whereas the name Ata'aš perhaps is also to be found in SAAB 5 42:40 (N 9, dating to the 8th or early 7th century B.C.E.) – we may assume that in both cases one and the same person is meant. Moreover, in the witness list of another text from N 2 (StAT 3 12), which, strangely, is not dated, we find three names present in VAT 9755 as well: Aššūr-aplu-iddina (line 23), Šalam-šarri-iqbi (line 24), and Mannu-kī-Aššūr (line 27).<sup>7</sup> In any event, the relationship between Mannu-kī-Aššūr, the buyer of the Elamite woman and her daughter, for whom VAT 9755 was drawn up, and the family of scribes, in whose house the deed was possibly kept, remains unclear. In principle, Mannu-kī-Aššūr could have been an otherwise unknown member of the scribes' family. However, considering that most of the documents from N 2 pose the same problem and that the connection among them is by far the least evident among the Neo-Assyrian archives of Ashur, we have to look for other possibilities. Perhaps Mannu-kī-Aššūr entrusted his deed of ownership to the family of scribes for safekeeping, for example, because of their prestige in the neighbourhood.<sup>8</sup> But other explanations may

<sup>6</sup> Post-canonical eponym sequence according to S. Parpola (see PNA, Part 1/I, pp. XVIII–XX) and, if differing, according to J. Reade, "Assyrian Eponyms, Kings and Pretenders, 648–605 B.C.", *Orientalia* 67 (1998), pp. 255–265.

<sup>7</sup> Some identifications proposed by PNA seem, by contrast, less probable. The seller Silim-Aššūr is identified with the witness of SAAB 9 131:15 (N 24) on account of the presence of Sākip-Aššūr in both documents (R. Mattila, PNA 3/I, p. 1110a, No. 9), although in the treatment of this last name the two attestations are kept separately (K. Radner, PNA 3/I, p. 1066, Nos. 2 and 6). With one exception, all references to Adi-ilu-iqbūni in documents from Ashur are ascribed to the same individual, namely to the *ḥundurāiu* known from N 9 and 10 (K. Radner, PNA 1/I, p. 52b, No. 2). In the absence of further evidence this indeed seems not well-founded. Aššūr-aplu-iddina is identified with the witness of VAT 19537:49 (unpublished) because of the presence of Pān-Aššūr-lāmūr (R. Jas, PNA 1/I, p. 154b, No. 10) in both texts. But again, the Pān-Aššūr-lāmūr of our text and the one of VAT 19537 are kept apart in a later volume, probably because of the frequency of the name (K. Åkerman, PNA 3/I, p. 984, Nos. 7 and 9).

<sup>8</sup> This phenomenon has been observed, for instance, in Late Bronze Age Emar; see B. Faist, "Scribal Traditions and Administration at Emar", in L. d'Alfonso, Y. Cohen

apply too. K. Radner has pointed out that the price of a purchased person or real estate had not necessarily been paid or paid in full when the document was drawn up, even if it is always written in the past tense. She proposes seeing the keeper of the document (*šābit tuppi*), who sometimes appears among the witnesses to the transaction and in many cases was identical with the scribe of the text, as the person who kept the deed till the buyer had fully satisfied the seller.<sup>9</sup> There is no mention of a *šābit tuppi* in VAT 9755, but the end of the witness list, where a statement like this is usually to be found, is damaged.<sup>10</sup> In such a case, a link between the *šābit tuppi* and the family of scribes should be postulated.

#### IV. *The chronological setting*

Beside the above-mentioned document StAT 3 2 dating from 648\* B.C.E., additional texts can be taken as reference for the chronological setting of VAT 9755. The goldsmith Sākip-Aššūr, one of the ten sellers of the Elamite captives, may be identical with the person of the same name from the goldsmiths' archive (N 33), even if his profession is not given there. He is attested in the judicial document StAT 1 33:14 from the post-canonical eponym year of Šarru-mētu-uballiṭ (640\* or 642\* B.C.E.) and in the letter StAT 1 51:15, which is not dated.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the mayor Qibīt-Aššūr, placed third in our witness list, most probably presided, with other members of the city administration, over the purchase of a house (StAT 1 22 = StAT 2 244) transacted by someone (the name is broken away) related to the goldsmiths' "guild", as the text was found in N 33.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately the date of this

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and D. Sürenhagen (eds.), *The City of Emar among the Late Bronze Age Empires. History, Landscape, and Society* (AOAT 349; Münster, 2008), pp. 198–199.

<sup>9</sup> See Radner, *Die neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden*, pp. 89–93.

<sup>10</sup> Nabû-lē'i (line 37) would be a good candidate. Two, perhaps three documents from N 2 refer to a *šābit tuppi* (always a different person): StAT 3 5: rev. 14'–15', StAT 3 10:33, StAT 3 15: rev. 14' (?). In the first two texts the *šābit tuppi* is also the scribe.

<sup>11</sup> K. Radner (PNA 3/I, p. 1066a, No. 2) identifies Sākip-Aššūr with another person of the same name (N 12), but does not consider the seller's profession, which makes a connection with N 33 more likely.

<sup>12</sup> So also H. D. Baker, PNA 3/I, 1013a, No. 22. In StAT 1 22:2 Qibīt-Aššūr is specifically called mayor of the Šamaš gate.

sale contract is lost, but prosopographical considerations indicate that it has to be sought after 620\* B.C.E.<sup>13</sup>

The available information thus suggests that the historical context of VAT 9755 is the reign of Ashurbanipal (or later), a fact that also applies to most of the legal texts from Ashur. At that time the long-lasting hostility between Assyria and Elam, going back to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.E.), reached its climax and ended in an (actually short-lived) Assyrian supremacy.<sup>14</sup> The Assyrian royal inscriptions, which represent the main source for Neo-Elamite history, record five military campaigns against Elam, undertaken between 664 and 647 or 646 B.C.E.<sup>15</sup> The last campaign against Huban-haltaš III (Assyrian Ummanaldaš) culminated in the sack of Susa and surpassed all previous campaigns in extent and cruelty, perhaps because of Elamite support for Babylonia in the revolt of Šamaš-šuma-ukīn (652–648 B.C.E.). Apart from the tremendous material destruction, a substantial part of the population, livestock, and property was carried off. Ashurbanipal also recovered from Susa a statue of the goddess Nanaya of Uruk, which had been taken away from that city during an Elamite raid in the distant past; he sent it back to the Eanna temple in Uruk.<sup>16</sup> Would it be too far-fetched to see this historical event evoked by the name of the Elamite captive, which in all probability was not her original name?<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See K. Radner, *Ein neuassyrisches Privatarchiv der Tempelgoldschmiede von Assur* (StAT 1; Saarbrücken, 1999), p. 107.

<sup>14</sup> See lastly M. W. Waters, *A Survey of Neo-Elamite History* (SAAS XII; Helsinki, 2000), pp. 45–80. For the iconographic sources (palace reliefs) see J. Reade, “Elam and Elamites in Assyrian Sculpture”, *AMI N.F.* 9 (1976), pp. 97–106, with pls. 21–28.

<sup>15</sup> For the dating of Ashurbanipal’s last two campaigns see G. Frame, *Babylonia 689–627 B.C.* (Istanbul, 1992), pp. 293–295.

<sup>16</sup> See Frame, *ibid.*, pp. 204–205.

<sup>17</sup> Oded, *Mass Deportations*, p. 12, pointed out that “deportees or aliens settled permanently on foreign soil were given to adopting names of the type commonly found in the lands of their exile”. In our case, since the woman was evidently enslaved, it is most probable that she was renamed by her new owners. Changing a name in the Mesopotamian onomasticon has been discussed by D. O. Edzard, “Name, Namengebung”, *RIA* 9 (1998–2001), pp. 109–110, but without taking into consideration the replacement of the name in the case of deportees and other displaced persons.

### V. *Some historical considerations*

Together with Babylonia and Media, Elam belonged to the countries from which the Assyrians most frequently deported people.<sup>18</sup> They did not confine themselves to specific social groups, and they would deport men together with their families so that they would not run away and return to their homeland but would rather become settled in the new place.<sup>19</sup> Against this background it seems likely that the husband of the Elamite captive had already died, perhaps as a war victim, when she was brought to Ashur.

All booty, human as well as animal, was regarded as property of the king.<sup>20</sup> But royal inscriptions frequently note that the king divided it among the soldiers, high-ranking officials, and the inhabitants of the main Assyrian cities.<sup>21</sup> The machinery of distribution is little known. Whereas high-ranking officials may have had the privilege to choose people from a contingent of deportees,<sup>22</sup> in most cases they were likely to be assigned – if not by the king himself – by responsible functionaries<sup>23</sup> or by institutions. From VAT 9755 we learn that the Elamite captive was sold together with her daughter by ten men and that both had previously been given by the king (most likely Ashurbanipal) to the city of Ashur, that is to say to its inhabitants. It is reasonable to assume that the new possessors sold the woman and her child in order to get money that they could easily divide among themselves. This implies

<sup>18</sup> Oded, *ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup> *Idem*, *ibid.*, pp. 22–25.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, *ibid.*, pp. 40 and 85.

<sup>21</sup> Ashurbanipal stated that the captives taken during the second campaign against Huban-haltaš III “were divided among the cult centres, the dwellings of the great gods, my provincial governors, my magnates, and all my army like sheep” (BIWA, p. 59, A VII 6–8).

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance, the letter CTN II 194, written by an officer to his superior, the governor of Kalhu, concerning the booty taken during a military campaign led by the commander-in-chief (*turtānu*). Lines 7–23 run as follows (after the translation by J. N. Postgate): “Out of the captives who came out I have searched and chosen 30 persons [from] them. I applied to the *turtānu*, (and) he has given (them) to me. Out of the captives who were inside Rapiqu, who came out, I have chosen 10 persons from them, (but) the *turtānu* was not in a good mood, (and) I did not apply to him. When he comes into the palace, may my lord speak to him”.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, the sale document StAT 3 15, according to which a garden in a recently conquered region was granted by the commander to his third man (on chariot), who sold it to another person. The garden presumably was part of the booty. Note that it is qualified as gift (*tidittu*) of the commander. Could this term also apply to human booty?



that captives could be assigned to more than one individual, especially when the inhabitants were “common” citizens. Yet the sellers do not seem to have been bound by familial or professional ties, even if not all designations are preserved. One wonders, therefore, how they came to be granted the woman altogether. One possible explanation may be that they were members of an institution through which deportees were allocated. In this case the Ashur temple comes to mind. It is well known that a significant number of craftsmen and other professionals worked for this large institution. Goldsmiths and bakers, both attested in VAT 9755, were very important as they were involved in the fabrication and maintenance of cult statues and other temple treasury,<sup>24</sup> and in the preparation of bakery products for offerings.<sup>25</sup>

As in most cases, we lack any trace of the captive’s personal history. We do not know her position in the Elamite society, and on the basis of VAT 9755 we can only assert that in her new place she had the status of a (domestic) slave who changed hands.<sup>26</sup> In his study, Professor Oded stresses the lack of uniformity in the status of the deportees. He clearly delineates the different socio-economic conditions they attained – from state official to farm worker – and the various degrees of freedom they enjoyed.<sup>27</sup> A great number of them were settled on lands owned by the king or his officials, or by temples, and their situation did not differ from those of other Assyrian subjects. Only in rare cases – and VAT 9755 provides a new example – do they seem to have become domestic slaves. G. Galil has recently shown that most of the slave families in the Neo-Assyrian period were “single-parent families” composed of an adult, predominantly a woman, and their child or children.<sup>28</sup> Among the various constraints given by the author as possible reasons for the existence of this family type he mentions

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<sup>24</sup> See Radner, *Ein neuassyrisches Privatarchiv*, pp. 34–42. Actually, it has been proposed above to identify the goldsmith Sākip-Aššūr with a member of the goldsmiths’ “guild”.

<sup>25</sup> See B. Menzel, *Assyrische Tempel*, vol. 1 (Studia Pohl Series Maior 10/I; Rome, 1981), pp. 251–253.

<sup>26</sup> See Galil, *The Lower Stratum Families*, pp. 188–191 for the terms used in the Neo-Assyrian period to define slaves. To my knowledge, the only additional reference to an Elamite in the legal texts from Ashur is to be found in a judicial document, unfortunately in a broken context (envelope MAH 16154:7 published by J. N. Postgate, “Assyrian Documents in the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire, Geneva”, *Assur* 2 (1979), p. 11 and pl. III).

<sup>27</sup> Oded, *Mass Deportations*, pp. 75–115.

<sup>28</sup> Galil, *The Lower Stratum Families*, pp. 265 (type A4) and 320.

the “breakup of families due to political circumstances”, especially the enslavement of deported war widows.<sup>29</sup> This, however, may have been more common than explicitly stated in our sources.

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<sup>29</sup> Galil, *ibid.*, p. 323.

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