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presented by **Ryan D. Winters**

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Date: October 30, 2018

Negotiating Exchange:
Ebla and the International System of the Early Bronze Age

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED

BY

RYAN D. WINTERS

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES CIVILIZATIONS
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE SUBJECT OF ASSYRIOLOGY

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
OCTOBER 2018

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Piotr Steinkeller, Gojko Barjamovic, and Marco Bonechi Ryan D. Winters

Negotiating Exchange
Ebla and the International System of the Early Bronze Age

ABSTRACT

This dissertation takes a new look at the international relations attested in the cuneiform archives recovered from Early Bronze Age Ebla (~ca. 2350 BCE, Middle Chronology). It is argued that a primary goal of Ebla's diplomatic relationships with the other major powers on the international scene was to ensure that trade paths remained open. It cooperated with other distant states – above all Mari on the Middle Euphrates – in order to profit from and dominate trade at the expense of lesser powers that were caught up in between them, such as Abarsal on the Upper Euphrates, and Manuwat, near the Euphrates between Ebla and Mari. Chapter 1 outlines the goal, method, and historical context. Chapter 2 offers a geographic overview of Ebla and its relations with its major neighbors. Chapter 3 establishes the context of Ebla's earliest relations with Mari, and how this led to Ebla's supremacy over its rival Abarsal. Chapter 4 situates Armi, one of Ebla's most important allies, in Cilicia, and shows how Ebla sought to capitalize on its geographic position, which allowed access to routes leading into Anatolia. Chapter 5 investigates Ebla's diplomatic and mercantile relations with Hassuwan, another power with an Anatolia connection and with which Ebla had important mercantile links. Chapter 6 explores the kingdom of Kakmium, for which a location in the Amuq valley, in between Armi and Ebla, is argued. Chapter 7 returns to Mari, and situates Ebla's later relations with that power in the light of the results of the preceding chapters. Chapter 8 offers

conclusions and avenues for further research, while also pursuing initial investigations into the causes of the collapse of Ebla and its international system. Throughout the work, partial text editions and translations of original sources are offered, along with investigations into selected key terms.

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To my Mother and my Father

Acknowledgements

I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to study under some of the brightest minds within the fields of Assyriology and Sumerology. Above all I owe my warmest and deepest thanks to my advisor and mentor Piotr Steinkeller. If those who are familiar with his extensive corpus of studies on Mesopotamian history and philology are able to detect his influence behind the present work, then it would be a great honor for me. I extend also my gratitude to Gojko Barjamovic, who through not only his broad and multifacted knowledge, but also his passion and enthusiasm, has likewise provided an example to live up to. Piotr and Gojko have both, through their tutelage and through their own works, demonstrated to me the use of philological and textual studies for the reconstruction of history, and how rewarding this pursuit can be. Their work, using what may seem at first to be mundane and repetitive texts, of the Ur III and Old Assyrian periods respectively, to weave consequential and impactful reconstructions, have provided the main inspiration for my approach to the texts of the Ebla period. Without them, this work would not exist.

For what concerns Ebla and the Ebla texts, this work would have been completely impossible without the ongoing advice and support of Dr. Marco Bonechi, with whom I began regularly communicating, mostly over online video chat, in 2014. From the very beginning, Marco treated me like a friend and a colleague. When it came to the sometimes complicated and controversial matters of Eblaitology, it was always clear to me that Marco was very careful not to unduly impose his views upon me or to influence my thinking; instead, he, in a neutral manner, provided me with the tools and directions I

needed in order to be able to come to my own conclusions. Overcoming a six-hour time difference and an often busy schedule, Marco corresponded with me regularly, over the period when I was a total beginner in Ebla studies up until the advanced stages of my dissertation writing. This work owes a very great deal to him and would have been impossible without his assistance. Any flaws or shortcomings are, however, mine alone.

Thanks are also owed to Manfred Krebernik for two semesters spent under his tutelage in Jena, which provided me with an introduction the often complicated interpretation of the lexical and literary sources found at Ebla. Ebla philological matters would have remained outside my grasp, were it not for the time I spent studying with him; once again any shortcomings on this front are my fault alone.

I also thank Christopher Woods, for introducing me to Sumerian, and for encouraging me to continue in Assyriology by applying to Harvard. Without his kindness, I might not have followed this career path at all. I thank also all the other scholars in whose classrooms I have been privileged enough to sit.

Above all else, I owe everything to my parents, Mark and Lisa. Without them, needless to say, I would be nothing. Their love, support, and encouragement are at the basis of everything I have achieved or ever will achieve. I thank also my sister Nicole and my brother-in-law Vlad, and all my friends who are close enough to be considered family, including Dan and Rob. I thank also all my fellow members at *Yume Wo Katare* in Cambridge, for teaching me how to dream big, and for providing endless heaping portions of *Jiroken*, indispensable fuel for dissertation writing.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Ebla, Trade, and Diplomacy

The present study[1] focuses on the international dimension at Ebla, an aspect covered in uniquely rich and detailed depth by the archives. The characteristic large and at first seemingly repetitive textile rosters list many foreigners from dozens and dozens of different places, month after month. Some of these foreign places are distant great capitals, well known from other periods and archives, such as Mari (Tell Hariri, on the right bank of the Euphrates, just at the modern Syria-Iraq border), or Kish (Tell Uhaimir and Tell Ingharra, in Babylonia, about 80 km south of Baghdad, or 20 km east of Babylon). Some can be linked with Syrian toponyms existing still in the second or first millennia, or even still today. Still others are never attested again outside of the Ebla palace archives. For many of these places there is still controversy as to their basic location and identity. Alongside the administrative texts, an additional group of texts with a more narrative character, termed "chancery texts" in Italian Ebla scholarship, provide important contextual information about Ebla's foreign interactions. The most famous of these include the letter of Enna-Dagan of Mari, and the Abarsal treaty, but there are also

[1] Abbreviations used are those of the *Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago, 1956–2010) and/or cdli: Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative [cdli.ucla.edu], "Abbreviations for Assyriology." Volumes from the two series containing publications of Ebla texts, *ARET* (*Archivi Reali di Ebla, Testi*: Roma) and *MEE* (*Materiali Epigrafici di Ebla*: Napoli), are cited as "A" and "M," respectively. Whenever possible, passages from Ebla texts are cited according to the section numbering of the original editions. For the most up-to-date complete bibliography of Ebla studies see Scarpa 2017.

many texts not yet generally known outside the community of Ebla scholars, many of which have not yet been translated into English. This study cannot treat these comprehensively, but will draw upon a selection of them where appropriate.

At first, the foreign places mentioned at Ebla present an overwhelming picture. There are so many of them, and the administrative notations in which they occur are laconic. There seems at first to be little means by which to differentiate them from one another; one peruses a volume of published Ebla texts and is left with the impression of a swarm of undifferentiated, seemingly generic places. However, through a careful, contextually focused analysis, it is possible to begin to recognize the most important among the over one thousand attested toponyms, and to roughly arrange them on a map with respect to Ebla itself. It is possible to more deeply characterize these foreign places, and the nature of Ebla's relationship with them. It is possible to begin to interpret this chaotic and complex international situation, especially as it relates to Ebla's own ascendancy. One can begin to understand the reason behind the surfeit of foreigners appearing in Ebla texts, for the most part as recipients of textiles given out by the palace administration – a situation for which one finds no ready parallel among the ancient Near Eastern documentation. One can glean a sense of what was happening not only at the Ebla palace but also at foreign ones abroad, and gain an understanding of international relations on the overall world scene at this moment of time – just before the momentous arrival of Sargon and his empire, which would mark the end of this phase of history.

In general, Ebla's diplomacy and foreign relations were aimed above all at maintaining a balance of power, which allowed the continuous, uninterrupted flow of trade traffic between the known world's major regions. Ebla's main source of income

throughout the Palace G period was most likely derived from international trade.[2] As a capital city, Ebla's main goal was to maintain amicable, arm's length relations with distant peer capitals. These capitals would all work together to ensure that the smaller powers lying in between them, functioning essentially as buffer zones, would remain in a state of subordination. The major powers all wanted to ensure that the roads connecting them remained open, and their merchants free from molestation by unruly seminomadic forces existing on the margins of what was, for them, established society.

In the present view, international relations in the Ebla period have been mischaracterized in recent literature. Despite persistent claims to the contrary, it seems unlikely that there was constant and open warfare between the major powers of the international scene during the Ebla Palace G period. Nor was Ebla, after an initial early phase of expansion towards the Euphrates, marked by the defeat of Abarsal – ever again in the position to pursue an expansionistic or militaristic foreign policy.[3] Instead, those military episodes that are attested – much fewer in number than has been alleged[4] – likely

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[2] Steinkeller 2004; Steinkeller 2014. For additional perspectives on the role of trade and commerce at Ebla cf. Archi 1993; Archi 2003b; Biga 2003; Milano 2003; Pettinato 1979b; Pettinato 2002; Peyronel 2006; Sallaberger 2008; Sallaberger 2014; Waetzoldt 1984.

[3] According to Archi 2010b: 15, "... thanks to the administrative documents from Ebla we now know of each of the successive military expeditions carried out year after year over a period of forty years. These expeditions were all concluded within a year by an exchange of messengers, oaths of peace, and other agreements often broken after a few years." This is based on the interpretation of TIL as "destruction, defeat" and nig$_2$-kas$_4$ as "military campaign, war." For the interpretation of TIL instead as "to arrive at a place, to complete a journey" see below §5.5; for the interpretation of nig$_2$-kas$_4$ as "expedition" (of any sort, not just military) see below §7.1

[4] It is conspicuous that terms, which unambiguously refer to violent affairs, such as me$_3$ "battle" or TUM×SAL "besieging," are significantly more rarely attested than TIL or nig$_2$-kas$_4$.

had the character of policing operations. They were probably directed surgical efforts, punctuated offensive strikes with a long-term defensive goal in mind. Throughout the period covered by the archives, Ebla seems to have been more concerned with maintaining and consolidating its position, rather than expanding. Ebla's military forays represent an attempt to maintain the status quo against those outside chaotic forces, who, in the end, were probably responsible for Ebla's destruction, and who cleared the way for the arrival of Sargon, history's first true world conqueror.

It is impossible in a work of this scope to treat all of Ebla's foreign relations comprehensively and for all periods of the archives. Instead, a selection has been made of those toponyms, which seem most ripe for renewed, detailed study, and which are most consequential for the overall picture. Diachronically, the scope of this study has been tailored to fit with the available published material. Presently, the earliest and latest phases of the Ebla archives are well represented in contrast to the middle period, whose tablets are still mostly unpublished.

1.2 Dating and Periodization

The Ebla tablets were inscribed by their ancient redactors with the name of one of twelve months, but no year was indicated. Probably the arrangement of the tablets on the shelves held this information,[5] but this has unfortunately been lost. Modern editors can most readily assign a tablet a rough position within the relative chronology based on the presence and activity of a certain high official: one of three of a sequence of "ministers" or "viziers." This official, by all appearances, did not actually bear a title at all, or at least

[5] Archi 2015: 164.

no text ever gives him one. But he clearly acted both as the general of the army, and as chief executive of the palace administration. His duties were so paramount that at first the viziers were each believed to been kings. Among Ebla scholars there is now, however, justified universal consensus that the three "viziers" exercised their office in parallel with the Ebla kings, whose archival presence is instead more withdrawn, and are only very rarely referred to by name. Throughout this study, the titleless chief executive of Ebla will be referred to simply as the vizier, out of convention and convenience.

The first to appear in the role of what we call the "vizier" was *Ar-ru*$_{12}$*-LUM*, and most of the monthly texts from when he was prominent are collected in *ARET* XV. After the death of ArruLUM and king Irkab-Damu the "vizier" office seems to have truly become preeminent, when ArruLUM was succceeded by his son *Ib-ri*$_2$*-um*, who himself already appears in early texts as a young man. Upon his death, Ibrium was succeeded by his son *I-bi*$_2$*-zi-kir*, who had likewise already been active while his father was still alive. Ibbi-Zikir's son *Du-bu*$_3$*-hu-*^{d}*'A*$_3$*-da* was apparently being prepared to succeed his father at the time of the catastrophic end of the Ebla archives; his active presence can therefore be taken as a clue of a "late" Ibbi-Zikir text, dated shortly before the end of Palace G. Importantly, there was also found a small cache of tablets that, apparently, someone had tried to rescue in vain from the conflagration which consumed Ebla.[6] They can therefore be assumed to date to just before Ebla's end, and were apparently considered important enough to attempt to save from a fire.

[6] First edited in Sollberger 1985 (=A8) and edited again in Pettinato 1996 (=M5).

The very earliest Ebla texts, few in number, date to the reign of the king Igriš-Halab. During his reign, the office of "vizier" apparently did not yet exist; instead, the silver income texts (mu-DU) feature quantities of silver brought to the Ebla palace by a collegium of what have been referred to as "lords" (lugal-lugal)[7], but would perhaps be better rendered as "officers."[8] The two who brought the most silver under Igriš-Halab were *Dar-mi-a* (aka *Dar-mi-lu*) and *Ti-ir* (who also appears in the Abarsal treaty, in an unfortunately broken and obscure context). ArruLUM began his career as one of these "officers." His emergence as the foremost among them seems to have overlapped with the reign of king Irkab-Damu. Both king Irkab-Damu and vizier ArruLUM seem to have died in the same year. The last king of Ebla, Išar-Damu, may have been still rather young upon taking the throne. He would reign until the eventual fall of Ebla, and so his time overlaps with the tenures of Ibrium and Ibbi-Zikir.[9]

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[7] Archi 2000.

[8] It is inherently unlikely that the word lugal had a reading **ba$^{\text{ʿ}}$alum* at Ebla, for the very reason that this word was written with a different logogram, namely BAD. This logogram occurs in Eblaite titles distinct from lugal, for example BAD e_2-en "royal majordomo." If the Ebla lugal was a "lord" then the Eblaites would have written this word with BAD. On the other hand, texts from the period of ArruLum occasionally use lugal where one might otherwise expect ugula, a term which can have a tribal connotation at Ebla. Furthermore, the text MEE 3, 59, a lexical exercise text of Mesopotamian origin strongly suggests that the Ebla scribes were aware of the standard correspondence lugal = *šarrum*, because it features in one section personal names beginning with lugal- and in the other, names with *šar-*. It is possible that the Eblaite reading was thus **šarrum* (or some equivalent), perhaps in its original meaning of a type of high-ranking military or tribal officer. This meaning is retained in the Old Assyrian dialect for petty rulers, cf. e.g. Barjamovic 2011: 205-206. Archi 2016: 11 states "because the highest officials at Ebla were called 'lords', the logogram applied to them was lugal(-lugal)," but this is circular reasoning; 'lords' here is nothing more than the author's own modern designation of the lugal-lugal.

[9] Cf. Archi 2015a: 166–170.

In light of the present publication situation, the length in years of the terms of each of these viziers and their respective kings remains uncertain. A reconstructed relative chronology has been partially described in the literature, but it remains opaque in its details, because it is based on unpublished materials.[10] With only 25% of the monthly textile accounts that were excavated mostly in 1974 and 1975 available for research, there is no way at present to independently tell how long the archives lasted. The present study is therefore agnostic as to the actual length of the period covered by the Ebla archives. It is possible that the period of time covered may actually be significantly less than has been claimed. Of key importance for reconstructing the Ebla internal chronology is the amount of time which elapsed between the first version of the Ebla royal ritual (A11, 1) and the second one (A11, 2).[11] A full treatment of this complicated matter is however beyond the scope of the present study.[12]

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[10] According to Archi 2015a: 166, the texts of ArruLUM cover about 5 years, those of Ibirium 18 years, and those of Irkab-Damu 17 years. There is, however, no way at present to verify this information. See also the chronological arrangement presented in Archi/Biga 2003: 8–9 (consisting almost exclusively of still unpublished tablets, and thus not useful for research).

[11] Fronzaroli 1993 (see also Pettinato 1992); see most recently the important and convincing new interpretation of Bonechi 2016c, according to whom the ritual is not primarily about enthronement and renewal, as according to previous interpretations, but instead focusses on fertility, and above all the marriage of the royal couple.

[12] The first version of the royal ritual (A11, 1) should feature king Irkab-Damu as protagonist while the second (A11, 2) concerns Išar-Damu; ArruLUM occurs in the first but is replaced by Ibrium in the second; also a preistly official (PA4.ŠEŠ) of the first version named *A-ma-za-u*$_3$ is replaced in the second version by *En-na-NI*. On the other hand, both versions feature the officials *A-du-lu*, dumu-nita *Iš*$_{12}$*-a-NI* (var. *Iš*$_{11}$*-a-il*), *Ba-sa-lu*, dumu-nita *Ir*$_3$*-da-ma-lik*, *Na-zu*$_2$*-mu* (var *Na-zu-mu*), *A-zi*, *Dam-da-il*, and *En-nu-LUM*.

It has become common practice in the Ebla literature to provide tablets (often unpublished) with a misleading label such as "Ibrium VIII."[13] Since such modern attributions are often made in studies published in volumes directed at a general scholarly audience, it is likely that non-specialists, unfamiliar with Ebla, might take "Ibrium VIII" as an indication that the tablet itself bore such an unambiguous date, such as *mu 8 *Ib-ri$_2$-um*. However, even lacking a proper transliteration, one can rest assured that no such date is directly indicated, since such a practice was unknown at Ebla. A simple "Ibrium VIII" conceals the fact that these chronological attributions are a matter of complex interpretation, one which, whatever its accuracy may be, remains opaque to the scholarly community.

In part, scholars seem to have arrived at a reconstructed total amount of years for the duration of the Ebla archives by counting tablets, both monthly (listing mostly textiles) and "annual" (listing mostly metals). Although the present publication situation prevents one from verifying this process, it is easy to see wherein the potential pitfalls lie. First of all, it is always inherently possible that two tablets, bearing the same month name, actually date to one and the same month; thus it by no means follows that the existence of, for example, ten tablets with the label "month 1" means one is dealing with a span of ten years. On the other hand, there is no concrete proof that the so-called "annual" tablets each cover precisely one calendar year (12 months). The Ebla scribes, perhaps being particularly prone to ad-hoc practices in comparison with their

[13] See e.g. Archi 2017: 166: "ARET XIV 61 (Ibrium VIII)... ARET XIV 67 (Ibrium XIV)... ARET XIV 81 (Ibbi-Zikir V)... ARET XIV 84 (Ibbi-Zikir VIII)." All of these texts are still unpublished as of present writing.

Mesopotamian counterparts, could easily have drafted such large documents (which were compiled from smaller tablets that were then discarded) whenever they needed to, depending on the then-current level of administrative activity. So too is it possible that some so-called "annual" accounts might be contemporaneous with one another, or partially overlap. Finally, one must reckon with the matter of "restoring" allegedly missing monthly or multi-month tablets within the relative chronology, and the interpretation and placement of fragments – hardly a straightforward process.[14] Only the correction of the publication situation, and subsequent transparent cooperative work by the scholarly community as a whole, will allow further progress to be made on this matter. Until then, there is no reason to follow the year attributions, which have been so far presented. Without publication, these year attributions are not only impossible to verify, they are also not useful for research.

1.3 Ebla's Internal Political Organization

Ebla was certainly the most powerful place within its own region, a geographically unitary zone encompassing the flat and fertile plains around Idlib and Aleppo. Its political influence certainly spread beyond this region, above all to the east and northeast, towards the Euphrates, and to the south, along the Orontes.[15] It would be beyond the scope of the present study to approach the question of whether or not the term

[14] Cf. the statement of Archi 2015: 169, "Ibrium was succeeded by his son Ibbizikir. The last years of this minister are poorly recorded because only a few, small fragments of the [annual metal accounts] 14–16 have survived. Furthermore the yearly mu-tum$_2$ documents from the 14th year of the minister onwards are missing."
[15] On the Orontes region see now Bonechi 2016a.

"empire" could be appropriate to describe the Ebla phenomenon, as compared with later and better known entities. Ebla chronologically precedes all other entities that are commonly considered to have been empires. It is for now still an open question, to what degree the Ebla phenomenon is similar to later known periods, or to what degree it might be considered unique. Avoiding for now such a complicatedmatter, the present studies seeks to begin to clarify not only how powerful Ebla itself was, but also in what way the extent of its power was conditioned by its relationships with other polities on the Near Eastern scene.

Ebla was rich and powerful, and would rightly be considered for its time a "large" territorial state – of this there is no doubt. But what seems particularly characteristic for Ebla is the sheer complexity of the overall international political situation of which it was a part, and the sheer quantity of players on the scene. The average Ebla tablet lists the name of over a dozen different foreign locations. In the early days of Ebla research it had been believed that most of these places were simply part of Ebla's empire, while today we can recognize that the situation was actually much more complicated. Only a select group of toponyms can be positively identified as having been part of the Ebla realm proper. Some were fully independent states of equal status to Ebla, while some had instead a middle-ranked status. Most of these various political entities had their own ruler, who bore the same title as Ebla's own ruler ("en"). There existed no terminological distinction between the king of a major world power and a minor kinglet, such as during the following Middle and Late Bronze Ages, when a “great king,” was distinguished from a mere “king." For the most part, representatives from these assorted places appear in the Ebla texts in the apparent role of palace guests, as recipients of issuances consisting

primarily of textiles and secondarily of precious metal objects. The Ebla tablets seem to go on and on listing such issuances, hundreds and hundreds of them, month after month. But what is the meaning of this constant bustle? In sheer scale and pace such a busy diplomatic situation is without ready parallel in the known ancient Near Eastern documentation.[16] How exactly did Ebla's intense relations with her neighbors relate, above all, to her economic and political ascendancy? People from all four corners of the then-known world were a perennial presence at Ebla–in our documentation primarily as recipients, only secondarily as contributors–but why, exactly? These questions all seem directly related to the matter of the extent of Ebla's power. It suggests that neither Ebla nor her neighbors were in the position to act as all-powerful regional bullies, but instead had to engage in complicated balancing acts and negotiaton.

The present study thus seeks to establish the basic context of Ebla's relations with the world around her through a close analysis of some of the most important available examples. It would be premature to attempt to treat Ebla and her neighbors in a fully comprehensive and historical manner, above all because of the publication situation, and because such a task would far exceed the scope of the current work. Instead, the focus is on a selection of places with which Ebla's relations were particularly important, and which seem poised to yield the most valuable insights. Because it is still too early to write the "history" of Ebla from beginning to end, each moment of interaction between Ebla and one or more of her neighbors will be treated as an individual "episode." These

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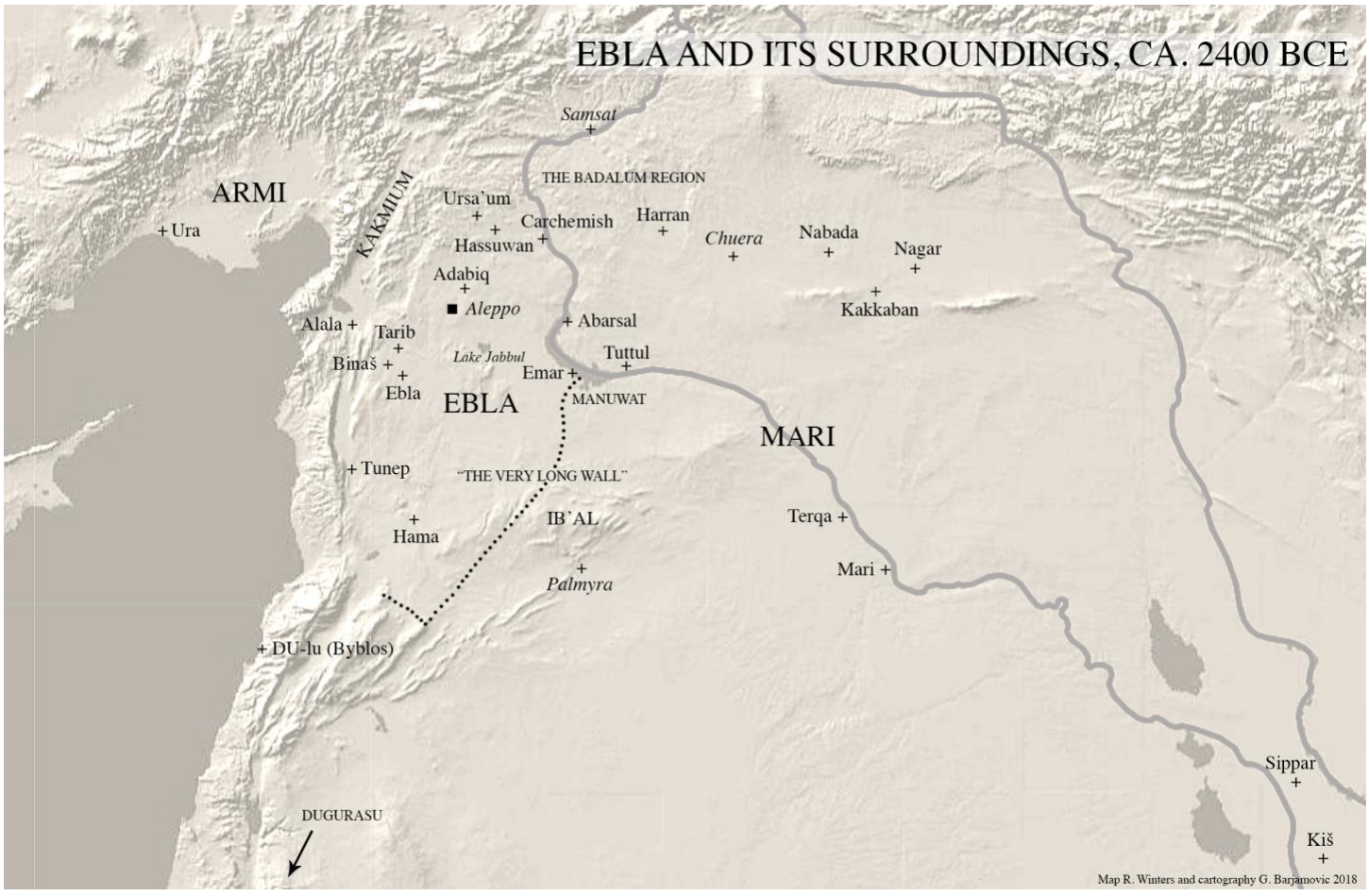
[16] This is not to say that the Ebla palatial diplomatic situation was itself historically unique, only that this type of documentation seems uniquely preserved for Ebla. The most comparable sources could be sought among the texts from the Ur III (late third millennium), or from the Neo-Assyrian (first millennium) periods.

individual episodes will be linked together, not as a sequential chain, but as a net, with each point shedding light on the combined overall context. The goal of the investigation is to uncover what were the basic dynamics of Ebla's interactions with her neighbors, what were the aims of her foreign policy and how was this linked to her prosperity, and what was the overall international "atmosphere" on the world scene at the height of the Ebla Palace G period.

2.0 Geographic Overview

2.1 Ebla as a Crossroads

By looking at the position of Tell Mardikh and the surrounding area on a map, it is easy to tell that Ebla was located at a crossroads between several key regions. Leaving from Ebla, one could readily reach the entire then-known world. From Ebla's heartland led routes north and northwest into Anatolia or modern day Turkey, and west to the Mediterranean; east across Upper Mesopotamia and into Iran and Central Asia; southeast into Lower Mesopotamia, and south and southwest to the Levant and Egypt.



2.1.2 East: The Upper Euphrates

Travelling due east from Ebla, one reached the Euphrates river, an exceedingly important trade highway.[17] The Euphrates was the key route connecting Anatolia with lower Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf, and even further beyond to the Indus Valley.[18] The region to Ebla's east and northeast, towards and along the Euphrates, seems to have been geopolitically dense. Many of the minor polities appearing in the Ebla texts are thought to lie in this general region. Further north, and to the east on the other side of the Euphrates, was the so-called *ba-da-lum* region (named for a high official who appears acting as ruler in place of the expected EN[19]), which included the famous city of Harran.

Throughout the period covered by the archives, the region east of Ebla along the Upper Euphrates was where Ebla was most interested in exerting and maintaining its influence, no doubt for reasons related to the Euphratean trade traffic. Ebla's relationship with Emar, lying due east from Ebla on the Euphrates, was complicated. In the time of

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[17] On the Euphrates as a trade highway in Mesopotamian cultural mythology, see Woods 2005: 41–45. For the Euphrates trade in the Old Babylonian period, see Leemans 1960: 85–112. For the period that concerns us, cf. the attestation on a votive inscription from Pre-Sargonic Mari of a ga'eš$_x$ / id$_2$ "trader of the river (Euphrates)," Gelb/Kienast 1990: 11 (MP 10), to which one can compare the ga'eš$_x$ / KI:LAM$_7$ / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ "trader of the market of Mari" attested in M2, 13 obv. iv 3–5. See also the significant attestation of the existence of a "Euphrates toll" or "tithe" (zag-10 KIB^{gunû}.NUN.A) in A13, 15 (10), a text dealing with disputes between Ebla and Mari merchants (cf. Sallaberger 2008: 98). For the Euphrates as a simultaneous trade corridor and border, see Barjamovic 2011. The central importance of the Euphrates as a trade highway during the Ebla period was stressed by Steinkeller 2004.

[18] On the Tigris and Euphrates as trade highways linking Mesopotamia with the Persian Gulf region, see Laursen/Steinkeller 2017, with a map p. 2.

[19] On the *ba-da-lum* official and its regional valence see Archi 1988c: 2–3, for whom the badalum region was located "between the Euphrates and the Habur, more or less along the present Syrian-Turkish border."

Iplus-Il Emar suffered a "sacking" (TUM×SAL).[20] In the subsequent ArruLUM texts, attestations of Emar are few, but the city apparently had its own ruler (EN), though perhaps one who possessed limited sovereignty. Eventually, a woman named Tiša-Lim, possibly related to the Ebla royal family, became the Queen of Emar, apparently as the result of a complicated juridical agreement.[21] The fact that accounts of Tiša-Lim's considerable property and wealth at Emar were kept at Ebla, implies that Ebla was from this point on in a situation of more or less control over that place.

From the time of Iplus-Il of Mari onwards, Ebla apparently owned a "port" (ma_2-NE^{ki}) on the Euphrates, which was probably located just north of Emar. Although the port can be referred to, referencing its location, as "of Emar," it seems to have been a city in its own right, possessing its own Ishara-goddess[22] and its own agricultural plots.

With the help of Mari under Iplus-Il and his successors, Ebla succeeded in dominating Abarsal, which was apparently both a specific settlement that also controlled

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[20] See below §3.1.1.4.

[21] Spelled out in the chancery documents A13, 7 and A13, 8; see also Archi 1993c for an account of the household (ŠID / e_2) of Tiša-Lim, and A2, 27a for a list of fields associated with Tiša-Lim. The documents in question have been interpreted as related to a "dowry" given to Tiša-Lim on the occasion of an intedynastic marriage with one *Ru$_{12}$-zi-da-mu*. However, A13, 7 and A13, 8 seem in some ways to have the character of a treaty, rather than simply constituting the record of a dowry (eg. the mention of an oath (nam-TAR) in A13, 7 (3), of "judges" (di-kud di-kud) in (4), and of a clause related to merchants (lu_2-kar) in (5). The actual situation seems to have been more complicated than that of a simple dowry for an interdynastic marriage and deserves deeper study, unable to be undertaken here for reasons of scope.

[22] M10, 20 rev. viii 17f: 6 gin_2-DILMUN ku_3-bar_6 / 3 *zi-bar* / nig_2-ba / ama-gal / en / ^{d}*Iš.*ŠARA$_2$ / ma_2-NE^{ki} / *wa* / *U$_9$-gu$_2$-wa-aš$_2$*^{ki} / *wa* / *Zu-ra-mu*^{ki} "6 D.-shekels of silver for 3 small cups, gift of the queen mother for Išhara-of-the-Port (near Emar), of Yukuwaš, and of Zuramu." On *zi-bar*, a small cup or drinking vessel, see Waetzoldt 2001: 365f and Mander 1990: 87.

a wider region. In contrast to earlier proposals,[23] Abarsal was probably located directly on the river, between Emar and Karkamiš, and controlled an important crossing.[24] This early episode marked the end of Ebla's expansionist phase, after which it was mostly engaged in maintaining and consolidating what it had gained.

2.1.3 Southeast into Mesopotamia: Manuwat, Mari, Kish

Proceeding southeast from Emar along the Euphrates, one passed through a "buffer zone" of middle-rank polities, including, above all, Manuwat, before one reached the realm controlled directly by Mari, which may have extended as far as Tuttul on the Balikh.[25] The urban center of the state of Mari was located at Tell Hariri. Throughout the entire phase covered by the archives, a direct military assault against Mari would almost certainly have been beyond the capacity of Ebla's army, and the converse was likely true as well. Even under its greatest king Iplus-Il, an assault by Mari against Ebla would likely have been too far-flung to be attemptable, and this is reflected by the new order that emerged after the campaigns of Iplus-Il in the upper Euphrates region (narrated by the Enna-Dagan letter), which saw Ebla, not Mari, emerging as the dominant force in that region (as seen in the Abarsal treaty). Thus, while there certainly existed some level of rivalry between these two states, they never dealt direct blows against one another.

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[23] An identification of Abarsal with Tell Chuera has been suggested (eg. Archi 2015: 162, and elsewhere), but this seems too far from the Euphrates to fit the situation described in the Enna-Dagan letter and in the Abarsal treaty. See in detail below §3.2.0.
[24] Cf. Biga 2015: 184, "Abarsal, probably on the Euphrates (or on a river)..."
[25] Cf. Archi/Biga 2003: 10, "The border between Ebla's and Mari's spheres of influence ran between Emar and Tuttul."

Instead, they played a complicated diplomatic game, based above all on the mutual domination of interstitial states like Manuwat and Abarsal. Historical reconstructions involving alleged “wars” between Mari and Ebla make little sense when integrated into an overall context. These are based solely upon interpretations of certain key terms, including nig$_2$-kas$_4$ “expedition” (of any sort, not always military), and TIL, which likely means “to arrive at a place, to complete a journey,” [26] or "to complete (business),"[27] but probably not "to destroy," or "to defeat," as has been alleged.[28]

2.1.4 Further East: Nagar, the Habur, and Upper Mesopotamia

If, instead of following the Euphrates towards Mari, one crossed it and proceeded east, one would have passed the Balilkh and eventually reached the Habur region, dominated by the major power of Nagar, identified with the modern site of Tell Brak. Near the end of the archives, an interdynastic marriage solidified the ties between Ebla and Nagar. Likely, all three of the powers of Ebla, Mari, and Nagar continuously tried to use one of the other two as a means by which to keep the third one in check. Geographically and politically, Ebla-Mari-Nagar seemingly formed a triangle of balance.

From the perspective of Ebla, Nagar appears above all as a region that produced a special kind of equid, likely a hybrid of the domestic donkey and onager. Ebla also maintained contacts with lands lying further east beyond Nagar, including Subartu and Hamazi. The Habur region and Upper Mesopotamia probably also served as the highway

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[26] Pomponio 1989b: 301–305. See below §5.5
[27] Cf. Milano 2003: 415f, "dépenser, verser (à titre de payment)," Archi 1980:
[28] See below §5.5, §7.1.

over which goods coming to Ebla from Iran and Central Asia (including, above all, lapis lazuli) passed.

2.1.5 The Southern Horizon: Ibʾal, Byblos, and Egypt

To the south/southeast of Ebla, in the semiarid part of Syria, was the tribal confederacy of Ibʿal. Potentially the zone inhabited by this entity was demarcated by the recently discovered archaeological phenomenon known as the *Trés Longue Mur*, although the exact function and dating of this structure remains unclear.[29] More research is needed on this possible connection. Ibʾal is perhaps not to be seen as a settlement or even a region, but as a kinship-based tribal confederacy. It was apparently known for a seminomadic lifestyle, and its fearsome warriors. Ibʾal interacted not just with Ebla but also with Mari, located to its east. In some vividly narrated, but difficult to understand chancery texts of likely early date, men from Ibʾal are described apparently acting as mercenaries on the behalf of both Mari and Ebla. They defeated minor cities, and transported the conquered booty apparently on one occasion to Mari.[30]

To the south/southwest of Ebla was the route that passed along the Mediterranean coastline and eventually connected Cilicia to the Sinai Peninsula and Egypt. The discovery at Ebla of objects inscribed with Egyptian writing have already confirmed that

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[29] On the archaeological phenomenon of the Très Long Mur see Geyer 2010; on the perspective from written sources see Lafont 2010.

[30] See A13, 13 (18) *wa* / *ni-za-ba-at* / *Ga-ra-ma-an*^{ki}/ (19a) *wa* / *ne-sa-ba-ar* / *si-in* / *Ma-ri*$_2$ / ga$_2$-nu$_{11}$ /*Ga-ra-ma-an*^{ki} / (19b) *ne-zi-bu*$_{14}$*-ud-kum* / ab-diri /lal$_3$ /*wa* /še / *wa* / [*N*]*A-SE*$_{11}$ */* [*w*]*a* / *a-ʾa*$_3$*-wa-a* MIN / *ba-da-ga* /*Ab*$_2$*-zu*^{ki} / (19C) *ša-a* / sag /*Bi*$_2$*-ne-Li-im* / *in* / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ "(18) And we (i.e., Ibʾal) seized Karaman, (19a) and we sent towards Mari the (contents of) the storehouse of Karaman towards Mari. (19b) Taken for you are: an abundance of honey, grain, people, and the *contents* of your two houses of Abzu, (19c) (all) that which (is now) property of Bin-Lim in Mari."

this route was active during Palace G times. Along it was situated the important state of *DU-lu*^{ki}, which is possibly to be read *Gub-lu*^{ki} and identified with Byblos.[31] Emphasizing its importance, *DU-lu* eventually came to be linked with Ebla by interdynastic marriage. One of its most important roles was that it served as the intermediary between Ebla and a place called Dugurasu, which, acccording to a recent proposal, can now be identified either with Egypt itself, or a place directly connected to it.[32] Among other things, Ebla

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[31] Biga 2014b: 97, "After studying the references to DUlu in the Ebla texts I recently concluded that there is no better candidate for Byblos in the Ebla texts than DUlu. A reading of the sign "DU" as gub is quite possible, and the absence of the dual (attested in the writing of Gubla in the second millennium) cannot be a big prob- lem; in the Egyptian texts the name of Byblos is not a dual form. From DUlu (and also from Dugurasu [i.e., Egypt] as we shall see) linen textiles are often sent to Ebla. There is not another centre (apart from Dugurasu) from which linen textiles are always sent to Ebla. In the texts recording incoming quantities of goods to Eblaite palace storerooms (the so called "mu-DU" texts) linen textiles and objects made with with precious stones of different colours are regularly sent to Ebla by DUlu and by Dugurasu." While it is true that the value *Gub-* of DU seems unusual based on the extant third millennium textual corpora, one must reckon quite seriously with the possibility of the existence of other, foreign scribal traditions which have not yet come to light. The spelling *Gub-lu*^{ki} could well reflect the traditions of just such a foreign scribal school, otherwise unknown.

[32] Biga 2014b: 98–99, "The name of Egypt or of an Egyptian city has not been identified with certainty in the Ebla texts, but there is one good candidate: the town/region of Dugurasu…. . In an Egyptian inscription recently assembled… there is the autobiography of Iny, an important Egyptian official… during the reigns of three pharaohs of the 6th Dynasty… They all sent him to Byblos and then to a region that is certainly Syria to buy products from these regions. The products traded are: lapislazuli, tin, silver and bitumen. In the Ebla texts several gifts sent by the Eblaite court to different kingdoms are mentioned. Gifts of conspicuous quantities of lapislazuli, tin and silver from the Ebla court are sent only to the king of Dugurasu, a king who never went to Ebla to swear allegiance; from Dugurasu, objects of gold, linen textiles and quantities of precious stones of different colours and precious vases made of a stone that may be alabaster (the same objects that come from DUlu) are sent as a gift to the Ebla court. The products sent by Ebla to Dugurasu are identical with the products the functionary Iny went to buy in Syria. DUlu and Dugurasu are often mentioned together. People from DUlu come to Ebla with the news that the journey of some merchants to Dugurasu has ended successfully. In Dugurasu several functionaries are described as having relationships with Eblaite merchants and their names are clearly not Semitic and can be better explained as

sent tin and lapis to Dugurasu, which is a good demonstration of Ebla's role as a crossroads, since these goods must have had their ultimate origin in the north and east, having reached Ebla after passing through the lands controlled either by Armi, Mari or Nagar.

2.1.6 North into Anatolia: Armi, Kakmium and Hassuwan

The final route to be mentioned is the one that has, so far, been either minimalized or outright ignored in the literature. It is the one connecting Ebla with Anatolia, which was potentially the most important connection of all, as far as Ebla's position on the geopolitical scene is concerned. Ebla was able to amass huge quantities of silver, and the ultimate origin of this metal had to lie within Anatolia itself.[33] Ebla's most important neighbor in this regard was Armi, a regional power with a unique onomasticon, which (as argued in detail below §4.0) is probably to be sought in Cilicia, in the region, which in later Hittite times was called Kizzuwatna. Armi is listed in association with certain exotic coastal food products, and with timber, a unique quality it shares in common with the important western kingdom of Kakmium. Kakmium seems have been located in between

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Egyptian names." A less convincing proposal is the one of Archi 2016a, to connect Dugurasu instead with Tukriš, and seek it thus in Iran. Ebla sent quantities of lapis and tin to Dugurasu, which is the exact opposite of what one would expect if Dugurasu were in Iran, considering that Central Asia is certainly the origin of the Ebla lapis lazuli, and possibly of some of its tin as well.

[33] Cf. the discussion in Steinkeller 2016: 130–131: "It is characteristic that silver was comparatively rare in Babylonia during the Early Dynastic periods (2900-2350 BC)…. it comes as a complete surprise to realize that [the Ebla] sources routinely record truly enormous volumes of silver…. this situation stands in a sharp contrast with the conditions prevailing during the same period in Babylonia. To be sure, silver does appear in the Pre-Sargonic and Sargonic documents, but never in such enormous quantities. This particular distribution of data makes it clear that Ebla and Mari did not obtain their silver from the east. *The sources of that silver must have been situated either in the west or the north* (emphasis mine)."

Ebla and Armi, and is probably to be sought in the area of the Amuq valley, known classically as the plain of Antioch. Characteristically, Kakmium and Armi were both among the places from whence came the largest numbers of merchants to Ebla. Only from Manuwat and Mari are a comparable number of merchants attested, as from Kakmium and Armi.[34]

There also existed another route into Anatolia, one that proceeded instead north along the Euphrates, eventually reaching the point where, centuries later, the Old Assyrian merchants crossed on their westward journey towards Kanesh. An important settlement lying somewhere along this general direction was Hassuwan, known in later Assyrian and Hittite sources as Haššum.[35] Hassuwan was singled out for mention in the Enna-Dagan letter, as a place from which Iplus-Il "withdrew" (e_3), just before receiving an income (mu-DU) from Ebla near Emar on the Euphrates. Subsequently, under king Irkab-Damu, Ebla engaged in intense diplomatic relations with Hassuwan, and merchants from Hassuwan visited Ebla in great numbers.[36] Other settlements were probably also located further north in this direction, including Kablul, which was known as a source of gold.[37] Possibly, Kablul was located near the "mountain of Hahhum" mentioned by

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[34] Archi 2011: 27, "No other state (than Armi) sent so many people to Ebla, especially merchants, lu_2-kar." Archi 1993a: 53–54, "The lu_2-kar 'the man of the port (of trade), *kārum*' is one of the names of function that occurs most frequently in the documents… they came from various city-states, but their largest numbers were from Kakmium, Manuwat, and Mari." Unfortunately, the present publication situation allows only a preliminary glimpse as to the exact statistical distribution of the various foreign lu_2-kar at Ebla.
[35] Archi 2008; Barjamovic 2011: 202.
[36] Archi 2008: 89, "Frequent mention is made of merchants (lu_2-kar) and workers (guruš) from Hassuwan present at Ebla." See further below §5.2.
[37] See below §3.2.4.2.

Gudea of Lagash as a source of gold,[38] and for which, on the basis of the Old Assyrian documentation, an identification with the site of Samsat on the Upper Euphrates has been proposed.[39]

2.2 Ebla as a meeting place

One of the clearest ways by which Ebla's role as a "crossroads" manifested itself was as a meeting place, a locus unto which foreigners from all corners of the above-outlined world descended. There, they met and interacted not only with Eblaites, but with each other. This was particularly important for the middle-ranked states that formed part of Ebla's retinue, and who, during the same month year after year, all came to Ebla at the same time. Ebla also played a key intermediary role between several of the major states on the international scene. Most importantly, Ebla facilitated relations between Armi (lying to Ebla's northwest), and other major powers (situated instead to Ebla's east), such as Mari and Nagar. Men from Armi came to Ebla, received an allotment from the palace administration, and departed thence for lands in the east, with Ebla accompaniment (see in detail §4.1.1).

2.2.1 Gifts at the Court of Audience

As a starting point one must ask, what does the appearance of a foreigner in an average Ebla list of textiles mean? Most of the time – by default, essentially – it means that the foreigner (who is sometimes listed by name, other times merely designated by his

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[38] Gudea Statue B vi 33–35 (=Edzard 1997: 34): ku_3-GI sahar-ba / hur-saĝ Ha-hu-um-ta / im-ta-e_{11} "He brought down gold in its ore from the mountain range of Hah(h)um."

[39] Forlanini 2006; Barjamovic 2008.

place of origin, GN^{ki}) was physically present at the city of Ebla, where he received some garments, and sometimes also gifts in precious metal. Indeed, the likely specific physical location where the garments were given out is known archaeologically. It is the so-called "Court of Audience," a large, open-air reception and meeting place located, not coincidentally, directly adjacent to where the monthly accounts were kept. This monumental audience hall included a door, located next to a throne, where the king or another high presiding official would have been garthered. This door led directly into a large storeroom, where the textiles and other precious goods to be given out were kept.[40] Thus Ebla's role as benevolent patron of gifts unto its courtly guests – foreign and domestic – is reflected in the architecture itself. Here it is important to note, as was already recognized very early on,[41] that the Ebla monthly accounts do not make any distinction between goods distributed to foreigners, and goods distributed to members of the Eblaite court itself. This strongly suggests that both types of transactions were seen as equivalent, and that both types of receipts took place under similar circumstances: namely, at the Ebla palace G, in the Court of Audience.

Previous scholars (below), however, have proceeded from the opposite assumption. For them, an entry listing textiles for a foreign geographical name implies that some Eblaites carried the textiles out of the Palace G, away from Tell Mardikh, and delivered them to the foreign locations themselves. Thus according to this view, the foreigners remained stationary, while a mobile Ebla brought the goods to them. In the

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[40] Mathiae 2013: 52.

[41] Archi 1985a (=A1): 219 fn. 1, "Anche in questi documenti non si distingue comunque tra beni destinati ad altri stati... e beni distribuiti all'interno dell'amministrazione eblaita."

present view, this would not make very much sense; it would turn a basic aspect of Ebla diplomacy on its head, and result in a rather unlikely situation. Biga expresses this point of view as follows:

> "Ces documents enregistrent les quantités des produits distribués au personnel de la cour et surtout mentionnent quantité de biens échangés avec des personnes d'autres cités. *Ces biens sont reçus dans ces cités elles-mêmes et sont donc apportés par des marchands éblaïtes*..."[42]

The invocation of "marchands" in this context seems ad-hoc and unjustified. The textile disbursals in question did not constitute commercial transactions in and of themselves. In general, the texts list neither merchants nor any delivering officials at all in such contexts. To be sure, Ebla did sometimes either distribute goods in a city other than Ebla itself (which can be indicated with the formula *in* GN^{ki} šu-ba$_4$-ti, where GN^{ki} usually seems to be a city directly controlled by Ebla), or have goods sent directly to a foreign location (indicated with the formula šu-mu-tak$_4$, whereby the official responsible for this conveyance official is usually listed and rewarded). But these seemingly represent exceptional occurrences, which the scribes were always careful to note. When no such remark is present, we can assume the goods were received at Ebla. It is of course inherently possible that certain contexts could imply the receipt of a good outside Ebla, and one should read the texts carefully in this regard. On the other hand, many entries contain an additional remark, explaining the purpose of the disbursal to a foreigner, which necessarily implies his presence at Ebla. For example, foreigners can deliver an exotic good to Ebla, or a piece of news. Another category of sources, concerned with recording incoming rather than outgoing goods, reveals that the same foreigners who

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[42] Biga 2008: 291.

regularly received textiles, also made small contributions to Ebla consisting of silver and textiles.[43] These contributions probably took place at the same time as the textile receipts, and so establishes the gift-giving act as reciprocal, even if the goods exchanged were not necessarily equal in value.[44] Of key importance to understanding these exchanges, especially as far as Ebla's middle-ranked allies are concerned, is that they most likely took place at Ebla.

Entering the Ebla palace as a guest in order to receive a textile gift was an act of submission and a way of acknowledging Ebla's superior status, with Ebla acting in the benevolent role of a host.[45] If one imagines instead that Ebla went out and delivered gifts

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[43] For Archi 2018: 18, the foreigners' receipt of Eblaite textiles and their contributions to the Ebla palace took place on separate occasions, but this is unjustified: "Beginning with the minister Ibrium, and then regularly in the last decade of Ebla, when the minister was Ibbi-Zikir, there was the custom of *delivering*, once a year, a set of garments as a ceremonial gift to the kings and elders... of those cities which recognized Ebla's hegemony.... These cities returned sending small amounts of silver and clothes, registered in the yearly mu-DU documents."

[44] It would appear most of the time that the value of the goods given out by Ebla to foreigners exceeded the value of the foreigner's own contributions, but this point deserves deeper investigation. Most of the mu-DU "income" texts are still unpublished.

[45] For extensive studies of the phenomenon of diplomatic gift-giving in later periods (especially the Late Bronze Age, as attested in the diplomatic correspondence recovered from Amarna) see eg. Liverani 2001; Liverani 1990; Zaccagnini 1987; Zaccagnini 1973. Cf. the summary in Peyronel 2014: 356–357: "The 'diplomatic' correspondence dealing with inter-state relations was the result of intensive contacts of the courts, generating shared procedures of political interactions. The socio-economic development of the urban society, the regional political composition based on hierarchical relationships between states and vassal kingdoms, and the ideology of power shared by the elites of various political entities, are the main features which shaped a common cultural system, a language and an operative model of international gift exchanges during the Late Bronze Age. The core of this system was certainly the ideology of prestige, with the neccesity of demonstrating the social position through precious materials, valuable items, and exotica. Regional and inter-regional exchanges were embedded in and supported by diplomatic relations, in which the exchange of goods represented only a part of a wider and multiform web of relations."

to each of its minor allies individually, this whole dynamic would be inverted. It would place Ebla in the weaker position, and the gifts would instead have had the character of a tribute or bribe. It is difficult to imagine what sort of diplomatic benefit Ebla could have gained by making deliveries to its weaker allies, all individually. Such a scenario would also present serious logistical difficulties, when one considers that Ebla gave out textiles to dozens of foreigners every month, spread out over quite a wide area. Conveying all these textiles to their destinations, every single month, would be a very costly enterprise. More realistically, the foreigners came to Ebla in order to collect their textiles and other gifts, in accordance with later practice in the region. It is worth noting, in this regard, that texts sometimes refer to gifts received by Eblaites when they went to visit the courts of some of their highest-ranked allies, such as Armi.[46]

2.7.1 Ebla's Core Allies

It is telling that representatives from Ebla's middle-ranked allies – both nearby places such as Dub, Garmu, NI-rar, Emar, Lumnan, Utig, Burman, Gudadanum, Ibubu, and Ra'ak, and some more distant places of an equivalent rank, such as Kakmium, DU-lu, Ursa'um, and Harran – all came to Ebla to receive their textiles during the same month, year after year. The fact that they received their textiles in the same month implies that, by coming to the palace, they would not only encounter Eblaites, but also each other. This would reinforce their status as peers, all belonging together essentially to Ebla's

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[46] Eg. A15, 36 (64a) ŠU.ŠA$_2$ gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba / *Zu-ša*-NAM / *a-de$_3$* / nig$_2$-ba-*SU$_3$* / lu$_2$ *in* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti (64b) ŠU.ŠA$_2$ gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ nig$_2$-kaskal / *Zu-ša*-NAM / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} "20 shekels of silver, as the gift for ZušaNAM as a replacement for the gift which he received in Armi. 20 shekels of silver for travel provisions for ZušaNAM to go to Armi (and back)."

retinue. If they received equal gifts, it reinforced their equal status; if someone received better gifts, it reinforced their superior status. This entire dimension would be lost if one instead saw the Ebla palace administration as a textile delivery service for assorted minor kingdoms. Tellingly, an important passage in the Abarsal treaty (see below §3.2.3) seems to forbid Ebla's middle-ranked allies from conducting diplomatic relations among themselves. All of their interactions with one another had to take place via Ebla.[47]

Centuries later, a very comparable political situation is alluded to in a famous passage from a letter found at Mari of the Old Babylonian period. There, the writer describes to the king of Mari how "No king is truly powerful just on his own: ten to fifteen kings follow Hammurabi of Babylon, as many follow Rim-Sin of Larsa, as many follow Ibal-pi-El of Ešnunna, and as many follow Amut-pi-El of Qatna; but twenty kings follow Yarim-Lim of Yamhad."[48] Yamhad, centered in Aleppo, could here essentially be thought of as the geopolitical successor to the Ebla state of Palace G times. Political and geographical patterns operated in a rather similar fashion; lacking its archives, we know rather little about Yamhad, but the "twenty" minor kings that were in Yarim-Lim's retinue would have been comparable to the various small kingdoms who visited Ebla annually. As a group, Ebla's core allies also accompanied Ebla on those occasions when it was Ebla's turn to make a visit to a foreign kingdom.

A previous study expressed surprise at Ebla's precise knowledge of the familial composition of foreign courts whose members are listed as recipients of gifts, attributing

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[47] For the analysis of a comparable "Feudal Interaction Order" as reflected in the Armana correspondence, cf. Liverani 1990. See also below §4.1.1.
[48] A.482: 22–27; see Sasson 2015: 82, no. 1.6.a.i.

such knowledge to Ebla's network of messengers.[49] While it is possible that messengers could have conveyed this sort of information, a simpler explanation is that the members of these foreign courts were all present at Ebla when they received their gifts. This could include elders, wives, brothers, sons and daughters. Indeed, the variety of foreigners who came to Ebla is staggering. It included, famously, at one point professional singers from Mari who bore Sumerian names.[50] Tellingly, the most common professional designation for a foreigner listed in a monthly textile account is lu_2-kar, "merchant." This is a clue that many of the foreigners who appear in the textile texts may have had other business at Ebla than what we learn from the palace's texts alone. The monthly accounts are usually silent as to what activity the foreign lu_2-kar "merchants" were conducting, but their presence as textile recipients can be taken as an indication that they were conducting some business at Ebla, whether it may have been on their own behalf, or on the behalf of the palatial institutions of their hometowns.

Some of those who received textiles at the court of audience may have resided as guests in the palace, while others may have resided somewhere else inside the city, or perhaps even somewhere outside of the city walls. Some could have been just passing through Ebla, while others were residing long-term. Other categories of documents record a different, complementary perspective on who visited Ebla, such as the records of

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[49] Biga 2008: 291–294.

[50] Steinkeller 1993a: 236–238; See also Tonietti 1997b for attestations of singers from, among other places, Nagar, Imar, Kiš, *Su-bar*^{ki} (likely a spelling of Subartu), Tuttul and Ibʾal. Tonietti is correct (Ibid.: 89; 96–97) to point out that such Sumerian names are not likely to represent the true onomasticon of Mari, but is rather reflects their bearer's social position as singers. Still, these attestations demonstrate that aspects of Sumerian culture made it to Ebla and were appreciated there; the bearers of these names most likely sang in Sumerian, and they may have themselves originated in the south.

food given out at the palace, kept in the separate archive L.2712.[51] Thus the category of palace guests proper, and the category of textile recipients at Palace G's court of audience, overlap with one another, but are not necessarily one and the same.

The recognition that the textiles listed in the monthly accounts were received at Ebla is crucial for making sense of certain entries recording travel. These often feature Ebla acting as an intermediary, above all between Armi in the northwest, and the eastern powers of Mari and Nagar. Men from Armi came to Ebla, where they received some textile allotments, before setting out, with Ebla accompaniment, for lands in the east.

Some of the highest-ranking representatives of important foreign kingdoms, such as Mari, received textiles and gifts in precious metals at the Ebla palace, the occasion of which was apparently a high-status diplomatic visit. But the texts do not attest Ebla only in the role of host. Ebla's own highest ranking officials, including the "vizier," also regularly made trips to foreign kingdoms, occasions that likewise involved the exchange of valuable ceremonial gifts. Some of these diplomatic excursions, which could involve quite a large retinue, are referred to in the texts as nig_2-kas_4, "expedition." Rather than attesting to "wars" as has been speculated, these nig_2-kas_4 are more likely to represent the reciprocal of the near constant peaceful visitations of Ebla on the part of foreigners, many of which come from the very same places towards which Ebla conducted nig_2-kas_4 "(diplomatic) expeditions." For a foreigner from Mari, who came to Ebla and received gifts there, it is quite possible his journey could have been considered, from his own perspective, a "nig_2-kas_4 *Ib-la*^{ki}," even if such a designation is unattested.

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[51] Published in Milano 1990 (=A9) and recently discussed, with reference to additional unpublished texts, in Archi 2018.

3.0 Setting the Stage: Of Iplus-Il and Abarsal

3.1.0 The Enna-Dagan Letter

The interpretation of the Ebla material is fraught with uncertainties of a kind not found in material of a later date. Because of their archaic date, the texts are more list-like and telegraphic than what we encounter in later millennia, and so their interpretation depends heavily on the context, which inevitably must be supplied by the modern reader.

The famous Enna-Dagan letter is a particularly good example of this. In order for it to make any sense, it must be contextualized. The most important source for shedding light on the overall international political situation at the time is the Treaty of Abarsal. So far, Ebla scholarship has not put the Enna-Dagan letter into any meaningful relationship with the Abarsal treaty. This is surprising, because Abarsal is one of the places mentioned as affected by Mari's military forays. Furthermore, while the Enna-Dagan letter itself is possibly of slightly later date than the Abarsal treaty, the climactic events recounted by the letter, having taken place under Iplus-Il of Mari, must have be roughly contemporary with the Abarsal treaty. A few additional important and roughly contemporary chancery documents help to further contextualize the Enna-Dagan letter, alongside a special group of administrative tablets, which record Ebla's gifts to Mari during this period.

For a "letter," Enna-Dagan's is stilted and prosaic in comparison with examples of the same genre from the later Middle Bronze Age. It is essentially a list, borrowing heavily from the language of royal inscriptions, and appended with an introduction and a conclusion. Thus, it is it somewhat puzzling that although Enna-Dagan's letter is the

closest thing to a royal inscription that has been recovered from Ebla, it features the rulers of Mari as the protagonists, instead of Ebla's own native rulers.

And yet, in spite (or perhaps because) of its outer simplicity, the letter's interpretation has been problematic and controversial since its initial publication. In the original edition of Pettinato,[52] Enna-Dagan was considered to have been a general in the service of the Ebla king, reporting back to his ruler about a series of victorious battles against Mari. A much more prudent treatment and a neutral translation was offered in the following year by Edzard,[53] whose work has formed the basis for all subsequent readings of the text.

Edzard showed that Enna-Dagan was not an Eblaite official, but instead a ruler of Mari, who in his missive recounted to his counterpart at Ebla a series of Mariote military victories. The letter does not state how long ago these campaigns began, nor how long they endured. Four different names are mentioned prior to Enna-Dagan's own appearance at the end of the letter as victor in a single campaign. Four of these five figures, including Enna-Dagan himself, are given the title of EN of Mari; one Ištup-(I)šar is instead called LUGAL. The penultimate, and most frequently mentioned character, Iplus-Il,[54] is first introduced as EN. But by his fourth mention he has undergone a change in title to LUGAL and is referred to as such an additional five times, lastly at the very end of the tablet, in the unfortunately badly damaged closing formula. The crux and climax of the letter comes under this largest figure of Iplus-Il: the mention of an income of (i.e., from) Ebla

[52] Pettinato 1980b.
[53] Edzard 1981b.
[54] On the reading of this name see Steinkeller 1993a: 240 n. 8; Steinkeller 1988: 49 n. 14; Steinkeller 1984b: 16–17 n. 30.

(mu-DU *Ib-la*^{ki}), which was received by Iplus-Il (šu-ba$_4$-ti) at a place called ma$_2$-NE^{ki}. This "income" has been rightly connected with an early group of Ebla administrative sources, listing gifts given by the Ebla king, and various high officials, to the Mari king and his own high officials, at various locations, including, above all, ma$_2$-NE^{ki} (see below, §3.1.2).

According to the currently prevailing scholarly view, this "income of Ebla" (mu-DU *Ib-la*^{ki}) is to be seen as evidence for a geopolitical situation that was totally and utterly in the favor of Mari. The mu-DU is interpreted to mean that Ebla was the vanquished foe of Mari, forced to pay a tribute lest even more damage be suffered.[55]

Particularly influential in this regard was the view of Astour, for whom the Enna-Dagan letter marked the beginning of a "Hundred Years War" between Mari and Ebla.[56] According to him, all of those places listed in the letter as affected by the Mariote raids "belonged, in different capacities, to the Ebla empire."[57] For Astour, the letter refers to "a

[55] Archi 2016: 2, "...Iplul-il was the great conqueror. He journeyed up the Euphrates as far as the land of Hassuwan (Tilbeshar?). In order to avoid the worst, Ebla paid a tribute which it handed over at MaNE, the port on the Euphrates immediately north of Emar.... Clearly Iplul-il felt it best not to venture too far into enemy territory and away from the Euphrates, the communications route connecting him with Mari. The tributes delivered for more than ten years were the price Ebla had to pay to avoid military confrontation." Archi/Biga 2003: 2, "Iblul-Il ranged repeatedly up and down the valley of the Euphrates, as far as the territory of *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}, upriver from Karkemiš, sowing terror and destruction in his wake. In order not to see her own territory invaded, Ebla paid a heavy tribute which was handed over to Mari near Mane (downriver from Emar), the site that continued to act as Ebla's port on the Euphrates."

[56] Astour 2002: 79.

[57] Astour 1992: 31.

long series of wars between Ebla and its allies on one side, and the neighboring and rival empire of Mari on the other."[58]

Following largely in the footsteps of Astour is the interpretation of Archi/Biga. According to these authors, the letter of Enna-Dagan "clearly has the aim of intimidating the king of Ebla. The tone used is threatening."[59] And furthermore, if the Ebla administration defined in its lists the wealth it sent to Mari as "gifts," (nig_2-ba, as rendered by those authors), this was "for ideological reasons,"[60] that is to say, because the Ebla scribes were embarrassed by the fact of having to pay a tribute.

One could state that if any "tone" can be read in the Enna-Dagan letter, composed in an archaic, telegraphic style as it is, and employing mostly logograms, then this tone most likely has to be supplied by the modern reader. Secondly, it doesn't seem appropriate to search for "ideology" in what are simple administrative terms of undisputed meaning. The term "mu-DU" does not in any way carry a primary meaning of "tribute," as asserted by Archi/Biga.[61] It is a simple, neutral term denoting "that which has been brought here, to me" as seen from the perspective of the writer.[62] Thus there exist no direct references to "threats" or to "tributes" in the Enna-Dagan letter; such

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[58] Ibid.: 26.
[59] Archi/Biga 2003: 1.
[60] Ibid., 2.
[61] Ibid., 2: "the obligation to deliver a mu-DU was applied to an individual or city that had been forced to submit to the another authority."
[62] Cf. Edzard, 1981b: 94: "mu-DU ist in der Verwaltungssprache ein neutraler Ausdruck für 'eingegangene, eingelieferte Sachen', so dass eine Übersetz 'tributo' bereits eine durch den Text nicht gewährleistete Weiterdeutung wäre." Neither is nig_2-ba a term which contains any inherent ideology. Most basically, it denotes "that which has been given out," so even a modern rendering of the word as "gift," with all that implies, could carry connotations, which are not necessarily inherent to the ancient term itself.

renderings conflate an assumed context with the information actually provided by the text.

In the present view, the idea of a "threatening letter" from a ruler of Mari to his counterpart at Ebla is unsatisfying, above all because such an idea makes little sense. There is no evidence that Enna-Dagan was in a position to be able to issue "threats" to Ebla, or to be able to benefit by issuing such threats.[63] The idea that the Enna-Dagan letter could have somehow recounted a situation which was embarrassing, humiliating, or a source of disgrace to Ebla, is contradicted by the very fact that the letter was discovered in Ebla's archives, having been kept there as one of its oldest documents for several years. Alongside the Enna-Dagan letter was discovered, moreover, a complicated literary description of a ritual featuring Enna-Dagan as a protagonist (below, §3.1.4).[64] This almost certainly excludes the possibility of Enna-Dagan having had the status of a reviled enemy for Ebla, which would have been the case if he was really issuing violent "threats" and forcing Ebla to pay "tributes."[65]

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[63] The campaigns of the Mari rulers allegedly never came close to the Ebla heartland, cf. the statement of Archi 2016: 2, "Clearly Iplul-il felt it best not to venture too far into enemy territory and away from the Euphrates." Moreover, the activities of Enna-Dagan himself were relegated only to the stretches of the Euphrates close to Mari itself. This suggests that Enna-Dagan was in the opposite of a position from which he could issue "threats."

[64] A13, 1. Archi 2016: 1 dates this document "to king Nizi," but it seems more likely that it dates to Iplus-Il. The documents that date to the reign of Iplus-Il (e.g. A7, 6) feature the appearance of Enna-Dagan as a high official, but do not mention NI-zi.

[65] In all likelihood, A13, 1 attests a ritual interaction between Mari and Ebla; the unnamed EN is the one of Ebla, while the lugal *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ is Iplus-Il. See below §3.1.4.

One can also note that paleographical evidence suggests that the Enna-Dagan letter itself was the product of the hand of an Ebla scribe, not one from Mari.[66] In general, during Ebla times it seems that epistolary exchange between courts functioned in the following manner: in order for King A to send a letter to King B, a scribe working for King B would have to travel to the court of King A, where King A would "dictate" to him a message. The scribe of King B would then write down King A's letter using the conventions of his own home country, and then bring the letter back home to King B. Only in this way could it be ensured that King A and his scribes would be able understand the message of King B.[67] Thus, while the letter of Enna-Dagan no doubt represents a message from Mari to Ebla, it was probably written down by an Ebla scribe, having been "dictated" to him either at Mari itself, or somewhere else where officials of Mari were residing. It seems somewhat unlikely that an Ebla scribe would have written down and conveyed to his ruler something that was menacing and unpleasant. The very existence of a letter from Mari to Ebla thus suggests open and active diplomatic relations and an amicable state of affairs, rather than one of hostility and malice. Such a situation is also suggested by the mention, at the end of the letter (§3.1.1.6), of the term i_3-giš, which at Ebla refers to a type of diplomatic ceremony, connotative of peaceful affairs.

All of the available contextual information suggests that Ebla and Mari were on good terms at the time the Enna-Dagan letter was written, and that the letter recounted

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[66] Cf. Fronzaroli 2014: 419, "The letter of the king of Mari Enna-Dagan (*ARET* XIII 4) and a long narrative text in which the same figure appears as an adviser of an earlier king (*ARET* XIII 1) come from the Mariote chancery but they may represent, especially the latter, a copy made by an Eblaite hand."

[67] For this scenario in the context of what has now convincingly been interpreted as a letter from Hamazi to Ebla (A13, 3), see Bonechi 2016d.

memories, which were positive for both Ebla and Mari. Although it has apparently been forgotten in current Ebla studies, this was already the interpretation of Edzard. Regarding the mu-DU given by Ebla to Mari at ma_2-NE,^{ki} he stated: "Es ist gut möglich, dass (es) sich… auf Hilfsleistungen bezieht, die Iblul-Il [scil. Iplus-Il] während seiner Unternehmung von Ebla empfangen hatte. Das (dankend) zu erwähnen, *wäre in einem Brief an den Herrscher von Ebla wenigstens sinnvoll* (emphasis mine)."[68]

That during the campaigns undertaken by Iplus-Il, Ebla and Mari were allies, not foes, is supportable through a slew of additional evidence, including above all the geopolitical situation testified by the Abarsal treaty, which paints the very opposite picture of a defeated and submissive Ebla. It shows that Ebla was now a dominant force in the very same Upper Euphrates region where Iplus-Il was conducting military campaigns. Abarsal is even mentioned as one of the places defeated by Iplus-Il.[69] This defeat must have paved the way for the vassalage that Ebla would soon impose on it. Clearly, Ebla benefited in the long run from the destructive events against Abarsal, Emar, and the other locations listed in the Enna-Dagan letter. While it is thus true that Ebla made some heavy payments to Mari at this time, it would seem that these were not without gain for Ebla. Despite the payments, or perhaps even to some degree *because* of these payments, Ebla began from this point on to prosper more than she ever had before. Ebla's new relationship with Mari, and the position on the world scene she gained from it,

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[68] Edzard 1981: 94.

[69] The unpublished tablet A14, 1 (see Archi 2017: 164) implies that Ebla received a large income from Abarsal during the reign of Igriš-Halab. This would chronologically match the defeat of Abarsal by Iplus-Il, since Igriš-Halab and Iplus-Il were contemporaries (Archi 2016b: 1). See further below §3.2.0.

could have been what allowed her to begin to amass the huge quantities of gold and silver that she sent to Mari in the first place.

Even though Mari itself is nowhere mentioned in it, behind the Abarsal treaty could be perceived Mari's looming shadow. Because it concerns control of a region in which Mari had been previously military active, but now apparently was no longer, the new situation implies the tacit consent of Mari. Indeed, the language of the treaty itself reflects this. It seems to be written in a "Mesopotamian" rather than "Eblaite" style. On an inner textual as well as physical, aesthetic level, the tablet bearing the Abarsal treaty may exceed what one would imagine were the capabilities of the early Ebla chancery. It could have been drafted with the help, or under the direct influence, of Mari scribes (see below in detail §3.2.2.1). In this regard, it is noteworthy that the Ebla administrative tablets recording the gifts made to Mari at this time, similarly seem to display such Mari scribal influences (see below §3.1.2). I

In the Abarsal treaty there occurs, furthermore, a phrase paralleled in a roughly contemporary letter (*en-ma*) from the king of Manuwat to the king of Mari, attested in a compilation tablet found at Ebla (see below §3.2.2). The existence of this tablet in the Ebla archives constitutes further proof that Ebla and Mari were working together at this time to dominate the small powers located in between them along the Euphrates. This document concerns, among other things, the king of Manuwat's ceding of control over "the fortresses of Raʾaq" to the king of Mari. Not coincidentally, Raʾaq, like Abarsal, was one of the defeated places mentioned in the Enna-Dagan letter (§3.1.1.3).

There is, moreover, specific evidence from an administrative tablet (A7, 6), dealing with the meeting of Mari and Ebla at $ma_2\text{-}NE^{ki}$ in the time of Iplus-Il, which

strongly suggests that Ebla participated, alongside Mari, in the sacking (TUM×SAL) of Emar. The tablet contains a news item apparently referencing this defeat of Emar, and also contains an expenditure for the Eblaite barracks (e_2-am); see further below §3.1.2.

For Astour, who saw the Enna-Dagan letter in terms of a conflict between Ebla and Mari, all those places listed as defeated by Mari belonged already at this early time to Ebla's "empire."[70] This is, however, an assumption unsupported by evidence. Far more likely, they were all independent states, belonging to a politically fragmented landscape. Most of the places mentioned never appear in any subsequent Ebla text, implying that they either ceased to exist, or that they simply remained outside of the geopolitical sphere covered by the Ebla administration. Those settlements that do occur in later times, such as the kingdoms of Raʾaq and Burman, were not part of an "Ebla empire" but remained independent states with their own rulers, even if they did enter into a subordinated relationship with Ebla to varying degrees. Note here, that close to the end of the archives, Ebla sent one of its princesses to marry the king of Burman,[71] demonstrating this kingdom's independence and importance.

The idea that Ebla paid Mari a "tribute" implies outright extortion. It is an image culled from much later times, such as under the Neo-Assyrian empire, when a vastly overpowered army marched up to the to the city of a much weaker target and demanded that they submit or suffer defeat. Such a situation does not seem to match the military or

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[70] Astour 1992: 31, "All of these localities belonged, in different capacities, to the Ebla Empire."

[71] The Ebla princess was named *Zi-mi-ni*-ku$_3$:bar$_6$ (on whom see Archi *et. alii* 1988: 238; Biga 1991: 299). For the relevant attestations from unpublished tablets documenting this marriage, see Biga 1996: 66–69. Fronzaroli 2003: 79 suggested a document of possible relevance (A13, 6), which would identify the ruler of Burman as *En-ar$_3$-Ha-lab$_x$*.

geopolitical reality of the Palace G period. Even in Neo-Assyrian times, this kind of treatment was reserved for client states that the empire presented as being in violation of a former treaty.[72] The balance of power, which emerged after the exchange between Ebla and Mari at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} seems instead to have been the result of a far more complicated situation than one of a defeated Ebla on the one side and a triumphant, aggressive Mari on the other.

The agreement reached at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} is probably referred to by the letter's closing formula i$_3$-giš / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* "The oil-(ceremony) of all the lands" (below §3.1.1.6). It has been assumed from that the fact that Enna-Dagan (as EN) is the sender of the letter, that Iplus-Il must have already been dead for some years when the letter entered Ebla's archives, and that most of the core events narrated in the letter were therefore already a distant memory. However, Iplus-Il's own mention in a broken context at the end of the letter, with the title of LUGAL, should rather imply that he was, in fact, still alive when the letter was written. Beginning with Iplus-Il, we know that Mari's highest authority was the LUGAL, not an EN. All of the documents, which are used to argue that our letter postdates Iplus-Il's death, give Enna-Dagan the title of LUGAL (when he was actually the one in charge), while the letter only ever assigns him the title EN. Thus, it is possible that Enna-Dagan was not yet the highest authority in Mari when he addressed a lettter to the ruler of Ebla,[73] and that the letter narrates what were still

[72] Parpola 2003: 1051; 1060–1061.

[73] One recalls that the Hamazi letter (A13, 3), according to the convincing new interpretation of Bonechi 2016d, was written by a high functionary of Hamazi (*I-bu*$_3$-KA×KID), (rather than by the king of Hamazi himself), and addressed to a high functionary of Ebla (called, from the Hamazian perspective, SUKKAL.DU$_8$ (= sukkal

relatively recent events. That, at the time the letter was written, Enna-Dagan was not the ruler, but instead a high-ranking official, matches the situation shown by the earliest administrative texts dating to Iplus-Il, and the Enna-Dagan ritual. The change in Iplus-Il's titulary from EN to LUGAL within the letter could constitute a witness to the very moment when, at Mari, the terms EN (**malkum*) and LUGAL (**šarrum*) were beginning to shift in meaning (see further below).

The simplest and most plausible scenario is thus that the Abarsal Treaty (A13, 5), the Enna-Dagan ritual (A13, 1), the Enna-Dagan letter (A13, 4), and the Mari-Manuwat letter collection (A13, 10), as well as the earliest administrative texts like A7, 6 and M12, 25, all entered the Ebla archives at around the same time.

Thus, we turn to the Enna-Dagan letter itself:

3.1.1 The Enna-Dagan Letter: Translation, Interpretation, Context

3.1.1.1 Campaigns of *A-nu-KA*

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]
(1) *en-ma* / *En-na-Da-gan* / en / *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki} / ʾ*a*$_5$*-na* / en / *Ib-la*^{ki}

(2) *A-bu*$_3$*-ru*$_{12}$^{ki} / *u*$_3$ / *Il*$_2$*-gi*^{ki} / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / BAD-*la-an*^{ki} /
*A-nu-*ʿ*KA*ʾ / en / *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ (3) du$_6$-SAR / *in* / kur^{ki} / *La-ba-na-an* / gar

(1) Thus (speaks) Enna-Dagan, EN of Mari, to the EN of Ebla:
(2–3) Anu-KA, EN of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) ʿAburru and Ilki, lands of Baʾalan. He raised a burial mound in the "mountainous area" of Labanan.

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gaba?), a title which does not otherwise exist at Ebla). Thus, it is not unthinkable that a letter to the Ebla king could likewise stem from a Mari high official. Iplus-Il the LUGAL could have been considered to have held a higher rank than the Ebla EN, and so addressing him directly in a letter would have been below him.

The unnamed king (EN) of Ebla is now generally identified as Irkab-Damu, but according to the present interpretation, it is more likely to have been Igriš-Halab, the same ruler who personally delivered a gift to Iplus-Il at Ebla's port on the Euphrates (§3.1.2). As already mentioned, Enna-Dagan is here too given the title of EN of Mari, contrary to all of the other sources in which he occurs, with a single exception.[74] The first Ebla royal figure mentioned, *A-nu-KA* has been linked with a Mari ruler appearing in the Sumerian King List called AN.BU,[75] but this seems unlikely.[76] The reading of the damaged third sign as BU_3 is not even certain; reading it as KA[77] opens up several additional possibilities for the interpretation of this uniquely attested PN. AN.BU could itself subject to many different interpretational possibilities. Nor does the SKL seem particularly authoritative on the matter of the early rulers of Mari; AN.BU could have been a purely legendary figure.

$AGA_3.ŠE_3$ is known also from royal inscriptions and letters from Pre-Sargonic Southern Mesopotamia, where it used as a logogram, probably representing a borrowing from the northern, "Kishite" variety of cuneiform, which itself remains poorly attested. $AGA_3.ŠE_3$ does not seem to have been a "real" Sumerian word. Logographically, $AGA_3.ŠE_3$

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[74] Archi 1985b: 75, TM.75.G.1390 obv. vii 1–6 50 gin_2-DILMUN ku_3:bar_6 nig_2-sam_2 2 tug_2 33 gin_2-DILMUN gug-za-gin_3 *$aš_2$-ti* maškim [*En*]-*na*-[*da*]-*gan* en [...] (case divisions not indicated by the editor), "50 D.-shekels of silver, the price of 2 cloths (containing?) 33 shekels of lapis and carnelian, from the agent of [En]na-[Da]gan, EN [of Mari]." According to its colophon, this tablet is a dub gar nig_2-sam_2 "archival document of purchases." Unfortunately, this important early source, testifying economic interactions between Ebla and Mari at this early date, remains only partially published. Because of its content it could possibly be linked with other similar early sources connoted by trade, such as eg. M12, 25 (see below §3.1.3.2). For another quotation see Archi 2016b: 8 no. 30. Another earlier quotation was offered in Pettinato 1981: 187. See also Baldacci 1992: 25.

[75] Fronzaroli 2003: 39; Alberti 1990.

[76] Cf. the skepticism expressed in Astour 2002: 57–58.

[77] So Fronzaroli 2003: 35; 39.

depicts the concept "(to put) to the axe" (with $_{ŠE3}$ representing the Sumerian terminative element; in texts written in Sumerian, it is used as a substantive, in combination with the verb si_3.g = **šakānu*). Even though $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ is often loosely translated as "to defeat," the real meaning of its Semitic equivalent is probably more directly violent: "to kill," or "to slaughter." Importantly, $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ is the term used at Ebla in mundane contexts referring to the "slaughtering" of livestock for food, and so the Semitic equivalent could have been **šagāšu* or a semantic equivalent thereof.[78] The occurrence of $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ in an Ebla administrative text can thus not be taken uncritically as a reference to war, especially when it occurs in the context of animals.

The places mentioned in this initial part of the letter do not seem to reoccur in the Ebla sources, and this probably reflects their location close to Mari, outside the geopolitical sphere usually covered by the Ebla texts. The impression of previous commentators, that the progressive campaigns reflect an increasing northward advancement along the Euphrates towards Emar is probably the correct one.[79] The first place listed, *A-bu_3-ru_{12}*^{ki}, could probably be interpreted as ʿAbur(r)u "crossing" from **ʿbr*

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[78] For Fronzaroli 2003: 40, the Semitic reading of $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ could have been an equivalent of Akkadian *šaʾārum* "to defeat," from a historical root ** ṯġr*. His suggestion to render the verb in contexts involving animals as "appropriarsi" (followed by Archi 2010: 16, "to raid (e.g. sheep)") is, however, without justification. In some contexts $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ might refer to the "illicit" slaughtering of animals, but this meaning does not seem to be inherent to the verb. More likely, $_{AGA3}$.$_{ŠE3}$ is simply the equivalent of the proper Sumerian verb gaz "to kill, to slaughter."

[79] Bonechi 1998: 224, "...it seems clear that the text narrates the progression of the conquests of the Pre-Sargonic Mari rulers from the south towards the north-west." Archi/Biga 2003: 1–2, "A series of victories won by Mari in the area of the Middle Euphrates... Iblul-Il ranged repeatedly up and down the valley of the Euphrates...."

"to cross" (Akkadian *ebērum*).[80] Behind *Il*$_2$*-gi*^{ki} one could see a form of the Semitic root **hlk* "to go,"[81] which also seems appropriate for a riverine location. One also notices that a conspicuous number of places mentioned throughout end in *-an*. This could reflect a dual form. Such a meaning of "two places" could be appropriate for a settlement that straddled two sides of the river.

For instance, ʿAbur(r)u and Ilki are defined as "lands of Baʾalan," meaning something like, "(Land of) the Two Lords." It is not so clear if this is to be taken as a political or a geographical attribution. That is to say, it is not clear whether Baʾalan was the name of one particular settlement, which exercised political control over ʿAbur(r)u and Ilki, or whether it was the designation of a wider region, to which ʿAbur(r)u and Ilki physically or notionally belonged. It could even be possible that we are supposed to understand that ʿAbur(r)u and Ilki were the "rightful" lands of Baʾalan, to whose control Mari, with these battles, was intending to restore. In any case, the battle apparently took place not in an urban environment, but in the kur^{ki} of a place called *La-ba-na-an*[82], for this is where the Mari king claims to have made a burial mound of the corpses of his defeated enemies. One should probably not take the logogram kur^{ki} so literally as referring to a "mountain" or "mountainous region." Although some occurrences could refer to a true mountain, at this early date, kur^{ki} could also have a meaning like "steppe;

[80] Bonechi 1998: 227.
[81] Ibid.: 227; other interpretations could also be possible.
[82] The resemblance of this GN to "Lebanon" is probably coincidental. For Ibid.: 227, it could be etymologized from **lbn* "white."

open, wild country."[83] No kur^{ki} is again mentioned following the conquests of the second mentioned king, SA$_2$-umu. Note that the text seems consistently to omit a KI determinative in referencing the place where burial mounds were raised, which is perhaps compatible with the idea that such places represented uninhabited, open land.

According to a previous interpretation, each victory narrated in the text "... was swiftly followed by the destruction of the enemy's city," [84] but this contention is unsupported by the text. That the burial mounds were repeatedly raised someplace other than the city from which the enemy forces stemmed implies exactly the opposite: that the battles represented a direct conflict between two opposing armies in an open area, rather than a situation of urban siege warfare. Unless one proposes that the corpses of the defeated enemy were transported to a different location, then the place where the burial mound was raised should be where the battle took place. A "besieging" of a city, on the other hand, could potentially be described by the logogram TUMxSAL (see further below).

Moving on, the letter introduces a new figure, that of SA$_2$-umu:[85]

3.1.1.3 Campaigns of SA$_2$-umu

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]
(4) *Ti-ba-la-ad*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Il$_2$-WA-NI*^{ki} /
SA$_2$-*u$_3$-mu* / en / *M*[*a-ri$_2$*^{ki}] / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ (5) *in* / kur^{ki} / *An-ga-i* / du$_6$-SAR / gar
(6) kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / *Ra-ʾa$_3$-ak*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / NI-*rum$_2$*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Aš$_2$-al-du*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Ba-ul*^{ki}

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[83] For Astour 1992: 27, kur^{ki} designated the entire region between the right bank of the Euphrates and the Balikh.
[84] Archi/Biga 2003: 2.
[85] Possibly to be interpreted a Semitic equivalent of the Sumerian PN Silim(SA$_2$)-^{d}Utu (on which see Steinkeller 2015), perhaps **Šalim-Yawmu*, or similar. The etymology offered instead by Fronzaroli 2003: 40 ("/Šaʾūm-u/ 'Comprato'") seems somewhat less likely. Admitedly, the preferred writing for expressing a glide /y/ at Ebla is usually *u$_9$-*, *a-*, or *i-*, rather than *u$_3$*.

[SA2]-*u3-mu* / en / *Ma-ri2*^{ki} / AGA3.ŠE3

(7) *in* / [z]ag / [x]-AN[86] / *in* / *Na-hal* / du6-SAR / gar

(4–5) SA2-umu, EN of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) Tibalat and Ilwiʾi, and raised a burial mound in the "mountainous area" of Angai.

(6–7) SA2-umu, EN of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) Raʾak, NI-*rum*, Ašaldu, and Baul, and raised a burial mound in the territory of [...], in Nahal.

The campaigns of SA2-umu thus apparently occurred in two phases. The first one follows much the same pattern as that of of *A-nu-ʿKAʾ*, with two places being defeated in a kur^{ki} "mountainous area" (or: "wilderness") of an otherwise unknown place *An-ga-i*. *Ti-ba-la-ad*^{ki} seems to be a hapax in the Ebla archives, while a connection between *Il2-WA-NI*^{ki} and the well-attested Ilwiʾum (*Il2-wi-u3*^{ki}, *Il2-wi-u9*^{ki}, *Il2-wi-um*^{ki}, *Ir3-wi-um*^{ki}) is uncertain.[87]

With the second campaign of SA2-umu, the Mari rulers have reached the area normally covered by the Ebla texts. Specifically, *Ra-ʾa3-ak*^{ki} (probably to be etymologized from the Semitic root **rḥq*, "to be distant"[88]) was one of the typically attested middle-ranked kingdoms, whose representatives continually reoccur as textile recipients at the Ebla court. Of all such typically occurring places, Raʾak could have been the southernmost along the Euphrates, as suggested by this occurrence, and also by the text A13, 9, a dossier concerning the oaths sworn by the ruler of Manuwat to Mari regarding control of the "fortresses" of *Ra-ʾa3-ak*^{ki} (§3.3 below).

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[86] Inssuficient space to restore BAD-*la-an* according to Fronzaroli 2003: 40.
[87] Bonechi 1993: 199. The reading of the second sign as *wi* seems conventional; *Il2-wa-um* or *Il2-wu-um*^{ki} are also possible. The importance of this place is underscored by the fact that it was one of the forty or so places from which merchants (lu2-kar) came (Archi et al. 1993: 33).
[88] Bonechi 1998: 228.

Probably in (6) the phrase kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / *Ra-ʾa₃-ak*^{ki} "the lands of Raʾaq" is meant to indicate that all of the places subsequently listed were minor settlements or areas belonging to the kingdom of Raʾaq. NI-*rum₂*^{ki} reoccurs in the main archive, although rather infrequently.[89] *Aš₂-al-du*^{ki} and *Ba-ul*^{ki} are otherwise unattested. Instead of raising burial mounds in the "wilderness" (kur^{ki}), this time SA₂-umu is said to have done so within the "district"[90] (zag) of a broken GN and in a place called Nahal, which seems to only reoccur once on a tiny fragment.[91] As before, it is unclear whether zag "district" should here constitute a strictly political, or a merely geographical attribution.

3.1.1.3 Campaigns of Ištup-Šar

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan letter]

(8) *u₃* / *I₃-mar*^{ki} / *u₃* / *La-la-bu₁₆*(NI)-*um*^{ki} / *u₃* / *ga-nu-um* / *Ib-la*^{ki}
Iš-dub-šar / lugal / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki} / AGA₃.ŠE₃ / (9) *in I₃-mar*^{ki} / *u₃* / *in* / *La-la-bu₁₆-um*^{ki} /
du₆-SAR / gar

(8–9) And Ištup-Šar, LUGAL of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) Emar, Lallabum, and the canebrake of Ebla. He raised a burial mound in Emar and in Lallabum.

The next section introduces a figure with a new title: *Iš-dub-šar*, with the title of LUGAL instead of EN. Previous commentators have generally dismissed this shift as of no

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[89] Note especially the association with Raʾak in A4, 3 (59): 1 *ʾa₃-da-um*-tug₂-ii 1 aktum-tug₂ 1 ib₂-iv-tug₂-gun₃ 1 dib 10 / *ʾA₃-lum* / NI-*rum₂*^{ki} / TUŠ.LU₂<×TIL> / *in* / *Sal-ba-u₃*^{ki} / lu₂ / *Ra-ʾa₃-ak*^{ki}. In another text, it occurs directly alongside Emar, M10, 21 rev. vii 8f: 1 tug₂-NI.NI / *Ti-še₃-li-im* / *ma-lik-tum* / *I-mar*^{ki} / 1 tug₂-NI.NI / *Iš-da-a-nu* / BAD e₂ / NI-*rum₂*^{ki}.

[90] The rendering of zag as "district," is intended to distinguish it from the term ki-sur, "border," also attested at Ebla. This distinction may correspond notionally to the *ana* vs. *ina pāṭi* in Old Assyrian, cf. Barjamovic in press A.

[91] A3, 549 vi′ 1′f: i₃-gi[š] sag / *Hal-ra-il* / *Na-hal*^{ki} / [...].

significance.[92] However, it seems inherently unlikely that an ancient scribe would simply indicate a different title for no reason at all, especially when the logograms EN and LUGAL have such deeply divergent histories.[93] Moreover, the use of one title or the other by no means seems random. Only one figure is referred to solely as LUGAL while only one, Iplus-Il, undergoes a change in title from EN to LUGAL, which then remains permanent, for a total of five mentions with the new title. There are other reasons why, in the context of Mari, one should perhaps not take lightly the distinction between EN and LUGAL.

In the present context, it is possible that Ištup-Šar held a lower rank than the aforementioned figures mentioned. He could have been a LUGAL"general" in the sense known from Ebla, while the EN of Mari was still SA_2-umu (or already Iplus-Il). The presence and activities of the LUGAL Ištup-Šar seem more ephemeral than those of the other figures mentioned. To judge from the present source, it was only beginning with Iplus-Il that the term LUGAL would, likely under Mesopotamian influence, begin to take on a more important meaning at Mari. On the other hand, it could also be possible that Ištup-Šar was indeed the true ruler of Mari, and his title was foreshadowing the change that would occur under Iplus-Il. It is interesting in this regard that his name contains the elemet *-šar*, which could possibly be interpreted in connection with the logogram LUGAL.

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[92] For Archi 1987: 38, the switch in titles reflects the scribe's inability to decide whether to employ Eblaite or Mariote scribal conventions.

[93] On the deep histories of the titles EN and $ENSI_2$ see Steinkeller 1999, especially p. 111: "The archaic rulers of Sumer... had borne the title of en.... A similar conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the logogram EN was employed at Ebla (and apparently in various other peripheral localities that adopted the northern Babylonian variety of cuneiform) to write the native term for "ruler." This phenomenon, which very likely originated in northern Babylonia, is a palpable proof that the rulers called en did indeed exist in Babylonia at some early point in time."

One notes that here, unlike in all the battles mentioned so far, a burial mound was raised in the same place that the enemy troops stemmed from, with the exception of the *ga-nu-um Ib-la*^{ki}. A place *La-la-bu*$_{16}$*-um*^{ki} is obscure, perhaps implying that it was destroyed completely after this conflict. *I*$_3$*-mar*^{ki} is certainly Meskene-Emar on the Middle Euphrates, where texts dating to the Middle- and Late Bronze Age date have been discovered.[94]

As for Ebla, the word *ga-nu-um* is attested lexically, in the equation VE 0416: giš-gi = *ga-nu-um* (var: *ga-nu-wu*), from the root **qnw* (Akkadian *qanû*) "reed, canebrake." This could be an appropriate designation of the marginal western outskirts of the Ebla realm, located towards the Euphrates, close to where the locus of battle was, around Emar. Perhaps it could even refer to a settlement directly on the Euphrates, which was at this time already controlled by Ebla. This is the only battle mentioned where Ebla seems to have been on the receiving end of Mari's aggressive efforts, but the campaign seems to have affected Ebla only in a marginal way, since no burial mound was erected there, and since the *ga-nu-um* probably reflects a locus relatively distant from the heartland of Ebla, and perhaps a territory only indirectly claimed by it. Regardless, the *ga-nu-um* was soon returned to the authority of Ebla:

3.1.1.4 Campaigns of Iplus-Il

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]
(10) *u*$_3$ / *Ga-la-bi*$_2$*-id*$_x$(NI)^{ki} / [*u*$_3$] / [x-(x)]^{ki}/ *u*$_3$ / *ga-nu-um* (*Ib-la*^{ki}) / šu-du$_8$ / *Ib-lu*$_5$*-il* / en / *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki}

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[94] For the Emar tablets see Pedersén 1998: 61–67, with references.

(10) Iplus-il, EN of Mari, *released* Kalabit, x^{ki}, and the canebrake (of Ebla) (from his control).

The text now introduces a new royal figure, reverting back to the originally seen title of EN, but suddenly introducing a completely new verb.[95] Edzard left šu-du$_8$ untranslated, but since then, scholars have sought to find behind šu-du$_8$ something parallel to the otherwise used AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$, describing an equivalent sort of violent or hostile action. However, it seems inherently more likely that the introduction of a new term serves a contrastive function. The verb šu-du$_8$ is commonly attested at Ebla in situations which do not refer to a violent context. One notes furthermore that all occurrences in the letter of AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ (and also TUM×SAL) are immediately followed by the raising of burial mounds, while šu-du$_8$ conspicuously is not. Finally, although Fronzaroli represented A13, 4 (10) as a single section, the use of *u$_3$* (in obv. vi 8) could imply a contrast.

Fronzzaroli translated "prese posesso" but admitted that this was based on his understanding of the context.[96] Such a meaning is not supported, however, by the basic semantics of šu-du$_8$.[97] It does not mean "to seize, to take (actively)" or "to receive," (**ṣabātu, *leqû*); this meaning belongs instead to šu-ba$_4$-ti. Instead, the most likely Semitic equivalents of šu-du$_8$ are on the one hand **kullu* "to hold (passively),[98] and

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[95] Edzard 1981b: 92 left šu-du$_8$ untranslated.
[96] Fronzaroli 2003: 41, "Il significato 'prendere possesso; prendere in consegna' risulta evidente dai contesti dei nostri documenti."
[97] As pointed out by Pettinato 1996: 20, "Né la traduzione...'versamento,' né... 'ha preso possesso, presa di possesso' corrispondono al significato originario della radice sumerica."
[98] A meaning "to hold in possession" seems apparent in Ebla literary passages of Mesopotamian origin, e.g. A5, 4 obv. i 1f: ki / šu-du$_8$ / *ba-ša-nu*/ *ba-ša-nu* "snakes hold the earth (in their control)," and the Hymn to Shamash (see Krebernik 1992: 72), Abu

paṭāru "to release[99] (perhaps also **wuššuru,* "to let go"[100]). Although these two translation possibilities of šu-du$_8$ may seem like opposites, they are both connected through the basic idea expressed by the Sumerian compound verb šu...du$_8$ "to open the hand." In the Treaty of Abarsal, the fuller form maš$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ has the meaning "to hand over."[101] When used as an administrative verb in relation to animals, šu-du$_8$ means "to hand over, to release from one's control, to deliver."[102] It thus describes the exact opposite

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Salabikh version (duplicating A5, 6 obv ii 2f, partially broken), *IAS* 326 obv. i 4f: ^{d}utu šu-du$_8$ / zi-kalam "Šamaš holds the life of the land (in his hands)." See also Gudea Cyl. A (Edzard 1997: 72) iv 25, gi dub-ba ku$_3$-NE-a šu im-mi-du$_8$ "She (Nisaba) held in her hand a stylus of flaming metal." The meaning "held in possession" (šu-du$_8$-a) is probably the source of the meanings "prisoner, captive" and "guarantee, pledge." The meaning of šu-du$_8$-a "prisoner" (i.e, something "held") does not necessariy allow for a translation of šu-du$_8$ as "to capture, to take" (the active form of the verb instead being "to hold").

[99] See the extensive (late) lexical data in CAD/P: 286f, s.v. *paṭāru*, e.g. A VIII/1, 150: du = DU$_8$ = *pa-ṭa-rum*; Nigga Bil. B, 178: [šu]-du$_8$-[a] = [*pa-ṭ*]*a-a-rum*; BRM 4 20, 56: šu du$_8$-a-kam = *pa-ṭa-ri ša qāti*.

[100] C.f. CAD/U: 310f, s.v. *wuššuru*.

[101] Fronzaroli 2003: 60, "consegnare (quanto dovuto)." This meaning of maš$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ is to be kept separate from maš$_2$ šu-du$_8$ "to perform extispicy" (Archi 2016c: 52–53), in which case the sense of **paṭāru* probably refers to "opening" the animal in order to inspect its contents (compare the equivalent Mesopotamian expression maš$_2$ šu gid$_2$-gid$_2$ "to reach inside an animal"). Edzard 1992: 210 suggested for maš$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ the translation "ersetzen, sich an jemandes Stelle setzen."

[102] So Waetzoldt 2001: 106 (4f) *et passim* with the translation "abliefern." It is unlikely that šu-ba$_4$-ti and šu-du$_8$ "esprimano la stessa direzione dei beni" as for Pomponio 2003: 541. See e.g. M12, 5 (4f): 1 udu / *si-in* / *ma-lik-tum* / *I-šar* / šu-du$_8$ "1 sheep, for the queen (for ritual purposes), Išar held (i.e., provided)." Clearly, the sheep in question represented an expenditure; Išar can hardly have been a recipient or beneficiary. Instead, he was the one who "handled" the sheep, "releasing" it from his control for (*si-in*) the queen for its intended sacrificial purpose. In the same text, one priestly official (*I-ti-*^{d}*NI-da-bal*, a lu$_2$ AN.AN.AN according to A8, rev. vi 20–21) performs šu-du$_8$ on a sheep (M12, 5 (9i): 1 udu ^{d}*A$_3$-da* lu$_2$ / *Lu-ub*^{ki} / *I-ti-*^{d}*NI-da-bal* / šu-du$_8$), and in a parallel occurrence performs nidba$_2$ "offering" (M12, 5 (37′a): 14 udu / ^{d}*I$_3$-lam* / *I-ti-*^{d}*NI-da-bal* / nidba$_2$). This demonstrates that šu-du$_8$ describes the movement of the animal *away* from the grammatical subject. On the other hand, the duties of an official who "performs šu-du$_8$ duty" (the logogram thus concealing a Semitic participle denoting a "profession," with no

motion as šu-ba$_4$-ti. The object must already have been in the possession of the one who performs šu-du$_8$, in order for him to "hold" it and then subsequently "release, deliver" it for some purpose, in contrast to šu-ba$_4$-ti, where the object is initially not in the subject's possession, then enters it after the action is complete.

Thus, one by no means needs to perform an act of philological violence in order to see in šu-du$_8$ an action on the part of Mari, which, contrary to the interpretation of previous scholars, was in fact favorable to Ebla. The new ruler Iplus-Il apparently reversed the action taken by his predecessor against the "canebrake of Ebla," and possibly also Kalabit and a third broken place name. A translation "to set free, to release from control" is more compatible with šu-du$_8$ (in the sense of **paṭāru* or **wuššuru*) than a putative meaning "to seize control of, to conquer."[103] According to this interpretation, the reign of Iplus-Il thus saw the beginning of a new era of Ebla-Mari cooperation, in which Mari not only made territorial concessions to Ebla in the north, but supported Ebla's expansion in this region, in exchange for a submissive stance.

It can be no coincidence, then, that immediately following the "release" (šu-du$_8$) of the Ebla "canebreake" by Iplus-Il, a victory against Abarsal, in the territory of Zahiran is reported:

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]

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direct object mentioned) remain difficult to define (cf. the extensive discussion in Pomponio 2003).

[103] When it means "to hold," šu-du$_8$ is passive in meaning and is thus incompatible with a translation "to seize." It should be kept separate from šu-ba$_4$-ti. If the ancient scribe had meant to indicate that Iplus-Il "seized" the territories in question, then he would have more likely used šu-ba$_4$-ti. From the Sumerian perspective, note that, at Ebla, šu-ba$_4$-ti, in addition to "to receive," can also mean "to take," which in proper Sumerian is instead expressed with the verb dab$_{5/6}$.

(10b) *u₃* / *A-bar*-SAL4^{ki} / AGA3.ŠE3 / *in* / *Za-hi-ra-an*^{ki} (11) *u₃* / 4[(+3)] du6-SAR / gar *Ib-lu₅-il* / en / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki}

(10b) Iplus-Il slaughtered (the forces of) Abarsal in Zahiran, and raised 7 burial mounds.

Za-hi-ra-an^{ki} is a hapax, but it seems possible that it is identical to a place called *Za-ʾa₃-ar*^{ki}, one of the places confirmed in the Abarsal treaty as belonging to the EN of Ebla,[104] and which also occurs in the main archive.

This battle, like the aforementioned šu-du8 "release" must have been to the favor of Ebla, to judge only by the Abarsal treaty, which cannot be very much younger than the battles in question: Although the figure is partially broken, the high number of "burial mounds" (probably seven) compared to what has been seen thus far in the text implies that this was a much larger battle than the previous ones. As far as control over the Euphrates is concerned, Abarsal was likely a rival of Ebla since time immemorial. This massive defeat, which Abarsal now suffered at the hands of Mari, would have paved the way for the vassal treaty, which Ebla would soon impose upon it, with the tacit approval of Mari.

A still-unpublished tablet A14, 1[105] lists first 961[(+x)] minas of silver in association with the Ebla king Kun-Damu, followed by 431 minas labeled "Abarsal," followed by another 310 minas attributed to Igriš-Halab. This implies that the income from Abarsal took place under Igriš-Halab, since the silver total for each king probably

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[104] A13, 5 (3). Fronzaroli 2003: 58 (citing a personal comment of his reported in Matthiae 1981: 127, fn. 38), suggests an interpretation of *Za-ʾa₃-ar*^{ki} as /Ṣahar/, from Semitic **ẓahr-* "back(country), steppe." Yet another variant of this toponym could be *Zu₂-har*^{ki}, attested in TM.75.G.2136 (Archi 1989), a list of 17 "countries" (kalam^{ki}-kalam^{ki}) said to be "in the hands of the ruler of Ebla" (in šu / en / *Ib-la*^{ki}).

[105] See Archi 2017: 164.

represents the amount present at the time of their death. This would chronologically match with the battle in question, since Igriš-Halab was the contemporary of Iplus-Il.[106] It would also match with the present contention that the Enna-Dagan letter and Abarsal treaty both entered the Ebla library at around the same time, namely, while Iplus-Il was still alive.

It makes perfect sense that one king would write to another about a memory that was positive for both, and that the tablet recording this good memory would be stored long-term in the archives of the recipient. This makes more sense than the idea of a "boast" over a "humiliating defeat" for Ebla, especially since it is impossible that a defeat of Abarsal represented a defeat for Ebla. We continue to read:

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]
(12) *U$_3$* / *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki} / *U$_3$* / *Ad-da-li-NI*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *A-ri-sum*^{ki} / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / *Bur-ma-an*^{ki} / lu$_2$ *Su-gu$_2$-rum$_2$*^{ki} / *Ib-lu$_5$-il* / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ / (13) *u$_3$* / du$_6$-SAR / gar
(14) *u$_3$* / *Ša-ra-an*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Dam-mi-um*^{ki} / *Ib-lu$_5$-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$* / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$
(15) 2 du$_6$-SAR / gar

(12–13) Iplus-Il slaughtered (the forces of) Šatap, Adali-NI, and Arisum, lands of Burman of Sugurum, and he raised a burial mound.
(14–15) And Iplus-Il, LUGAL of Mari, defeat Šaran and Dammium, and he raised 2 burial mounds.

Having "released" (šu-du$_8$) the canebrake of Ebla and subsequently defeated Ebla's rival Abarsal, Iplus-Il continued his march up the Euphrates. *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki} can be safely identified with a place called Šatappi, attested in the Late Bronze Age texts from Meskene.[107] Also,

[106] Archi 2016b: 1.
[107] Bonechi 1997: 532 fn. 396.

an unpublished passage refers to *Ša-dab*$_6$[ki] as "of Emar."[108] Accordingly, it could not have been located very far from there, probably somewhere to its north. *Ad-da-li-NI*[ki], *A-ri-sum*[ki], and *Su-gu*$_2$*-rum*$_2$[ki] are all obscure singular occurrences. *Bur-ma-an*[ki], however, was, like the aforementioned *Ra-ʾa*$_3$*-ak*[ki], one of the "typical" allied minor kingdoms, attested receiving textiles at Ebla on a regular basis. Since, according to this passage, Šatap belonged at this point to the "lands" (kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM*) of Burman, Burman itself could not have been located very far from Emar either. All of these mentioned locations should thus have been located somewhere upstream from Emar.

By entry (14), Iplus-Il, having by now participated in more major, far-flung battles than any of his predecessors, had apparently earned an upgrade in titulary: from this point on he is referred to as LUGAL,[109] and he goes on to be referred to as such an additional 5 times. This is also the title he bears in the Ebla administrative tabets, and in his own original inscriptions found at Mari.[110] In Ebla, and probably the rest of Syria, EN (**malkum*) was a higher rank than LUGAL (**šarrum*?); the only previously mentioned LUGAL of our text, Ištup-Šar, seemed like a more minor figure compared to SA$_2$-umu and Iplus-Il. For a former EN to change his title to LUGAL, however, is a different matter altogether; clearly this could not be a downgrade. Conspicuously, in entry (12), which

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[108] TM.75.G.2463 (Archi 1991: 384) rev. vi 9f: *En-na-Il* nu-giš-kiri$_6$ *Ša-dab*$_6$[ki] lu$_2$ *I*$_3$*-mar*[ki]. Note that at Ebla "lu$_2$" functions as a relative pronoun (equivalent to later Akkadian *ša*).

[109] Cf. the remarks in Sallaberger 1998: 34f fn. 56: "Auffallend ist... dass im Enna-Dagān-Brief IbLUL-Il zunächst als EN, dann als LUGAL bezeichnet wird. Könnte sich deshalb hier nicht auch eine Rangfolge wiederspiegeln, vergleichbar etwa dem ensi$_2$ und lugal in Sumer (z.B. Urukagina), oder Stufen in der Karriere eines Herrschers von Mari?"

[110] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 12f.

marks the transition point from EN to LUGAL, Iplus-Il is given no title at all. I will return to this matter in greater detail below §3.1.4.

The crux and climax of the text comes in the following section:

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan Letter]
(16) *in* / *NE-ra-ad*^{ki} / *u*$_3$ / *in* / E$_2$.NA / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / e$_3$ / *Ib-lu*$_5$*-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$
(17) *u*$_3$ / mu-DU / *Ib-la*^{ki} / ša$_3$-*SU*$_3$ / ma$_2$:NE^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti

(16) Iplus-Il, the LUGAL of Mari, withdrew from NE-rat and from the *stone house* of Hassuwan.
(17) And (as a result) he received an income from (the ruler of) Ebla within (Ebla's) port (on the Euphrates).

That the verb in (17) is the result of the one in (16) could be implied by the omission of the subject of the verb šu-ba$_4$-ti (Iplus-Il) in the second clause.

As with šu-du$_8$ of (10), previous scholars have tried to find behind e$_3$ some action parallel to the AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ of all the other sections. However, it is once again more likely that the singular use of a different verb serves the discursive function of establishing a contrast. Moreover, on a semantic level it is extremely difficult to see a violent action behind e$_3$. The preposition *in*, when combined with a verb of motion such as e$_3$/**waṣû* "to depart, to exit," indicates motion *away* from a place, as already unhesitatingly translated by Edzard.[111] Fronzaroli's hesitating translation "uscí *contro*" (italics in the original)[112]

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[111] Edzard 1981: 94: "Von ON und von dem... von ON2 zog Iplul-Il, König von Mari, aus." He further commented "è sollte zunächst neutral als 'hinausgehen, ausziehen,' aufgefasst werden; als solches passt es gut in den Zussamenhang." This translation was also followed by Astour 1992, 30, "Iblul-Il departed from...." See also CAD/I: 141 s.v. *ina*: "ina (***in***) prep.; in, on, **from**, through" and the lexical equation cited therein: "ta-a TA [scil. the Sumerian ablative element] = *i-na* S^b II 99."
[112] Fronzaroli 2003: 37. The use of italics for "*contro*" would seem to indicate that Fronzaroli felt forced towards this translation by the conventional understanding of the overall context. On the other hand, Archi/Biga 2003: 2 fn. 4 translated unhesitatingly

seems impossible on linguistic grounds. A rendering of e$_3$ as "to depart from, to move away from" also matches the geographic situation. Hassuwan represented the northernmost point reached by Iplus-Il, after which he began descending south, back towards ma$_2$-NE and Emar. By the end of the letter, we are back where we started, with the mention again of *Ti-ba-la-ad*^{ki} and [BAD-*l*]*a-an*, presumably located closer to Mari itself.

This understanding of e$_3$ thus differs only a little from that of Astour, for whom the mu-DU of Ebla represented an "indemnity payment" paid in exchange for what he termed the Mariote "evacuation" (e$_3$) of the lands along the Upper Euphrates.[113] In principal, this is in agreement with the present view, only Astour saw all those places affected by Mari's expansion as part of Ebla's "empire," when they were more likely to have been independent minor polities. They were the potential rivals of both Ebla and Mari alike (such as, above all, Abarsal), especially as far as the Euphrates trade was concerned.

The subsequently mentioned receipt by Iplus-Il of a "delivery" from Ebla in ma$_2$-NE^{ki} could thus be seen as the direct result of his "departure" of the lands extending from Hassuwan in the far north down to ma$_2$-NE^{ki} itself. This stretch would have included Karkamiš, confirmed to belong to Ebla by the Abarsal treaty a short time later. As we shall see below, Hassuwan itself subsequently entered into a period of intense diplomatic and mercantile relations with Ebla that lasted throughout the period of ArruLUM.

"Against Nerat and ʾAʾaš of Hassuwan moved Iblul-Il, the king of Mari." However, the translation "moved (aggressively) against" represents a significant departure from the basic semantics of the verb **waṣû*.

[113] Astour 1992: 39.

NE-ra-ad^{ki} seems to be attested again only in two entries on one tablet, from the period of ArruLUM. Both times it is mentioned in connection with the *delivery* (šu-du$_8$) to Ebla of some type of large animal (EREN$_2$+X; perhaps a wild bull or other bovid).[114] E$_2$-NA remains otherwise unattested, but of all the other available options,[115] the best one is probably to interpret "stone house." This seems to fit the context, especially if one recalls that, according to the Abarsal treaty and other sources, this region (around Karkamiš and further north) was full of bad$_3$-bad$_3$^{ki} "fortresses." Also, Hassuwan itself is attested to have had at least one fortress.[116]

Hassuwan thus belonged to the region to the north and east of Karkamiš, which was characterized by the presence of "fortresses" (see below §3.2.4.0). Iplus-Il's "departure" from there foreshadowed what would happen in the Abarsal treaty, when many settlements belonging to this upper Euphratean region of "fortresses" would be confirmed to belong to the ruler of Ebla.

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[114] A15, 12 (21): 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *NE-ra-ad*^{ki} / šu-du$_8$ / ERIN$_2$+X; (66) 10 KIN siki gi$_6$ / MAŠ.KASKAL ur$_4$ / šu-ba$_4$-ti / 1 kin siki / maškim-*SU$_3$* / šu-du$_8$ / ERIN$_2$+X / *NE-ra-ad*^{ki}. On the ERIN$_2$+X in mythology and iconography of the third millennium, and the identification with the human-faced bull, see Steinkeller 1992b: 259f.

[115] Archi/Biga 2003: 2 fn. 4 read an otherwise unknown GN *ʾA$_3$-aš*^{ki}, but a GN in *-aš*^{ki} would be rather unexpected at Ebla (*aš$_2$* is the sign usually used). Astour 1993: 30 suggested reading *ʾA$_3$-na* and identifying with *A-nu*^{ki}, *A-na-a*^{ki} logographically written igi^{ki}, "the water source (lit: eye/two eyes)," which occurs also in the Abarsal treaty (A13, 4 (18)). However, the sign E$_2$/*ʾa$_3$* cannot stand for an *ʾayin*.

[116] A15, 23 (30): ...nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Ma-nu-ti-um*^{ki} / 1 bad$_3$^{ki} / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} TUM<×SAL>$^{?}$

The location of this exchange, ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, is not the syllabic spelling of the name of a specific settlement.[117] Rather, it is a logographically written common noun, meaning something like "port, harbor, dock."[118] During the period covered by the archives, Ebla owned more than one "port."[119] The one we are dealing with here is undoubtedly the one, which in later texts was designated "of Emar."[120] This designation need not necessarily mean that the "port" (ma$_2$-NE^{ki}) was located physically within the city of Emar itself; it could have also been somewhere in the vicinity, especially since other cities like *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki} can also be called "of Emar."

Fronzaroli rendered ša$_3$-*SU$_3$* as "nel suo territorio," i.e., "within Ebla's territory." However, it is unlikely that ša$_3$ could have such a wide meaning like "territory." It should refer instead to a rather specific locus, i.e. the inside of a building or other structure. Moreover, -*SU$_3$* probably does not refer to Ebla. Here, *Ib-la*^{ki} does not stand for a city,

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[117] As for Astour 1988: 146 fn. 7 and Astour 1992: 39, who proposed a highly unlikely identification with a place called ^{uru}*Ma-ni-e*^{ki} attested in a Neo-Babylonian chronicle (followed by Archi/Biga 2003: 2 fn. 5).

[118] So too Archi 2016: 2, "MaNE, the port on the Euphrates immediately north of Emar...." This is shown above all by its occurrence in VE 0961 (Pettinato 1982: 306), alongside other maritime-related terms (ma$_2$-lah$_4$, u$_5$ (=MA$_2$.HU), ma$_2$-gur$_8$). In the Abarsal Treaty (A13, 5 (24), (26)), ^{giš}ma$_2$-NE apparently means "siege engine" (occurring alongside gu$_4$-si-dili "battering ram," on which see Steinkeller 1987a). One could visualize a semantic connection between a wooden platform that served as a mooring point for boats, and a similar wood-frame box construction used as a platform to overcome city walls.

[119] One was located in the Ebla kingdom proper (A2, 27). There was one located at *Ga-du-ru$_{12}$*^{ki} (M10, 38 obv. iv 5), also known as *Ik-du-ra*^{ki} (M10, 38 obv. v 4; A7, 121 obv. ii 3).

[120] Referenced directly in A3, 323 (=TM.75.G.3368+3369), obv. iv 9′–10′: ma$_2$-NE^{ki} / lu$_2$ *I$_3$-mar*^{ki}; TM.75.G.2259 (unpublished, Archi 1991: 34) obv i:3f ...dam ne-di ma$_2$-NE^{ki} lu$_2$ e$_2$ *I$_3$-mar*^{ki}; TM.75.G.2454 (unpublished, Ibid.: 35), rev. i 1: ...ma$_2$-NE^{ki} lu$_2$ *I$_3$-mar*^{ki}.

but likely stands more concretely for "(the man of) Ebla" i.e., the ruler.[121] As Pettinato and Edzard recognized, "$ša_3$-*SU*$_3$ / ma_2:NE^{ki} is either an anticipatory construction, with -*SU*$_3$ referring to ma_2-NE^{ki}, or otherwise a frozen, logographic usage,[122] essentially meaning "within ma_2-NE^{ki}." Fronzaroli's statement that the Semitic equivalent of $ša_3$-*SU*$_3$ is unknown[123] seems overly pessimistic. For lack of other options, it is likely **in libbišu* or **in qerbišu* (+ **ša*?) or the equivalent thereof. It seems that "sa_3-*SU*$_3$ / ma_2-NE^{ki}" is a logographic construction to which at least one preposition (i.e., *in*) or a grammatical element (i.e, *–um* or *–iš.* or *ša*) must be supplied in order for it to make sense.

In any event, this location is very significant for understanding the political situation. The toponym ma_2-NE^{ki} is suggestive of trade along the Euphrates, potentially a source of profit for Ebla and Mari alike. It was a place located neither in the heartland of Ebla (which remained unaffected by Iplus-Il's expansion), nor in that of Mari. It was in the middle between them. Had the gift exchange occurred at Ebla itself, or at Mari itself, it would represent a different type of situation. If Mari received the gift at Ebla itself, then perhaps it would represent a situation comparable to the later Neo-Assyrian one, and so justify a label "tribute." Similarly, if Ebla had brought the gifts all the way to Mari, then Ebla would have had a status with regard to Mari similar to that of Ebla's own allied

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[121] See below §3.1.2 on the administrative texts that show the Ebla ruler's direct involvement here.

[122] Pettinato 1980b: 244. Edzard 1981b: 94, "[Pettinato] vermutet, dass *–sù* 'anticipa il genitivo.' Ich möchte dem prinzipell folgen. Allerdings halte ich es für wahrscheinlicher, dass šà-*sù* 'wörtlich' [sic., surely a typo for '*örtlich*'], 'darinnen', Logogramm for **libbum* (Lokativ–Adverbialis) oder für einen sonstigen Ausdruck für 'innerhalb von' ist, wobei das *–sù* in erstarrtem Gebraucht angefügt wäre."

[123] Fronzaroli 2003: 41, "Il sumerogramma šà ha qui la funzione di una preposizione dentro, all'interno di'; l'equivalente semitico non è noto. "Al suo intero" puo riferisi all'area di influenza eblaita.

kingdoms, who annually brought mu-DU "incomes" to Ebla in later texts. However, the exchange having occurred on a middle ground – which was either previously owned by Ebla, or was now being confirmed as belonging to Ebla – implies a more balanced situation.

If the whole stretch of the Euphrates between Emar and Mari had been controlled by many different small states, then the potential for Ebla and Mari to profit from trade would been much lower. Each petty ruler would collect tolls[124] along the way, demanding his fair share of the enterprise. Such a fragmented political situation seems to have obtained along the Euphrates, prior to the reign of Iplus-Il. By receiving Ebla's gift at ma_2-NE^{ki}, Mari was acknowledging that this place was the property of Ebla. Soon the Abarsal treaty would declare that fortresses which peppered this whole area up to Karkamiš, and likely even beyond, was "in the hands" of the ruler of Ebla (see below §3.2.4.0. This all was probably a novel situation, considering that not much earlier *A-bar-sal*$_4^{ki}$ had suffered a major defeat by Iplus-Il, resulting in the erection of seven burial mounds. Earlier, Emar and the "canebrake" of Ebla had suffered a defeat under Ištup-Šar – although a burial mound was raised only in Emar, not in the "canebrake," and then the "canebrake" was subsequently "released" (šu-du$_8$) by Iplus-Il. Immediately after the exchange at ma_2-NE,^{ki} Emar would suffer a defeat even worse than before, described with

[124] Cf. the significant attestation of the existence of a "Euphrates toll" or "tithe" (zag-10 KIB^{gunû}.NUN.A) in A13, 15 (10), a text dealing with disputes between Ebla and Mari merchants. Cf. Sallaberger 2008: 98.

a logogram that possibly means "to besiege" or "to conquer (a fortified location)," potentially implying the destruction affected the city directly.[125] We read thus:

[A13, 4; Enna-Dagan letter]
(17) *u₃* / mu-DU / *Ib-la*^{ki} / ša₃-*SU₃* / ma₂:NE^{ki} / šu-ba₄-ti
(18) *u₃* / *I₃-mar*^{ki} / TUM×SAL / (18b) du₆-sar / gar / *Ib-lu₅-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki}

(17) He received an income from Ebla within (Ebla's) port (on the Euphrates).
(18) (And then) Iplus-Il *besieged* Emar, and raised a burial mound (there).

Below §3.1.2, we will investigate some administrative passages, which shed light on both this exchange at ma₂-NE^{ki} and the "*besieging*" (TUM×SAL) of Emar, which immediately followed. The letter then goes on to mention one more campaign of Iplus-Il, before introducing the character of Enna-Dagan, with the title of EN:

3.1.1.5 Campaigns of Enna-Dagan

(19) *u₃* / *Na-hal*^{ki} / [*u₃*] / *Nu-ba-ad*^{ki} / *u₃* / *Ša-dab₆*^{ki} / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / *Ga-sur₃*^{ki} / AGA₃.ŠE₃ / *in* / *Ga-na-NE*^{ki} (20) *u₃* / 7 du₆-SAR / gar / *Ib-lu₅-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki}
(21) *u₃* / *Ba-ra-ma-a*-ii^{ki} / *u₃* / *A-bu₃-ru₁₂* / *u₃* / *Ti-ba-la-ad*^{ki} / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / [BAD-*l*]*a-an* / AGA₃.ŠE₃ / *En-na-Da-gan* / en / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki} (22) [(x) du₆-SAR / gar

(19–20) Iplus-Il, LUGAL of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) Nahal, Nubat, and Šatap, lands of Gasur, in Ganane, and he raised 7 burial mounds (in Ganane?).
(21–22) Enna-Dagan, EN of Mari, slaughtered (the forces of) of Baraman, ʿAbur(r)u, and Tibalat, lands of Baʾalan, and raised [x] burial mound(s).

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[125] Like AGA.ŠE₃, TUM×SAL appears to have been an old logogram pertaining to the Northern Babylonian "Kishite" tradition. It seems to occur in specific association with cities and other fortified locations, i.e. bad₃^{ki} "fortresses" (eg. in the Abarsal treaty, A13, 5 (36): mu-DU / BAD / bad₃ / TUM×SAL, "income of the lord of a besieged fortress," in a context that also mentions a gu₄-si-dili "battering ram" and giš-ma₂-NE "siege engine," but whose overall meaning is not entirely clear). Pettinato 1980b: 244 already pointed out the occurrence of this logogram in a lexical list of Mesopotamian origin, in between AGA₃.ŠE₃ "to kill, to defeat," and NAM.RA.AK "to plunder, to take booty" (MEE 3, 44 obv. iv 3–5). A meaning "to besiege" would logically fit here. Archi 2010b: 16 defines TUM×SAL as "to conquer, conquest."

Sections (19–20) and (21–22) reflect the increasing progression of Iplus-Il's retreat or departure (e_3) away from Hassuwan; some of the places in (19) had been previously seen in the middle section of the letter, while those in (21) were first seen at the very beginning. *Na-hal* was last mentioned in (7), without the KI determinative, as the place where SA_2-umu had raised burial mounds after having defeated the forces of *Aš$_2$-al$_6$-du*^{ki} and *Ba-ul*^{ki}. *Nu-ba-ad*^{ki} is a new mention; it occurs twice on a single tablet of the ArruLUM period,[126] where it is recorded alongside *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki}. *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki} we had previously encountered in (12) – the entry, which marks Iplus-Il's transition from EN to LUGAL. There, it had been counted among the "lands" (kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM*) of Burman, although this time, along with Nubat and Nahal, it is ascribed to *Ga-sur$_3$*^{ki}. *Ga-sur$_3$*^{ki} appears in additional texts, studied below, dealing with the early interactions between Ebla and Mari, as well as in some letters from very close to the end of Ebla Palace G, suggesting that *Ga-sur$_3$*^{ki} maintained a close connection with Mari.[127] The location of the battle, *Ga-na-NE*^{ki}, is otherwise unattested; the seven burial mounds suggest a large conflict.

By the time that Enna-Dagan is introduced, the places mentioned are those that were seen towards the very beginning of the letter, reflecting their close proximity to Mari. The spelling *Ba-ra-ma-a*-ii^{ki} probably reflects a dual ending, cf. the numerous

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[126] A15, 27 (9) 5 <gu>-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 5 aktum-tug$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ / *Ša-dab$_6$*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Nu-ba-ad*^{ki}; (90) 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Nu-ba-ad*^{ki} / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / ib$_2$-iii-babbar-tug$_2$ /*Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}. That the men from Nubat delivered "white garments in the fashion of Mari" could be seen as evidence for the political or geographical proximity of Nubat to Mari, shortly after the events narrated in the Enna-Dagan letter.

[127] See the occurrences listed in Catagnoti/Fronzaroli 2010: 206, especially A16, 13 (8): ... *Ga-šur$_x$*^{ki} / *wa* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}.

toponyms in this text in *-an*. *A-bu*$_3$*-ru*$_{12}$^{ki} was the very first place mentioned in the text, in section (2), under *A-nu-KA*, where it was, like here, reckoned to the lands of BAD-*la-an*^{ki}. *Ti-ba-la-ad*^{ki} was last mentioned in (4), under SA$_2$-umu. Thus the movement of Mari away from the upper Euphrates region, represented by Hassuwan, the process of which included an exchange with Ebla at the symbolic location of ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, was now complete. These last campaigns of Enna-Dagan could hardly have been intended to constitute a "threat" to Ebla on the part of Mari, since the letter itself makes it quite obvious that Enna-Dagan's activities were no longer anywhere near the neighborhood of Ebla. The letter ends in much the same neighborhood as it began.

Based on chronological information extracted from administrative tablets recording gifts from Ebla to Mari, it has been assumed by earlier authors that over four years intervened between the events narrated in (19–20) and (21–22). These four or so years would be represented by the reign of *NI-zi* (as LUGAL), whom the author of the letter putatively omitted because nothing interesting happened during his reign.[128] To judge from the text itself, however, this does not seem very likely. The geographical progression, from the upper Euphrates back through the Emar area and down again towards the area of Mari – which begins with the e$_3$ "departure" of (16) and continues through to the end of the letter – could well imply instead that all of those events happened in relatively close chronological succession. Moreover, all of the texts which are drawn upon to place these military activities of Enna-Dagan, narrated in (21–22),

[128] Archi/Biga 2003: 2, "...Nizi (*Ni-zi*), Iblul-Il's immediate successor, omitted in Enna-Dagan's letter, perhaps because nothing of great importance happened during his reign." Archi 2016b: 3 "Nizi does not appear in Enna-Dagan's letter, presumably because he had not conducted any important military ventures against Ebla."

several years after the death of Iplus-Il, give Enna-Dagan instead the title of LUGAL – not EN, as he is called here. The scribe of our letter shows no sign of being "confused" about when to use LUGAL or EN; his use of one title or the other is entirely consistent.

Thus, there are no grounds upon which to presume that the introduction of Enna-Dagan as EN necessarily means that Iplus-Il the LUGAL had died. We do not possess enough information about the political system in place at Mari at this time to presume it impossible that there could have been a LUGAL and an EN in office at the same time.[129] Moreover, the important and unique administrative tablet M12, 25 (discussed below §3.1.3.2), which almost certainly dates to the time of Iplus-Il, contains a reference to a news item which reads as follows: ...nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / en *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / lugal, "News: the EN of Mari has become a LUGAL."[130] Unless one attempts to simply explain this entry away,[131] it seems to constitute incontrovertible proof that both an office called EN and LUGAL existed at Mari, and that a royal figure could transition from one to the other. In all likelihood, the news event in question refers to Iplus-Il's own "promotion," which took

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[129] While it is true that the title EN is not attested among the original Presargonic inscriptions found at Mari (Gelb/Kienast 1990: 12f), this corpus is not rich or extensive enough for it to be considered to a constitute a comprehensive picture of the political system in place at Mari.

[130] M12, 25 (49), on which see below §3.1.3.2

[131] According to Archi 2016: 11, "The anomalous passage.... 10 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$-babbar nig$_2$-mul / en *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / lugal, should be interpreted as a redundant phrase: '10 (shekels) of silver (to whom) brought the news that the lord (Eblaite *malkum*) of Mari became king (Mariote: *šarrum*) (i.e., ascended to the throne).'" This invocation of "redunancy" however is unsatisfying. There is nothing at all inherently "anomalous" about the phrase in question; the meaning instead seems to be rather straightforward. The suggestion in Ibid.: 8 that "It could refer to Iku(n)-išar, who became king after Enna-Dagan," seems equally unlikely, because Enna-Dagan appears twice in this same text but is apparently not yet LUGAL, while Iku(n)-Išar himself is only ever referred to as EN, never LUGAL.

place between our letter's entry (11) and (14).[132] Finally, one notes that, subsequent to the introduction of Enna-Dagan as EN, Iplus-Il is mentioned again, as LUGAL, in the unfortunately damaged closing section of the letter. This could very well imply that Iplus-Il was still alive at the time the letter was written.

Putatively, Iplus-Il could be mentioned as a "ghost" in the context of a type of threat or curse formula, where one might expect otherwise to see the mention of a deity.[133] This however, would be a situation without parallel. In the Ebla texts, deceased rulers are generally only ever mentioned as passive recipients of offerings.[134] Nor do there seem to be any parallel instances from later Near Eastern history, where a deceased human ruler is invoked in the context of a curse.

The idea that Iplus-Il and Enna-Dagan were both alive and active together during Mari's interactions with Ebla actually fits with the picture presented by earliest administrative sources (such as A7, 6 see below §3.1.2), which show Enna-Dagan as an active figure, engaged in afairs with a mercantile connotation, and present, on at least one occasion, at Ebla itself (see §3.1.3 on M12, 25), all while Iplus-Il was still alive and reigning as LUGAL. NI-zi, on the other hand, does not seem to have engaged with Ebla at all until after Iplus-Il had died, likewise matching the situation portrayed by the Enna-Dagan letter. Finally, we can note the Enna-Dagan ritual text features Enna-Dagan

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[132] Another possibility is that it could refer to the promotion of NI-zi to LUGAL. However, unlike Iplus-Il, NI-zi is never attested to have had the title of EN.

[133] Fronzaroli 2003: 432, "La lettera si chiude con un auspicio minaccioso, la cui sintassi ricorda le maledizioni che chiudono i trattati di alleanza. Qui però la punizione dei ribelli non verrà dagli dèi ma dalla lancia di Yiplul-Il (evidentemente impugnata dall'altrettanto valoroso Henna-Dagan).

[134] See for example the list of royal ancestors A7, 150; cf. Archi 2012 on the Ebla cult of the royal ancestors.

(himself possibly at this point bearing the title of EN) interacting with the EN of Ebla (see below §3.1.4), just like when Enna-Dagan addressed the EN of Ebla in his letter. This ritual text also mentions the anonymous LUGAL of Mari, with little doubt referring to the LUGAL of Mari *par excellance*, namely, Iplus-Il, still alive but probably by now advanced in age (a reference to an insignificant figure like NI-zi seems less likely).

Thus, if Iplus-Il was still alive when the Enna-Dagan letter was written, as all the contextual evidence seems to suggest, this would mean that the Enna-Dagan letter entered the Ebla Palace G archives at around the same time as the Abarsal Treaty (§3.2.0), the Enna-Dagan ritual text (§3.1.4), and also the earliest administrative sources such as A7, 6 (§3.1.2) and M12, 25 (§3.1.3). This seems like a plausible scenario, and is also the least complicated one.

3.1.1.6 Conclusion: the diplomatic ceremony (i_3-giš)

As stated, the closing passage has previously been interpreted to constitute an "ominous threat" and a type of curse formula, invoking the "spear of Iplus-Il."[135] However, the passage is not preserved well enough for such an unequivocal reading. The idea of a threatening curse is a reflection of contextual assumptions. The passage could easily lend itself to other interpretations. The rendering offered below represents just one of many possibilities:

[A13, 4]

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[135] Fronzaroli 2003: 42, "La lettera si chiude con un auspicio minaccioso, la cui sintassi ricorda le maledizioni che chiudono i trattati di alleanza. Qui però la punizione dei ribelli non verrà dagli dèi ma dalla lancia di Yiplul-Il (evidentemente impugnata dall'altrettanto valoroso Ḥenna-Dagan)."

(23–24) *ma-da-a* / *in* / i$_3$-giš / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / šu-du$_8$ / [giš]-ERIN$_2$[(-x)] / *a-i*[*n*$^?$]-x[-(x)] / [d]u$_{11}$$^?$-[d]u$_{11}$[136] / [giš-g]u-[gid$_2$]-kak-šub / *Ib-lu$_5$-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ / [ ] / *-si-na-at*

(23–24) When, during the oil(-ceremony) of all the lands, they held the scales (of justice). (...) they spoke.$^?$ The spear of Iplus-Il, LUGAL of Mari (...) them.

The plural noun kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* "(all the) lands" seems to stand in construct to i$_3$-giš, "during the olive oil(-ceremony)." For lack of any other potential candidates, this "(diplomatic) olive oil (ceremony) of (all) the lands" should refer to the important exchange between Mari and Ebla which occurred at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, previously mentioned in (17), and also illustrated by the text A7, 6 (§3.1.2). At Ebla, the word i$_3$-giš suggests peace, and could potentially be rendered as "agreement." The olive branch is still today a symbol of peace with very deep historical and cultural roots; the diplomatic attestations of i$_3$-giš at Ebla could be the earliest echoes of this symbolism. One should take i$_3$-giš seriously as referring to peace, and not necessarily try to see it as some forced, oppressive agreement forced upon a weaker party by a stronger.

It seems likely that the Enna-Dagan letter would have been composed shortly after this "peace agreement" between Mari and Ebla was reached, in order for Ebla to have a resumé of the events which led up to it. This "agreement," in all likelihood, refers to the one that gave Ebla control over ma$_2$-NE^{ki} in the aftermath of the defeats of Emar and Abarsal, which is also when Ebla would begin making substantial payments to Mari. There seems to be little reason why one would mention such a positively connoted word such as i$_3$-giš in the context of a "threatening curse." The word should instead refer to

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[136] Read by Fronzaroli 2003: 38 as s[ag]-sa[g], but other interpretations of the traces seem possible (eg. K[A] instead of SA[G]). Read perhaps d[u$_{11}$]-d[u$_{11}$]?

positive memory for Ebla and Mari alike, and also a recent one – one which explains the whole purpose and subject matter of the letter to begin with.

Modern editors have generally divided the letter's conclusion into two clauses, the first of which is closed by the verb šu-du$_8$. If this subdivision is correct,[137] the direct object of the verb would most likely be *ma-da-a*, apparently standing in the dual accusative. Two potential interpretations of this noun that have been offered are "two staves" or "two lands." [138] However, it has also been proposed to see in *ma-da-a* a Semitic adverb meaning "when."[139] This seems to better fit the context. Going with this solution, one is obliged to seek the object of šu-du$_8$ instead in the following word, [giš]-ERIN$_2$.

In line with the theory of an "ominous threat," the logogram giš-ERIN$_2$ has been interpreted as giš-sur$_x$, representing the "yoke" as a symbol of domination. As with the notion of "tributes," this idea is culled from a much later period of history, when, in later times, the "yoke" (*nīru*) symbolized the domination of a god and perhaps the obligation to deliver regular tribute.[140] The idea that Ebla was subjected to Mari's "yoke," however, does not fit the political context, since Mari's raids never came close to touching the Eblaite heartland. Rather than a defeated and submissive Ebla and a dominant Mari, the

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[137] Cf. the doubts expressed in Edzard 1981: 95, "Die Abgrenzung gegen den Schlussabschnitt ist nicht sicher."

[138] The interpretation of *ma-da-a* as a dual form of a well-attested Semitic word for "stick, staff, spear" goes back to Pettinato 1980b: 244. The singular form of this word is indeed lexically attested, VE 481: giš-gu-šub-kak^{urudu} = *ma-ti-um* (see Hajouz 2013: 452). The same word would thus potentially be seen in the following clause, written logographically and standing in the singular. Similarly, *ma-da-a* as a dual of the word for "land" (*matum*), seems redundant in light of the immediately following kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM*.

[139] Archi 1991: 222 fn. 42.

[140] Attested from the Old Babylonian period onwards, see CAD N/2: 262–263.

exchange at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} seems to reflect a new balance of power, with Ebla acknowledged as the dominant force in the Upper Euphrates region around Emar. A more appropriate interpretation of gis-ERIN$_2$ in this and other contexts, therefore, might be giš-rin$_2$ "scales," as a symbol of justice and equity.[141]

To conclude, it seems inherently more likely that a letter from one major power to another would speak in these positive terms. There is no evidence that Ebla was ever subjected to Mari's "yoke," and the payments, which Ebla made to Mari, seemingly had a more complicated context.

Unfortunately, the reference to the "spear of Iplus-Il, king of Mari" ([giš-g]u-[gid$_2$]-kak-šub / *Ib-lu$_5$-il* / lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}) occurs in a context that is too broken to make any sense of. If it really does refer to a "threat," then there is no reason to assume that the threat was directed against Ebla; it could also be directed against Mari and Ebla's mutual enemies. However, the mention of Iplus-Il's "spear" could be rendered more meaningful in light of the fact that, according to an administrative passage (§3.1.2), exactly such a "spear" was gifted to Iplus-Il personally by the ruler of Ebla himself, at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}. It could be precisely this "spear" – the gift from the Ebla king to the one of Mari – that the letter is referring to.

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[141] The meaning "scales" instead of "yoke" is also more appropriate in A13, 19: (14) *en-ma* / en / *ʾA$_3$-du*^{ki} / *ʾa$_5$-na*/ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / (15–16) *an-na* / *wa* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / i$_3$-giš / giš-rin$_2$ / *wa* / nam-TAR / giš-rin$_2$ / gaba / ^{d}KU-ra / *wa* / gaba / ^{d}*ʾA$_3$-da* / an-gal$_2$ "Thus speaks the EN of Haddu to (the "man" of) Mari: Ebla and I have placed the oil of the scales, and the oath of the scales before KU-ra and before Hadda" (for this interpretation cf. Archi 1991: 221). Fronzaroli 2003: 197–198 interpreted read giš-sur$_x$ "yoke" and understood the first occurrence as a verb ("equivalente ad 'aggiogare'"), but this does not seem very likely. He suggested a comparison with *rakāsu*, but this meaning belongs instead to the logogram KEŠDA.

The letter thus seems to close with a recapitulation about the i$_3$-giš kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* "oil-(ceremony) of all the lands," probably identical with what occurred at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, reported in (17). There, the rulers and elites of Ebla and Mari met face-to-face, exchanged gifts, and agreed upon a new political arrangement – one which ultimately led to the emergence of Ebla as the main power in charge of the area around Emar, Abarsal, and Carchemish.

3.1.2 The Exchange at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}

The earliest interactions between Ebla and Mari, beginning with Iplus-Il as LUGAL and continuing on after his death through the LUGAL-ships of NI-zi and Enna-Dagan, are attested in a special group of Ebla tablets,[142] among the oldest documents recovered from there. They are concerned with recording quantities of precious metal that the Ebla palace spent. Some of them seem to represent early versions of the later type of texts referred to in the literature as Annual Accounts of Metals (AAMs), while others seem to belong to their own category. There is clear evidence of a redactional process, with passages duplicated across multiple tablets, sometimes with details omitted. Especially the tablets dating from the time of Iplus-Il display a number of unusual outer characteristics that could be seen as archaisms, and/or the influence of Mari scribal culture. They do not follow the same later Ebla conventions as far as dividing words into cases; they use *U$_3$* and occasionally even *U$_2$* instead of the standard Ebla *wa*. They use vocabulary not later in common use at Ebla, or which are otherwise suggestive of a situation involving Mari,

[142] Recently the subject of a renewed study in Archi 2016. Some of the tablets belonging to this group remain unpublished.

such as, e.g. sukkal, sagi, and ga'eš$_x$(GA.KASKAL).

These expenditures towards Mari belonged primarily to a diplomatic context, and it seems justified to render the ancient terminology describing these expenditures as "gifts" (nig$_2$-ba). But already from the very beginning there are clues of an ongoing mercantile and commercial exchange between the two powers, running parallel to the diplomatic one. In general, these documents paint a picture of close relations between Ebla and Mari, rather than the oppression of Ebla on the part of Mari. There is no inherently negative connotation to any of these interactions; even if Ebla was adopting a submissive stance with regard to Iplus-Il, one should remember than the servant–master relationship was not one which was seen in inherently negative terms within Ancient Near Eastern culture. There is no reason to believe that Ebla was suffering economically during this period; instead, Ebla was seemingly beginning to grow larger and wealthier than it ever had before.

The text A7, 7 is identified by its colophon as a dub lugal, "Tablet pertaining to the king (Iplus-Il),[143]" and is concerned exclusively with gold and silver conveyed to this ruler and his wife *Pa$_4$-ba$_4$* at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}. Without a doubt, these gifts are identical with the mu-DU at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} referred to by the Enna-Dagan letter. A7, 6 is likewise exclusively concerned with ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, but also contains information about other affairs which took place there; it could therefore have been the original source from which A7, 7 and the other documents were prepared. A7, 3 and Archi 1981: Text 2 are compilations, listing

[143] One notes, in addition, that most of the Eblaite officials involved in these transactions themselves also held the rank, at Ebla, of LUGAL. However, an interpretation "tablet pertaining to the (Ebla) LUGALs" seems less likely.

the gifts given out at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} and three additional locations: *Za-la-ga-tum*^{ki}, *A-zu$_2$*^{ki}, and *Ir$_3$-ku-ud*^{ki} (in the younger texts of this group called instead *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki} or *I-ra-ku*^{ki}). A7, 12 does not specify any location, but a comparison with A7, 3 and Archi 1981: Text 2 reveals that the gifts it records are the ones given out at *Za-la-ga-tum*. A7, 12 and A7, 6 (collated from the published photo) contain, in contrast to the compilations, the verbal phrase in-na-sum, which could likely stand for a present-future form, "will be given."[144] This fits with the likely scenario that A7, 12 land A7, 6 were original documents, from which the others were compiled.

These documents thus allow us to gain a better understanding of the exchange alluded to in the Enna-Dagan letter:

[A7, 7]
(1a) 4 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-sagšu /
(1b) ŠU$_2$.ŠA-5 ku$_3$-gi kešda-kešda gi[š-gu]-gid$_2$ /
(1c) 2 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ ku$_3$-sal tug$_2$-du$_8$ / en šu-mu-tak$_4$ / lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(2) KA-E$_2$-BAR *i-gi* ŠA.PI-8 ku$_3$-gi / *Ig-na-da-mu* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ lugal /
(3) 40 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Ig-na-da-mu* / *u$_3$ Ib-u$_9$-mu-ud* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / lugal ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(4) ŠU.ŠA$_2$ <ku$_3$-gi> 2 *BU-<DI>* ušum:gal 3 sag / *Ib-dur-i-šar* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Pap-ba$_4$*
(5) 1 giš-šilig ku$_3$-gi / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *En-na-NI* / *u$_3$ Ib-dur-i-šar* / lugal (blank)
(6) gu$_2$:an-še$_3$ 5 ½(MAŠ) 3 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 42 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / (blank)
(7) dub lugal

(1a) 4 minas of gold (as a) helmet; (1b) 25 shekels of gold (as the) *plating* of a spear; (1c) 2 minas of silver (as) chariot trappings, and a piece of felt (for a chariot), the EN (of Ebla) presented to the LUGAL of Mari (at) ma$_2$-NE^{ki}.
(2) A (...) weighing 48 shekels of gold, Ikna-Damu presented to the LUGAL (of Mari).
(3) 40 minas of silver, Ikna-Damu and Ibumut presented to the LUGAL (of Mari).
(4) 20 shekels (of gold) (as) 2 fibulae with 3 dragon heads, Ipṭur-Išar presented to (the Queen of Mari) Paba.
(5) 1 golden *battleaxe*, presentation of of Enna-NI and Ipṭur-Išar to the LUGAL (of Mari).

[144] For the possibility that, in the Hamazi letter (A13, 3), i$_3$-na-sum conceals a past tense form while in-na-sum stands for a present-future, cf. Bonechi 2016d: 10–11.

(6) Total: 5 minas 33 shekels of gold, 42 minas of silver.
(7) Tablet (concerning) the LUGAL (of Mari).

Thus we learn that during this extraordinary event the Ebla king personally delivered to the ruler of Mari at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} (en šu-mu-tak$_4$ / lugal *Ma-ri*$_2$ / ma$_2$:NE^{ki}) luxurious gifts symbolic of Iplus-Il's status as a great warrior. These included a helmet (nig$_2$-sagšu) weighing 4 minas of gold; a spear (giš-gu$_2$-gid$_2$-kak-šub) that contained 45 shekels of silver; decorative metal trappings for the harness assembly of a chariot (ku$_3$-sal)[145] weighing 2 minas of silver, and a piece of felt (tug$_2$-du$_8$) which likely served for the upholstery of a chariot.[146]

We also learn that several high-ranking Eblaite officials were present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, where they likewise presented Iplus-Il with gifts in precious metal. They also presented gifts to Iplus-Il's wife Paba, apparently also present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, unless the mention of different conveying officials is supposed to imply a different location. In general, the texts belonging to this group seem to be concerned with recording exactly which Ebla official it was who "conveyed" (šu-mu-tak$_4$) the various gifts. These officials all generally held at Ebla the title of LUGAL;[147] some of them also held an additional title, such as *Du-*

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[145] For ku$_3$-sal as a part of the equipment for a chariot see Conti 1997, 49.
[146] According to administrative texts, a tug$_2$-du$_8$ weighed approximately 3 KIN-measures of wool. That the tug$_2$-du$_8$ formed part of the furnishings for a chariot can be deduced from the fact that the same officials who receive wool for the manufacture of other chariot elements also receive wool for to produce a tug$_2$-du$_8$ (both of these most often marked as for either the king or the vizier). See for example the official *Ik-su-ud*, responsible for reins and bridles in A1, 15 (55), but for tug$_2$-du$_8$ in A1, 2 (35″). For some examples of felt used as upholstery for chariots and wagons in other periods, see Steinkeller 1980.
[147] See the list in Archi 2000: 23.

bi$_2$-šum UR$_4$, "*executor*," *En-na-NI* and *Ip-dur-i-šar* di-ku$_5$ "judge," and *Ig-na-da-mu* UL.KI "...".[148]

The delivery at ma$_2$-NE is recapitulated in the compilation A7, 3 (5–6). The information regarding the involvement of the EN of Ebla is omitted, but the tablet specifies that Mari queen *Pa$_4$-ba$_4$* was herself also present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, underscoring the diplomatic nature of this affair:

[A7, 3]

(1a) 3 *mi-at* ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 8 ma-na ku$_3$-gi /
(1b) ŠA.PI-5 gin$_2$ dilmun ku$_3$-gi / 1 si[149] /
(1c) 1 ma-na- 12 gin$_2$ dilmun ku$_3$-gi / ku$_3$-sal ku$_3$-sal /
(1d) TAR-5 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 2 giš-sur$_x$ /
(1e) ŠA.PI gin$_2$ DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 2 nig$_2$-anše-ak /
(1f) 1 gin$_2$-dilmun / šita^{l}(SILA$_3$) /
(1g) giš-gigir-ii /
(1h) 6 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / kešda / giš-gu-kak-gid$_2$-šub /
(1i) 4 gin DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / bar-us$_2$ / BAR.AN BAR.AN /
(1j) nig$_2$-ba / lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *Za-la-ga-tum*
(2) 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 2 *ti-ki-na* / nig$_2$-ba / *Pap-ba$_4$* / *Za-la-ga-tum*^{ki} / *Du-bi$_2$-šum* ur$_4$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$
(3) 30 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 4 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / nig$_2$-ba / lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *A-zu$_2$*^{ki}
(4) 11 ma-na TAR ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba / abba$_3$ abba$_3$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *A-zu$_2$*^{ki}
(5a) 4 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-sagšu /
(5b) ŠU$_2$.ŠA-5 ku$_3$-gi kešda-kešda giš-gu-kak-gid$_2$-šub /
(5c) 2-ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / ku$_3$-sal ku$_3$-sal /
(5d) tug$_2$:du$_8$
(5f) nig$_2$-ba lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *Ig-na-da-mu* / *Ib-u$_9$-mu-ud* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(6) ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 2 *BU-DI* / nig$_2$-ba / *Pap-ba$_4$* / ma$_2$:NE^{ki} / *Ib-dur-i-šar* / *En-na-NI* / šu-mu-tak$_4$
(7) 42 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 5 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-ba / lugal / *Ir$_3$-ku-ud*^{ki} / *Dur-du-lum* / šu-mu-tak$_4$

[148] For a chart listing the Eblaite LUGALs of the oldest generation see Archi 2000: 23.
[149] Corresponds to A7, 12 obv ii 1: ŠA.PI-5 gin$_2$-DILMUN gu$_4$-si-dili^{l}(ME).

(1a) 300 minas of silver, 8 minas of gold; (1b) 45 shekels of gold (as) one *spike* (for a chariot); 1 mina 12 shekels of gold (as) chariot trappings; (1d) 35 shekels of gold (as) 2 yokes (1e) 40 shekels of gold as 2 bridles (1f) 1 shekel of gold (as) a mace; (1g) a two-wheeled chariot; (1h) 6 shekels of gold as *plating* for a spear; (1i) 4 shekels of gold (as) a goad for equids: (1j) gift for (Iplus-Il) the king of Mari in Zalagatum.
(2) 1 mina of gold (as) 2 necklaces, gift of Paba (Queen of Mari) in Zalagatum, Ṭubī-šum the *executor* conveyed (these gifts).
(3) 30 minas of silver, 4 minas of gold, Pilsa-Il conveyed: gift for (Iplus-Il) the king of Mari in Azu.
(4) 11 minas 30 shekels of silver, gift for the elders of Mari, Pilsa-Il conveyed to Azu.
(5) 4 minas of gold (as a) helmet; (5b) 25 shekels of gold (as the) *plating* of a spear; (5c) 2 minas of silver (as) chariot trappings; (5d) a piece of felt (for a chariot): gift for (Iplus-Il) the king of Mari, Ikna-Damu and Ibumut conveyed to ma$_2$-NE.
(6) 40 shekels of gold for 2 fibulae: gift of Paba (Queen of Mari) at ma$_2$-NE, Ipṭur-Išar and Enna-NI
(7) 42 minas of silver, 5 minas of gold: gift for the king of Mari in Irkut, Tur-Dūrum conveyed.

Thus the gifts at Zalagatum and Azu apparently preceded the ones at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, and the ones given to Iplus-Il at Zalagatum were even richer than the ones at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}. They included an entire "two-wheeled *chariot*[150]" and various accessories for it, foreshadowing the additional chariot equipment which Iplus-Il would receive at ma$_2$-NE. This implies that Ebla and Mari were already interacting on peaceful terms prior to the mu-DU mentioned in the Enna-Dagan letter, while Iplus-Il was actively campaigning in the Upper Euphrates region. Once again, these gifts were clearly symbolic of Iplus-Il's status as a renowned warrior. Likewise, his wife, the queen, was also present at Zalagatum, when an Eblaite high official Ṭubī-Šum, displaying full diplomatic politeness, delivered to her a pair of golden necklaces (*ti-ki-na*). Later, this same Ebla

[150] The translation of giš-gigir-ii as "two wheeled chariot" does not mean to imply anything about the exact form of this vehicle or its wheels (i.e., whether or not it had spoked wheels). A rendering as "cart" or "wagon" could be equally possible. However, it seems that the two-wheeled giš-gigir had a specific military connotation at Ebla, in contrast to other types of wagons, which were instead used primarily for transportation.

official (who is mentioned quite often in the texts from the primacy of ArruLUM)[151] would be responsible for delivering gifts to queen Paba on the occasion of her funeral.[152]

The gifts at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} as they appear on A7, 6 could represent the original source, drawn upon for the above compilations. It provides yet more information on affairs that all seem to be related to what happened at ma$_2$:NE^{ki}, precisely at the moment narrated by the Enna-Dagan letter:

[A7, 6]
(1) 1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / ½(MAŠ) ku$_3$-gi *gu$_2$-li-lum* abba$_3$
(2) 1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Ir$_3$-am-ma-lik*
(3) ŠU$_2$.ŠA / ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / dumu-nita abba$_3$/
(4) ŠU$_2$.ŠA ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / dumu-nita / gal-sukkal
(5) 5 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / dumu-nit[a] en / nag lugal
(6a) ŠA.PI ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / PI:*an* / UR-NI-*ga* / kin$_5$-ak
(6b) 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / *Du-bi$_2$-<šum>*$^?$ / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / ma$_2$:NE^{ki} / TUM×SAL*[153]
(7) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / abba$_3$ *Sa-hu*^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti
(8) 4 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / maškim-*SU$_3$* /
(9) 11 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Ik-na-da-mu u$_3$* / *Ib-u$_9$-mu-ud* / abba$_3$-abba$_3$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}
(10) 40 ma-na AK.AK ŠU$_2$.ŠA ku$_3$:bar$_6$ *Ik-na-da-mu* šu-mu-tak$_4$ ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(11) 40 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Ik-na-da-mu* / *u$_3$ Ib-u$_9$-mu-ud* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / lugal ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(12) 3 ma-na 50 ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-sagšu / ŠU$_2$.ŠA-5 ku$_3$-gi kešda-kešda giš-gu-gid$_2$ / 2 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ ku$_3$-sal tug$_2$-du$_8$ / en šu-mu-taka$_4$ lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / ma$_2$:NE^{ki}
(13) 1 ma-na 8 ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / kešda za-za / *aš$_2$-ti* maškim *En-na-Da-ga**-*an**[154]
(14) 5 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$:bar$_6$ maškim *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki}
(15) ŠU$_2$.ŠA ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / GIŠ.KIN$_5$-ak ŠE+TIN / e$_2$-am
(16) 1 ma-na 7 ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-du$_8$ dam-dam / *I-ti*-NE ur$_4$ / in*-na-sum[155] / 10 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$:bar$_6$[156]

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[151] See the occurences in Pomponio 2013: 301.
[152] A4, 2 (17) (gifts) ...*Du-bi$_2$-šum* ur$_4$ *Pap-ba$_4$* E$_2$×PAP.
[153] TUM×SAL is clearly visible on the published photo, and distinguishable from regular TUM in (17).
[154] The edition in Archi 1988a: 16 has "*En-na-Da-gan*:^{d}", but the photo, Ibid.: pl. 6, clearly shows *En-na-Da-ga-an*.
[155] The edition in Archi 1988a: 16 has "i$_3$-na-sum", but the photo Ibid.: pl. 6, clearly shows in-na-sum.
[156] Not visible on the photo. Potentially "10 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$:bar$_6$" could be written in the same case as in-na-sum.

(17) gu$_2$:an-še$_3$ 27 ma-na ½(MAŠ) / *Ib-gi-tum* igi-gun$_3$

(1) 1 mina of silver, and a gold bracelet of 30 shekels, for the elder.
(2) 1 mina of silver for Irʾam-Malik.
(3) 20 shekels of silver for the son of the elder.
(4) 20 shekels of silver for the son of the great SUKKAL.
(5) 5 shekels of silver for the son of the EN (of Ebla[?]) for "beverage of the LUGAL."
(6a) 40 shekels of silver for *Uznan to produce UR-NI-GA.
(6b) 1 minas of silver for Ṭubī-<Šum[?]>, (who conveyed) news (related to) ma$_2$-NE^{ki}: besieging (of Emar).
(7) 5 minas of silver for the elder of Sahu, received.
(8) 4 minas for his envoy.
(9) 11 minas of silver, conveyed by *Ig.* and *Ib.*, to the elders of Mari.
(10) 40 minas AK.AK-metal and , *Ig.* conveyed (to Iplus-Il?) at ma$_2$-NE^{KI}.
(11) 40 minas of silver, *Ik.* and *Ib.* conveyed to the LUGAL (Iplus-Il) at ma$_2$-NE^{KI}.
(12) 1 golden helmet 3 minas 50 shekels, 1 spear *containing* 45 shekels of gold.
(13) 1 minas 8 shekels of silver, exchanged with the envoy of Enna-Dagan, for *lumps* of lapis lazuli.
(14) 5 shekels of silver for the envoy of Nagar.
(15) 40 shekels of silver in order to produce beer for the "Bull-House" (i.e., for Ebla soldiers).
(16) 1 mina 7 shekels of silver for the payment of women, *I-ti-NE* the *executor* will provide 10 shekels of silver.
(17) Total: 27 minas 30 shekels (of silver). Ipqitum with the "colorful eyes."

The implied location of all these expenditures and transactions is ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, rather than Ebla or anyplace else. Entries (11) and (12) duplicate the information seen above in A7, 7 – with the 3 minas 50 shekels apparently representing a more precise figure for the weight of Iplus-Il's golden helmet. In (9) it is revealed the same Eblaite officials who conveyed some of the gifts to Iplus-Il also brought 11 minas of silver to the "elders" of Mari– perhaps eleven in number. These "elders" could have had a rank equivalent to the Ebla LUGALs. One should perhaps not take the translation of abba$_3$ as "elder" literally to assume that these individuals were actually of highly advanced age. In (10), an Ebla LUGAL conveys to (the king of?) Mari at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} 40 minas of the unusually designated

AK.AK-metal,[157] while in (11) the same official and an additional one convey an additional 40 minas of silver. Neither (10) or (11) are included in the sum total in (17).

A single anonymous "elder" of Mari received one mina of silver and a 30-shekel gold "bracelet" in (1), while in (3) an anonymous "son of the elder" received 20 shekels of silver. Irʾam-malik in (2) may at first seem more like an Eblaite or northern Syrian name than one appropriate for a man of Mari, but a text from the ArruLUM period registers a man from Mari by this name.[158] That **malkum* was part of the Mari onomasticon is of potential significance for the status of the title EN there. Perhaps this Irʾam-malik was also an "elder" of Mari. Likewise, the dumu-nita sukkal:gal of (4) was probably the son of a member of the Mari elite, perhaps equivalent to a high-ranking Eblaite LUGAL. Possibly the "elder of Sahu" (otherwise unattested) of (7) was also part of the Mari elite.

The expenditure in (5) defined as nag lugal "beverage of the LUGAL" does not seem to be otherwise attested at Ebla. Perhaps it was related to festivities celebrated at ma_2-NE^{ki}, although why the son of the EN (of Ebla?) should be here involved (as the one who purchased the beer?) is not so clear. This expenditure, apparently for beer, would seem to underline a positive connotation to this Mari-Ebla interaction at ma_2-NE^{ki}.

In (6a) the spelling AN.PI is possibly a personal name meaning "Two Ears," with a phonetic compliment *-an* expressing the Semitic dual. Such a personal name is also

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[157] On the unusual writing AK.AK describing a type of metal (lead?) see Waetzoldt 2001: 192. Significantly, AK.AK only occurs again in M12, 25 (9a); (56); (65), an important administrative account dating to the reign of Iplus-Il (see below §3.1.3.2).

[158] A15, 59 (75′): 2 <gu>-dul_3-tug_2 2 aktum-tug_2 2 ib_2-iii-babbar *Ma-ri_2* / *La_2-da-il* / *Ir_3-am_6-ma-lik* / *Ma-ri_2*^{ki}

attested in the spelling 2-PI (which can also be transliterated as MIN$_3$-PI).[159] The present AN.PI was apparently issued 40 shekels of silver to produce (kin$_5$-ak) an object of uncertain identity (UR-NI-*ga*). On the other hand, it could be possible that UR-NI-*ga* is the personal name, in which case AN.PI would have to be interpreted as an object, "two earrings." The syntax pleads in favor of the former option. The *editio princeps* grouped (6a) and (6b) together as a single entry, but it seems unlikely that 40 shekels could have been issued to produce (kin$_5$-ak) an object weighing one mina.

Entry (6b) records the reward of a high-ranking official of Ebla (possibly the same *Du-bi$_2$-šum* ur$_4$ who handled the gifts for Queen Paba above)[160] for delivering a piece of news. This is one of the oldest (or the oldest) news item attested at Ebla, and so provides a potential source of precious historical information at this early date. Given the rarity of events described as TUM×SAL, and the context of this tablet relating to the gift giving that occurred at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, it seems all but certain that this news event must be identical with the TUM×SAL *I-mar*^{ki}, reported in (18) of the Enna-Dagan letter, immediately subsequent to the mu-DU... šu-ba$_4$-ti at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} of (17). It does not seem likely that ma$_2$-NE^{ki} itself was the place which was "besieged," unless we are meant to understand that ma$_2$-NE^{ki} had been conquered, by Ebla and Mari, from Emar, in the aftermath of which a gift exchange took place there. Potentially ma$_2$-NE^{ki} could have been meant to indicate the place to which the news of the successfully vanquished Emar

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[159] A4, 2 (15): 4 sal-tug$_2$ / *Si-ti-ša-nu* / nagar / *Bu-da-NI* / lu$_2$ 2-PI / *Nab-ha-NI* / *Da-ri$_2$-ib$_2$*^{ki} / *In-NE-dar* / *si-in* / E$_2$×PAP.

[160] There was also a high Ebla official named simply *Du-bi$_2$*, but he seems to appear on the scene only later; he occurs in MEE 2, 35 obv. vi 1, featuring ArruLUM in the prime position, but also still including Tīr; he was subequently an active LUGAL during the Ibrium period (Archi 2000: 39).

was delivered – since the rulers and elites of Ebla and Mari were both present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}. Or, perhaps the news was actually sent from ma$_2$-NE^{ki} back to Ebla, in which case ma$_2$-NE^{ki} could be understood as a topical indicator: "News (pertaining to ma$_2$-NE^{ki}): a besieging (of nearby Emar)." At any rate, it does not seem likely that this TUM×SAL could have represented a defeat for either Ebla or Mari.[161] More likely, it was positive news of a victory for both powers.

That Ebla itself participated alongside Mari in this military strike against Emar could be supported by another datum from this same tablet, namely the expenditure in (15) of 40 shekels of silver to produce a type of beer (ŠE+TIN)[162] for the e$_2$-am or "bull house," which at Ebla designated a type of barracks or armory,[163] named for the bull as the symbolic animal of the war and thunder god ^{d}*A-da*. There does not seem to be any reason to believe that an institution called e$_2$-am also existed at Mari. Entry (15) thus strongly suggests that the army of Ebla was present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, at the very moment narrated by the Enna-Dagan letter when Iplus-Il received an income from Ebla. It does not seem possible to interpret this occurrence of e$_2$-am to suggest that Mari and Ebla fought directly against each other; instead, it seems more likely that the armies of Ebla and Mari participated together in the TUM×SAL of Emar. 40 shekels of silver for beer

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[161] Archi 2016b: 5 no. 10 interprets this news item as follows: "The news that *Ma$_2$*-NE^{ki} was (re)conquered, TUM×SAL, from Mari (?)." But how could a reconquest of ma$_2$-NE^{ki} from Mari be possible, if the same tablet, only a few lines later, records the transfer of gifts from Ebla to Mari at the same place?

[162] For ŠE+TIN see the lexical equation VE 645 (Pettinato 1982: 272), ŠE+TIN = *sa*-[*gi*]-*lum*, to be compared with Akkadian *šikarum* "beer" (see Hajouz 2013: 694f).

[163] See the text M7, 13, where we read in the colophon rev. v 1f: kas$_7$ / e$_2$-am "account of the bull house." The text lists over 14,600 bronze spear points as present in this building or institution.

could imply quite an occasion of festivity. Given that it occurs on the tablet after the reporting of the TUM×SAL, it could represent a celebration after that successful military endeavor. Why else would the Eblaite "barracks" (e_2-am) require 40 silver shekels worth of beer on this very occasion? Possibly directly related to these victory celebrations is subsequently listed "payment" (nig_2-du_8)[164] for women (dam-dam) in (17). These women could have performed services for the soldiers stationed in the e_2-am.

The mention in (14) of small payment made to a man from Nagar adds another dimension to this ma_2-NE^{ki} episode. Because of the context, it is possible that maškim here stands as an abbreviation for the more important title of maškim-e-gi_4, a "special envoy," who occurs with affairs connoted by high-level interstate relations. As has been argued above, ma_2-NE^{ki} was the place where Ebla and Mari came to a new agreement about how to divide up the world between them, with the ultimate result being the situation testified by the Abarsal treaty – Mari had "withdrawn" (e_3) from the area around Hassuwan, and Ebla was now preeminent in the upper Euphrates region around Emar,

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[164] The term nig_2-du_8 has been assigned in the Ebla literature an exclusive meaning of "ransom" paid for the freedom of a kidnapped or imprisoned person (e.g Archi 2003c; Catagnoti 2012b). While some occurrences probably do refer to ransoms, the term occurs in too wide a variety of contexts for this to be the only meaning. The sense of du_8 (**paṭārum*) "to release" need not apply only to a "release" from captivity; it could also refer to "release" (from a debt or obligation) or "satisfaction" (provided for a service). At Ebla, it would appear that nig_2-du_8 is used when it refers to the payment of a person who has provided a service, as opposed to a payment made for a good or commodity (nig_2-sam_2). See e.g. A2, 6 (5–6): 10 ma-na ku_3:bar_6 / šu-bala-ak / 2 ma-na ku_3-gi / 14 gin_2 DILMUN ku_3:bar_6 / nig_2-du_8 / *La-ga-ma-al* / simug / *as_2-du Ib-gi-a-ha*. Here nig_2-du_8 can hardly represent a "ransom" paid for the freedom of a captured "smith" (simug). Rather, it his payment for having performed the service of "exchanging" (šu-bala-ak) silver for gold in the previous entry. For another example of a smith who performs šu-bala-ak see A1, 16 (5): ...*I_3-sa-tum* / simug / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi^{ki}* / šu-bala-ak / ku_3-gi.

Abarsal, and Karkamiš. In turn, Mari was receiving some major gifts from Ebla, but this was occurring not in the heartland of Ebla itself (or in the heartland of Mari), but at a middle ground, which would now be Ebla's new port on the Euphrates, symbolic and paradigmatic of Ebla's new role. The presence of an envoy from Nagar implies that this major power in the Habur too was lending its consent to the new world order, if only as an observer.

Entry (13) records a transaction, which could represent something other than a diplomatic gift, potentially instead a form of commercial exchange. It refers to 1 mina 8 shekels of silver "exchanged" (šu-bal-ak) "with an envoy of Enna-Dagan" (*aš$_2$-ti* maškim *En-na-*$^{d:}$*Da-gan*) for *lumps*[165] of lapis lazuli (kešda za-za). The occurrence of Enna-Dagan in this situation is also interesting, because it matches what has been suggested above (§3.1.1.5) about his introduction, in the Enna-Dagan letter, as EN after the last-mentioned campaign of Iplus-Il. The present occurrence suggests he was likely already present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} when Iplus-Il received his income from Ebla. Thus his appearance at the end of the letter as active in some battles of his own need not imply that Iplus-Il had already died and that many years had passed. One notes, on the other hand, that NI-zi

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[165] For this sense of kešda, c.f. CAD/K: 436 s.v. *kiṣru*, n. 11: "lump, meteorite (?)." Cf. also Dercksen 2005: 28–29. See furthermore the following unpublished Ur III Drehem text from the Harvard Semitic Museum, a transaction concerning a KA-kešda "*lump*" of tin weighing 3 minas and worth 5/6 minas of silver, witnessed by a smith and a merchant. *SM 1911.10.162* (obv.): 1(diš) KA-kešda nagga / ki-la$_2$-bi 3(diš) ma-na / ku$_3$-bi 5/6 ma-na-še$_3$ / ki Lu$_2$-^{d}EN.ZU-ta / Lu$_2$-^{d}En-lil$_2$-la$_2$ / u$_3$ Tul$_2$-ta / šu ba-an-ti-eš$_2$ / igi ^{d}En-lil$_2$-da / (rev.): igi Ur-^{d}Sag-ub^{ki} / i[gi] Ur-Gu simug / [igi U]r$_2$-ra-AN dam-gar$_3$ / [igi] A$_2$-gu / [ig]i Gir$_3$-ni-i$_3$-sag$_9$ / [n]ig$_2$-bi gur-de$_3$ / iti 3(diš) ba-DU / mu lugal-bi al-pad$_3$ (le. ed.): ki lugal ˹x-x˺ (photo available under CDLI P407188, but the tablet has been since cleaned and baked). The receipients of the tin "*lump*" swear an oath of uncertain meaning. Could it be related to some metallurgical processing they are to perform? "Its *product* is to be returned *within 3 months passing*, it has been sworn upon the king."

seems to be absent from the texts documenting the affairs of the time of Iplus-Il and the whole ma$_2$-NE^{ki} episode.

The colophon including the sum total at the end of this text (17) features the unusual mention of a personal name: *Ib-gi-tum* igi-gun$_3$ "Ipqitum (with the) 'colorful eyes.[166]'" Who was this man, and why is he mentioned at the very end of the text? What role did he have with respect to all these transactions? There is no Eblaite LUGAL or other high official attested with such a name or designation. By all appearances, Ipqitum seems to have been a man from Mari, who, as we will see below, held a role that is highly suggestive of trade. Namely, he was an u$_5$ or "(transport) driver" (see below §3.1.3.3 on this title). Why exactly he was mentioned at the end of this tablet A7, 6, one can only speculate. Could he have been the scribe who wrote the tablet? Or did he convey the tablet from ma$_2$-NE^{ki} (where it was written?) to Ebla?

3.1.3.0 Commercial Relations under the Early Mari Rulers

The individual *Ib-gi-tum* igi-gun$_3$ "Ipqitum with the *'colorful eyes*'" provides a link between A7, 6 and the important text M12, 25.[167] Although this man also occur in other early Ebla–Mari sources of slightly later date, only in the very early texts A7, 6 and M12, 25 is he given the unique designation "with the *colorful eyes*," apparently referring to a

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[166] One could potentially also intepret igi-gun$_3$ as "splotched face." In any event, it seems to be a description of a unique physical characteristic, rather than a professional designation (cf. Waetzoldt 2001: 193).

[167] Waetzoldt 2001: 179f. The text was also transcribed and translated, with photos, but wihtout commentary, in Pettinato 1995: 86–98. The availability of photos renders this text much more useful to scholarship, by allowing one to check odd spellings and sign forms.

physical characteristic of his.[168] A number of other features link M12, 25 to A7, 6 and other texts that predate the death of Iplus-Il. M12, 25 thus very likely belongs among the oldest tablets from Ebla, dating to the reigns of Igriš-Halab of Ebla and Iplus-Il of Mari.

One important characteristic is the use of the MAŠ sign in order to indicate half of a mina or 30 shekels, instead of the usual Ebla practice of using the sign TAR for this purpose. Other than M12, 25, only eight additional tablets share this feature.[169] Of these, four have been recently dated to Iplus-Il,[170] one has been assigned to Iplus-Il/Nizi,[171] one has not yet been treated,[172] and two of them (A7, 9 and A7, 10) have been assigned instead to Enna-Dagan.[173] However, it is most likely that all the texts using MAŠ date to

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[168] Cf. Waetzoldt 2001: 193, n. 15. Unlike other sources, M12, 25 consistently writes his name with the KI sign, an unusual feature for Ebla, often diagnostic for Mari. A man named *Ib-gi-tum* from Mari also later occurs in the complicated and fragmentary chancery text A13, 14 (concerned with DU^{ki} and dating apparently to the time of Ibrium and Išar-Damu).

[169] Cf. Waetzoldt 2001: 190. The texts which use MAŠ instead of TAR are: A2, 6; A7, 4; A7, 5; A7, 6; A7, 7; A7, 9; A7, 10; A7, 12 and M12, 25.

[170] Archi 2016b: 14 assigns to Iplus-Il A7, 4; A7, 6; A7, 7 and A7, 12.

[171] Ibid. assigns A7, 5 to "Iplul-Il/Nizi." However, the occurence in this text of gifts for a *ma-lik-tum*, conveyed by *Bil$_2$-zi-il* and *Ik-na-da-mu* to Mari, strongly suggest Iplus-Il, because the wives of Nizi or Enna-Dagan are never otherwise mentioned.

[172] A2, 6 was not treated in Ibid. It also features Ikna-Damu and Pilsa-Il apparently conveying silver to Mari, but in an unusual formulation: (2) 1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *I-ti-ga-mi-iš* / MU.MU.MU x x / *Ik-na-Da-mu* / *u$_2$ Bil$_2$*-zi*-il* / *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*. The text lists various miscellaneous silver expenditures. Section (4) mentions the "exchange" of 10 minas of silver for 2 minas of gold, a service apprently performed by the "smith" (simug) of (5), for which he receives a payment (nig$_2$-du$_8$) of 14 silver shekels. (7) lists the expenditure of 1 mina 40 shekels to purchase (nig$_2$-sam$_x$(NINDA$_2$×ŠE+DIŠ) 100 sheep. In (10), 5 shekels are spent on a linen garment (gada-tug$_2$). In (14) 3 minas of silver are exchanged for an unspecified quantity of tin (šu-bala-ak / an-na), probably the oldest mention of this metal in the Ebla archives; likewise in (21) 2 minas are exchanged for carnelian (GUL.ZA). Finally, a gift is recorded for the agent of a title-less Enna-Dagan in (19): 1 ½(MAŠ) ma-<na> ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba maškim / *En-na-Da-gan*. A remark of uncertain meaning is provided in the colophon (27): gu$_2$:an-še$_3$ 31 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *ba-a-tum*.

[173] Archi 2016b: 14 assigns A7, 9; A7, 10 and M12, 25 to Enna-Dagan.

Iplus-Il. Quite significantly, the text that reports the funeral gifts upon the death of Iplus-Il (A2, 4) no longer uses MAŠ, but employs instead the usual TAR.

A7, 9, and A7, 10, like M12, 25, concern commercial affairs. A7, 9 and A7, 10 both feature the active presence of the Ebla lugals *Ig-na-da-mu*, *Bil$_2$-zi-il*, and *En-na-NI*, all of whom were present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} in A7, 7 which certainly dates to Iplus-Il (see above §3.1.2). These officials also all occur in A7, 4, likewise employing MAŠ and certainly dating to Iplus-Il.[174] It is known that *Ig-na-da-mu* disappeared from service as an Ebla LUGAL beginning with the ascendency of ArruLUM,[175] suggesting an early date.[176] *Bil$_2$-za-il* (aka *Bil$_2$-zi-il*) likewise seems to have disappeared from the scene very early on.[177] A7, 9 and A7, 10 both also share the very unusual feature of using U$_2$ for the conjunction "and," a feature potentially also shared by M12, 25, depending on if one reads SUKKAL or U$_2$ (see below §3.1.3.2). Also A7, 9 displays the archaic manner of grouping more signs than later usual into a single case, a feature it shares with A7, 6. Finally, A7, 9 can be

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[174] Note that A7, 4 (9), concerning the conveyance of 34 minas of silver and 5 minas of gold by *Dur-du*:*lum* to a LUGAL in *Ir$_3$-ku-ut*^{ki} is duplicated in the later redaction Archi 1981: Text 2 (5), where it is listed immediately after (4) the gold and silver delivered to Iplus-Il at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} by *Ik-na-da-mu* and *Ib-u$_9$-mu-ut*, which corresponds to A7, 6 (11) and A7, 7 (3). Note furthermore that this later redaction employs TAR instead of MAŠ.

[175] Archi/Biga 2003: 4. Cf. Archi 2000: 35f (*Ig-na-da-mu* no longer attested beginning with the ArruLUM period texts). This contradicts the claim of Archi 2016b: 8, no. 29, that "the names of the Eblaite messengers date [A7, 9] to the time of minister Arrukum."

[176] The death of Ikna-Damu seems to be recorded in A15, 8 (46): 1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ig-na-da-mu* ur$_4$ / E$_2$×PAP, which could date to the first year of ArruLUM's primacy. Note that in M2, 13, apparently the earliest text that refers to Enna-Dagan as LUGAL, the first mentioned figure is *Ig-na-da-mu* UL.KI, followed by *Ti-ir*, whereas ArruLUM is missing. On the other hand, *Ig-na-da*-mu is no longer present in the later Enna-Dagan LUGAL text M12, 35, but ArruLUM does occur (obv. viii 5).

[177] *Bil$_2$-za/zi-il* appears in two mu-DU texts of the pre-ArruLUM period, M7 43 obv. v 8 (*zi*) and M2, 26 obv. v 3 (*za*). He also appears in the very early sheep account M12, 12, along with *I-PEŠ$_2$-zi-nu*.

linked to M12, 25 through its colophon (32), which reads lugal / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ / DU^{ki}. A news item reported in M12, 25 (4) reads: lugal DU^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$. Noteworthy is also the occurrence in M12, 25 of the metal AK.AK, which only otherwise appears in A7, 6 (a ma$_2$-NE^{ki} text certainly dating to Iplus-Il, see above §3.1.2). M12, 25 (9a) features the abbreviated spelling *BU* for *BU-<DI>*, attested also in the Iplus-Il text A7, 7 (4).

Given that these strange features do not occur in sources that unambiguously date to NI-zi or later, it is likely that Iplus-Il was still alive when M12, 25 was written. Enna-Dagan occurs twice, in (44a) and (44b) with the unusual title sukkal maškim[178] – unless the putative SUKKAL is to be read U$_2$,[179] in which case one could understand silver given simultaneously to "Enna-Dagan and (his) maškim," nevertheless an unusual if not unique notation. Also *Gul-la* occurs three times, identified in another source as the brother of Enna-Dagan.[180] We encounter also HI-da-ar, who would be the LUGAL of Mari at the end of the Ebla archives; his adult life thus apparently spanned the entire period covered by of the Ebla archives. Also occurring twice is a SA$_2$-*u$_3$-mu*-(*um*), who could either be identical with the early EN of the Enna-Dagan letter,[181] or a namesake of his. He is likewise entitled "sukkal maškim" (or, reading U$_2$, appears directly with a maškim).

Other features set M12, 25 apart from any other text discovered at Ebla. Certain sign forms and combinations (including BAR+TE and LA$_2$+BAR.NI) are otherwise

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[178] This matches the statement of Archi 2016b: 10, that "Enna-Dagan appears already in the documents of Iplul-il, without a title or a term which could relate him to the king."
[179] So Archi 2016b: 8, n. 32. Waetzoldt 2001: 185 and Pettinato 1995: 93 both unhesitatingly read SUKKAL.
[180] See A7, 17 (2): ...*Gul-la* / šeš / *En-na-*^{d}*Da-gan*. For the name *Gul-la* in a dedicatory inscription from Mari, see Gelb/Kienast 1990: 7, MP4.
[181] It is merely an assumption that the introduction of a new royal figure in the Enna-Dagan letter means that the previous one had died.

unattested, and certain personal names (or spellings of personal names) likewise never again occur. These features are so strange that the text's editor was led to comment: "Der Text wurde möglicherweise von einem Schreiber geschrieben, der unsicher und dem die in Ebla übliche Orthographie nicht so geläufig war.... Vielleicht stammte der Schreiber auch nicht aus Ebla."[182] Based on their names, it seems as though nearly every single individual mentioned in this text is a person from Mari, rather than Ebla. See below for a list and analysis of these names.

There occurs in M12, 25 (3) an anonymous dub-sar mah "Chief Scribe," a title that, while otherwise unattested at Ebla, occurs in a dedicatory inscription found at Mari.[183] This "chief scribe" could very well have been the one who wrote the text itself. There also occurs in (14) a singer (nar) named Ur-na-zi, undoubtedly representing the Sumerian name Ur-Nanše, likewise known from a famous inscribed statue from Mari[184] dedicated to Iplus-Il. This matches the chronology of the present text; it could very well have been the same man portrayed by the statue, confirmed by the present text to have been once present at Ebla. Like the aforementioned "chief scribe," Ur-Nanše's statue specifies that he was no ordinary "singer" but a "chief" (nar mah). It is very probable that, as a singer, he was not present at Ebla alone. He was probably accompanied by a whole troup of junior singers, just like the choir of Mari singers who were present at Ebla in the later period of the archives (and among whose ranks there was also an Ur-Nanše, himself

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[182] Waetzoldt 2001: 190.
[183] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 14, MP 16: *I-bu$_3$-sar* / dub-sar mah....
[184] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 13, MP 14: *Ib-lu$_5$-il* / lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / Ur-^{d}[N]anše / nar mah / dul$_3$-*SU$_3$* / ^{d}INANNA×ZA.ZA / SAG.RIG$_9$; cf. Ibid.: 14, MP 15.

however a nar-tur "junior singer").[185] The aforementioned "chief scribe" could have been accompanied by one or more junior scribes as well, especially considering that text also lists after him an "agent" (maškim), and then in a seperate entry later on the tablet, a maškim dub-sar "agent of the (chief) scribe." The cultural signifiance of these two early attestations – of the presence at Ebla of a Mariote "chief scribe" and of a "(chief) singer" – cannot be overemphasized. It shows that the cultural influence of Mari at Ebla was already strong, at the same moment that, according to previous interpretations, Ebla was allegedly suffering under the "yoke" of Iplus-Il's oppression. These attestations instead seem to cast early Ebla-Mari relations in a positive light and suggest friendly relations.

The title ga'eš$_x$ "long-distance trader" occurs in M12, 25 five times, and is also attested in dedicatory inscriptions from Mari;[186] the occurrence of this title at Ebla generally points to a Mari context. Another type of functionary suggestive of trade and transport, namely an u$_5$ or "(transport) driver," occurs in M12, 25 no less than ten times (one of them restored; see below 3.1.3.3 on these officials). Importantly, in M12, 25 there occur six references to "news" (here spelled nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN), which, along with the one from the ma$_2$-NE^{ki} tablet A7, 6 therefore constitute the oldest such references found at Ebla. These news items concern to Mari affairs, such as the aforementioned one from (49): ...nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / en *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$* / lugal "News: the EN (i.e., Iplus-Il?) of Mari has become a LUGAL," or the one from (22c): ...nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$* / *Tir$_5$-ga* / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$

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[185] On this later group of Mari singers at Ebla see Steinkeller 1993a: 237, with no. 6, for another singer named Ur-Nanše (spelled Ur-na-zi-a).

[186] Ibid.: 10–11, MP 10: ...BAD-*SU*$_3$-bad$_3$ / ga'eš$_x$ / ^{d}id$_2$ "*Baʾalšu-Dūrum, long-distance trader of the river (Euphrates);" Ibid.: 23, MP 33: ...[*N*]*I-li* / ga'eš$_x$ "NI-*li*, long distance trader...."

"News: (the forces) of Mari have defeated (the forces) of Terqa." However, another reference to an event instead speaks clearly of Ebla affairs, (50): ...*in* ud / en DU / *Bi$_2$-na-aš$_2$*^{ki}, "when the EN (of Ebla) went to Binaš."[187] The fact that this local event was not formulated as a piece of news, but instead merely as an "event" (*in* ud), bolsters the perception that this document has Ebla itself as its area of focus. This differs from the other early Ebla-Mari documents which feature instead some "middle ground" as the area of Ebla-Mari interaction (eg. ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, *Za-la-ga-tum*^{ki}, *A-zu$_2$*^{ki}, *I-ra-ku*^{ki}, *Ga-šur$_x$*^{ki}).

M12, 25 shares with A7, 9 the feature of being concerned with assigning quantities of precious metal to specific persons in connection with kaskal-kaskal (sometimes abbreviated simply as kaskal), a term that does not seem to be used in later Ebla sources. A7, 10 only mentions kaskal-kask[al] once, but also mentions "purchases" (nig$_2$-sam$_2$) in (4) and a "long-distance trader" (ga'eš$_x$) in (7) who "comes up from Mari" (e$_{11}$ *aš$_2$-du Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}). A7, 9 and 10 feature the familiar Ebla LUGALs seen in the other early texts dealing with Mari, whereas in M12, 25, they are missing, the text instead being entirely concerned with men from Mari. It would seem that A7, 10 represents a "small account" drafted close to the occasion of the expenditures itself, while A7, 9 represents the product of a redactional process. The status of M12, 25 could belong int he middle of the administrative process, between that of a "final redaction" and a "daily record" that reflects ongoing events. While M12, 25 is a lengthy text, the fact that the kaskal-kaskal of each person are not arranged consecutively, like in A7, 9, and the fact

[187] This entry also seems to demonstrate that the scribe was not confused about when to use the titles EN or LUGAL. On *Bi$_2$-na-aš$_2$*^{ki} as a location within the Ebla kingdom with special meaning within the context of the Ebla royal wedding rituals, see Bonechi 2016c.

that news items are listed, seems to imply that M12, 25 reflects a sort of running total, listing events in the order they happened.

The term kaskal-kaskal could be rendered as "journey, (commercial) expedition, caravan," and is highly suggestive of trade and mercantile activity. The meaning seems to encompass that of later kas$_4$-kas$_4$ (DU.KASKAL-DU.KASKAL)[188] or nig$_2$-kas$_4$.[189] One should note that reduplication at Ebla often serves to express an abstract term, rather than plurality. The texts list a number before kaskal-kaskal, but the term is still reduplicated when this number is 1. The entries in A7, 9 are organized by personal name, and the kaskal-kaskal are listed in increasing numerical order, implying that one should understand "1st trip, 2nd trip, 3rd trip, etc." M12, 25, in contrast, seems disorganized; it lists the same individuals multiple times but in non-adjacent positions on the tablet, and the number listed before each kaskal-kaskal does not always follow an identifiable pattern (although perhaps collation of the tablet could improve this). Each entry in A7, 9 is closed with šu-mu-tak$_4$ "conveyed," (plus the destination), while in M12, 25 this term occurs only once in (55), in an apparently special use. Sometimes an entry in A7, 9 also offers a month name, allowing us to chronologically orient these trips. The destination is usually Mari, but, importantly, Kish is also listed in (6), possibly also implied for (7–11); also (the shrine of) ^{d}*Aš-dar Za-ar$_3$-ba*-ad*[190] occurs in (17) as a destination, where there

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[188] See below §4.2.5.1

[189] See below §7.1.

[190] Read in Archi 1988 (=A7): 24 as *Za-ar$_3$-zu-ad*; the sign is on the edge of the tablet and difficult to see in the published photo, but it seems compatible with BA; if it really is ZU, read BA$^{!}$. Read likewise *Za-ar$_3$-ba*-at* in A7, 4 obv. v 2 (clear on the photo). On Ištar Ṣarpat "Ishtar of the Poplar" at Mari see Edzard 1967: 53, fn. 4; Steinkeller 1984a: 35;

could have been located a "market," given the association between deities and markets in the Ebla period.[191] M12, 25 also mentions Kish, in a context of a news item that is, however, difficult to understand (see below). Together, these two occurrences constitute the oldest mentions of Kish in the Ebla archives. Mari was acting as the intermediary for Ebla and Kish on this early occasion, when Iplus-Il was still in power.

3.1.3.1 Ebla traders to Mari (A7, 9)

Likely, the quantities of metal assigned in A7, 9 for kaskal-kaskal represent capital issued by the Ebla palace to purchase goods in the areas of Mari and Kish. Importantly, it has already been recognized that, "These amounts of silver and gold (perhaps in part the value of other goods), concerning commercial expeditions, should be considered apart from the tributes owed by Ebla to Mari."[192] The individual entries record quantities ranging from 5 minas to as high as 21 minas of silver, for a grand total of 304 minas 30 shekels, and from 1 to 4 minas of gold for a total of 19 minas 40 shekels. Sometimes the metal is specified to have been in the form of an object, such as a battle-axe (giš-ASAR), but this need not exclude them having been used in the context of a commercial transaction. They could have been "extra" gifts, given on the side, socially embedded within the context of business interractions.

On the other hand, a few entries insert, additionally to the trading capital, a smaller ammount, specifically marked as for travel provisions (nig$_2$-kaskal), see below

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Gelb/Kienast 1990: 7. On the later Bēlet-Ṣarbat, see CAD/Ṣ: 109–110. Note that, in the Ebla period, various deities had their own associated "markets" (KI:LAM$_7$), see Biga 2003.

[191] On thie association between deities and markets, see Biga 2003: 60–63.

[192] Archi 2016b: 8 (regarding A7, 9).

(21) and (22). The amount of silver needed to cover the cost of a journey (nig$_2$-kaskal) was generally only a few shekels of silver per person.[193] We can compare one later text where an Ebla official is issued 5 shekels to cover the cost of his trip from Ebla to Nagar, and 14 minas of silver to purchase 5 BAR.AN equids there.[194] The gold and silver issued in this text must have served a similar purpose, even if the goods to be acquired were not specified. They could have included, among other things, textiles (see below on A7, 11).

A7, 9 thus reveals that the same high-ranking Eblaite LUGALs, who were charged with the duty of delivering gifts to the ruler of Mari and his elite retinue, were simultaneously deeply engaged in commercial activity. The gold and silver capital was apparently issued by the Ebla palace administration.[195] This high-paced activity was already well underway at the moment that Iplus-Il received gifts from Ebla at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, considering that the same officials who delivered those gifts in A7, 7 (i.e. *Ig-na-da-mu*, *Bil$_2$-zi-il*, and *En-na-NI*) were involved in the business trips in A7, 9. According to the text, another one of the Ebla LUGALs, here called *I-wa-zi-nu*, made no less than 12 trips back and forth between Ebla and Mari, on at least one occasion proceeding all the way to Kish. The spelling of his name with the WA sign (readable also as *-pi*, but this is not a

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[193] This image fits well with the much denser information on travel costs provided by the Old Asssyrian sources; see Barjamovic 2011: 1–34.

[194] M12, 37 (53a): 5 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-kaskal / *Ru$_{12}$-ʾa$_3$-da-mu* / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Na-gar$_3$* / (53b) 14 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-šam$_2$ / 5 BAR.AN / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} "5 shekels of silver are the travel provisions for Ruʾah-Damu in order to travel to Nagar; 14 minas of silver in order to purchase 5 equids (from) Nagar."

[195] For Archi 2016b: 8, these gold and silver amounts were "perhaps in part the value of other goods." Ibid.: "It is possible that part of the silver registered for in some documents for Mari was just the value of [olive] oil or other products." In the present context, however, this seems like an uneccesary assumption; if the metals were simply abstract representations of the value of other goods, then its hard to imagine what the point of distinguishing gold and silver would have been. On the olive oil trade see below §3.1.3.3.

common value at Ebla) is also quite unusual, and reflects another archaism and/or the influence of Mari – usually the name is spelled *I-PEŠ$_2$-zi-nu* or *I-ba-zi-nu*:[196]

[A7, 9]

(1) 7 ma-na ŠA.PI ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *I-wa-zi-nu* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} 1 kaskal-kaskal....
(6) 8 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ <šu>-mu-tak$_4$ 6 kaskal-kaskal / Kiš^{ki}...
(12) 7 ma-na ŠA.PI ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 HU.NIGIN ku$_3$-gi 1 mana / 1 *ki-si-me*[197] ku$_3$-gi / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$ / I-wa-zi-nu* 12 kaskal-kaskal

(1) 7 minas 40 shekels, conveyed by *I-wa-zi-nu* to Mari on his 1st commercial expedition....
(6) 8 minas of silver, conveyed (by *I.*) to Kish on his 6th commercial expedition....
(12) 7 minas of silver, 1 ... of 1 mina of gold, 1 *spike* of gold, conveyed to Mari on his 12th commercial expedition.

This information thus lends to the Ebla LUGALs, in addition to their military connotation and their status as high-level state representatives, a mercantile character. Possibly, the quantities of metal listed in A7, 9 represent only a fraction of the trading capital that the Ebla LUGALs had access to. Considering that the Ebla LUGALs seem to have had the status of "noblemen," and were able to make their own annual silver contributions to the Ebla palace, it is quite possible that they also engaged in trading on their own behalf. A7, 9 is only concerned with recording the capital that the Ebla palace issued; nor is it concerned with recording exactly what the Ebla officials were acquiring with the issued capital in

[196] For the Ebla lugal *I-ba$_x$*(PEŠ$_2$)*-zi-nu* or *I-ba-zi-nu* see Archi 2000: 23. Perhaps the interchange with the *wa* sign could be a clue of an underlying labiodental fricative. The overall etymology of the name, however, remains unclear.
[197] Compare A7, 12 obv. ii 1: ŠA.PI-5 gin$_2$-DILMUN gu$_4$-si-dili^{l}(ME), of which *ki-si-me* could represent a syllabic spelling.

Mari and in Kish. Interestingly, two of the entries also list, alongside the Ebla lugals, anonymous KU.TU "*fiduciary agents*"[198] (unlikely to represent a mere personal name):

[A7, 9]
(20) 7 1/2(MAŠ) ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *u$_2$* KU.TU / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / 3 kaskal-kaskal
(21) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar 10 (gin$_2$) nig$_2$-<kaskal> / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} 4 kaskal-kaskal
(22) 10 la$_2$-1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* šU$_2$.ŠA$_2$-1 ku$_3$:bar$_6$ nig$_2$-kaskal 5 kaskal
(23) 5 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / 6 kaskal
(24) 20 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 2 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *Ik-na-da-mu* / *u$_2$ Bil$_2$-zi-il u$_2$* / KU.TU / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / 7 kaskal-kaskal / iti *ik:za*

(20) 7 minas 30 shekels of silver, conveyed by Pilsa-Il and a fiduciary agent to Mari, on (Pila-Il's) 3rd commercial expedition.
(21) 5 minas of silver, and 10 shekels for <travel> provisions, conveyed by Pilsa-Il to Mari on (his) 4th commercial expedition.
(22) 9 minas of silver, conveyed by Pilsa-Il (to Mari), 41 shekels for travel provisions, on (his) 5th commercial expedition.
(23) 5 minas of silver, conveyed by Pilsa-Il to Mari, on (his) 6th commercial expedition.
(24) 20 minas of silver, 2 minas of gold, conveyed by Ikna-Damu and Pilsa-Il and a *fiduciary agent* to Mari, on (Pila-Il's) 7th commercial expedition, month 2.

The exact role played here by the KU.TU is unclear. Were they men of Ebla, or Mari? Based on their occurence in other texts recording mercantile affairs, it has been suggested that the KU.TU were a category of merchants who acted on the behalf of an individual or even of a city.[199] This meaning seems to fit the present context of capital being issued by the Ebla palace to high-ranking Eblaites in order to conduct business in Mari and Kish. In

[198] On the translation of KU.TU as "fiduciary agent," and for its occurrence in the context of a dossier documenting the activities of an Ebla merchant, see Milano 2003: 421.
[199] Milano 2003: 421–422 (with references), "Quant au sens du terme, l'opinion de A. Westenholz, qui rapproche l'élément KU.TU à l'akkadien *kuttu* / *kittum*, me paraît suggestive, bien que le recours à kattû 'garant' (de katā'um 'prendre en garantie') soit aussi très plausible: je proposerais par conséquent une traduction '(agent) fiduciare', qui pourrait bien s'adapter à la fonction d'une catégorie de marchands agissant pour le compte de quelqu'un, et même d'une ville...."

this context, note that a later text, importantly, attests purchases made by an Ebla official at the "market of Kish," which is mentioned directly alongside the "market of Mari."[200]

The simultaneity of the gifts conveyed to the Mari elites, and the commercial trips undertaken by the same Ebla LUGALs in that region, is underscored by the connection between A7, 9 and A7, 4. The same officials are attested traveling the same paths, only the money they are listed as carrying to Mari in A7, 4 seems to concern gifts, rather than trade capital as in A7, 9. Although the word for "gift" (nig$_2$-ba) is not mentioned, A7, 4 (9), is duplicated by a later compilation tablet,[201] which inserts the term nig$_2$-ba. The compilation lists this transaction immediately after the one that took place in ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, implying that the transactions in A7, 4 took place close to the mu-DU event narrated in the Enna-Dagan letter. Also, some of the entries (4; 9; 16) in A7, 4 insert the term lugal, likely meant to indicate that Iplus-Il was the recipient of the gifts.

The exact temporal relation between A7, 4 and A7, 9 is, however, difficult to determine because of their different oganizational principles. A7, 4 is organized chronologically, and provides progressive month names, demonstrating that the Ebla officials such as Ikna-Damu and Pilsa-Il were going back and forth between Ebla and Mari on a monthly basis in a rapidly paced activity. A7, 9 is instead organized by the

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[200] M10, 29 rev. xvi 20–xvii 8: 12 ma-na 54 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ 41 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ / 13 aktum-tug$_2$ ti-tug$_2$ / 21 ʾ*a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-2 igi-tum$_3$ / 75 ʾ*a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-1 / 10 nig$_2$-la-sag-sa$_6$ / 22 nig$_2$-la$_2$-gaba / 5 ib$_2$-tug$_2$ u$_2$ *Ma-ri*^{ki} / 15 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ 40 SI-ʾ*a$_3$-tum* / 11 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ 1 *mi-at* 2 ba-ba / ki:lam$_7$ / Kiš^{ki} / *wa* / ki:lam$_7$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, "12 minas 54 shekels of silver, in order to purchase 41 gowns, 13 heavy cloths for *bedsheets*, 21 two-ply ʾ*a.*-garments …, 75 one-ply ʾ*a.*-garments, 10 fine turbans, 22 breastbands, and 5 sashes *colored* (in the fashion of) Mari; 15 shekels of silver, in order to purchase 40 …, 11 shekels of silver in order to purchase 102 turtles: (acquired at) the market of Kish and the market of Mari."

[201] Archi 1981: Text 2 (5).

individual LUGAL, which seems to underscore the commercial background of this text (since it would have been more important, in the context of such transactions, to track each individual's activity). Only beginning with entry (24) does A7, 9 start to specify month names, but they do not seem to appear in chronological order. Compare the following entries:

[A7, 9]
(26) 18 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ½(MAŠ) ma-na ku$_3$-gi / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *Ik-na-da-mu* / *u$_2$ En-na-NI u$_2$ Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} 10 la$_2$-1 kaskal-kaskal / iti ʾ*a$_5$-nun-na* /
(26) 18 minas of silver, 1 mina 30 shekels of gold, conveyed by Ikna-Damu, Enna-NI, and Pilsa-Il to Mari, 9th commercial expedition, month 8.

[A7, 4]
(6) 10 ½(MAŠ) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *in* šu-mu-tak$_4$-6 / *Bil$_2$-zi-NI* / iti ʾ*a$_5$-nun-na*
(8) 10 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 *zi-b*[*ar*] tur ku$_3$-[gi] 12 [gin$_2$-DILMUN] / *in* šu-mu-tak$_4$ 8 / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / iti ʾ*a$_5$-nun-na*

(6) 10 minas 35 shekels of silver, 1 mina of gold, from the 6th conveyance, Pilsa-Il, (to) Mari, month 8.
(8) 10 minas of silver, and one small *z*-vessel of 12 shekels of gold, from the 8th conveyance, Pilsa-Il, (to) Mari, month 8.

Thus, it is possible that that Pilsa-Il was, during one or more of his trips to Mari during a month 8, simultaneously conveying two different quantities of silver, one destined for a gift for Iplus-Il, the remainder used to purchase goods that he would bring back to Ebla. Even if the above transactions actually all belonged to different years, still, the close link between gifts for the Mari king and commercial business would remain. In this light, the gifts for the king and elites of Mari could be seen, to some extent, as part of the costs of doing business. Compare also the following entries:

[A7, 9]
(17) 21 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 3 ma-na 10 ku$_3$-gi / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *I-gi* / lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / kaskal-kaskal ^{d}*Aš-dar Za-ar$_3$-ba*-ad*^{ki}
(19) 21 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ 3 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *I-gi* / lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / 2 kaskal-kaskal ^{d}*Aš-dar*

(17) 21 minas of silver, 3 minas 10 shekels of gold, conveyed by Igi. (On an occasion involving) the king of Mari, commercial expedition to (the shrine of) Aštar of Ṣarpat.
(19) (21 minas of silver, 3 minas of gold, conveyed by Igi. (On an occasion involving) the king of Mari, commercial trip to (the shrine of) Aštar of Ṣarpat.

[A7, 4]
(4) 14 ½(MAŠ) ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *in* šu-mu-tak$_4$ 4 / *Bil$_2$-zi-il* / *u$_3$* / *En-na-NI* / lugal *Za-ar$_3$-ba*-ad*
(4) 14 minas 30 shekels of silver, 1 mina of gold, from the 4th conveyance, Pilsa-Il and Enna-NI, to the king of Mari (when he was at) Ṣarpat.

In A7, 9, only the above two entries (17) and (19) mention the king of Mari. It is not very likely that these transactions, in contrast to the rest of the ones recorded throughout the tablet, counted as gifts for Iplus-Il; more likely the LUGAL is mentioned in reference to some special occasion, perhaps because Iplus-Il was making an offering to Ištar of Ṣarpat. On the other hand, the gifts conveyed to Iplus-Il in A7, 4 (4) could have belonged to the same occasion. It is quite possible that a market (KI:LAM$_7$) would have been operational at Ṣarpat during this special festivity; deities and their shrines and markets were closely linked in the Ebla period.[202] Recall furthermore that A7, 4 (9) record gifts for Iplus-Il given at the place called *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki}. Very significantly, a text of slightly younger date reveals there to have been a market at *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki}, where 260 NI.NI-garments were purchased by an Eblaite official (the amount paid is unfortunately not preserved).[203] Another tablet makes two mentions of a long-distance trader (ga'eš$_x$) of *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki}.[204] Thus, the same place where the ruler of Mari received gifts from Ebla was likely the center of a booming commercial trade.

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[202] See especially the text M10, 29 and cf. Biga 2003.
[203] A7, 13 (4): [...] / [nig$_2$-sam$_2$] / 2 *mi-at* 60 tug$_2$-NI.NI / KI:LAM$_7$ / *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki}.
[204] A7, 16 (5); (10).

The final closing remark of A7, 9 tablet reads simply: lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / DU^{ki}. As stated, this could be connected with a news item reported in M12, 25 (see below). It reflects, once again, the close ties between Mari and Ebla at this early date, under Iplus-Il.

3.1.3.2 Mari traders at Ebla (M12, 25)

The background of M12, 25, in contrast to A7, 9, is difficult to pin down. As I show below, the names listed all point strongly to Mari, and the text itself displays stronger scribal influences of Mari than any other administrative text found at Ebla, perhaps even having been written by a Mari scribe. To judge from the fine, neatly arranged script,[205] it could well have been written by the dub-sar mah "chief scribe," almost certainly from Mari, who is listed on the tablet receiving the large amount of 4 minas of silver and 1 mina of gold marked as a "gift" (nig$_2$-ba). Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the scribe used the entire available surface of the tablet, a characteristic not typically seen on Ebla administrative tablets, which usually leave ample blank space on the reverse, in between the end of the text and the final summations. It also seems that the individual cases are as compact as possible, while at the same time, the signs are inscribed within each case in such a way that as little space is left blank as possible.[206] Compare for example the sign AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ in M12, 25 obv. iii 5 (where it fills the whole case) with the way the same sign is written *passim* in the Enna-Dagan letter A13, 4. This

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[205] See Pettinato 1995 for the photo. An in-depth paleographic study of this text (ideally on the basis of new photographs and/or inspection of the original), and comparison with other early Ebla tablets could be helpful.

[206] Compare for example the sign AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ in M12, 25 obv. iii 5 with the way the same sign is written *passim* in the Enna-Dagan letter A13, 4.

trait of an apparent *horror vacui* for the tablet's surface, as well as the overall fineness of the script, seems to be shared by the Abarsal treaty, A13, 5, for which, it is suggested below §3.2.2.1, the scribal influence or assistance of Mari could be detected.[207]

If M12, 25 really was written by a Mari scribe, as everything seems to suggest, one is left wondering who exactly issued the silver and gold listed therein, and what sort of financial arrangement this reflects. The amounts of metal issued in M12, 25 are not as high as in A7, 9, and they vary more strongly. Some of the entries record as many as 4 minas of silver and 1 mina of gold, while in others the quantities are as low as 5 shekels of silver. Possibly therefore the higher amounts represent trading capital, while the lower amounts were only enough to pay for a journey (nig$_2$-kaskal). Although M12, 25 does not specify the destination in the same way as A7, 9, it is strongly implied that "kaskal-kaskal" refers to the journey between Ebla and Mari. One notes furtheremore that the text only states "1 kaskal-kaskal" for those persons who undertook more than one journey, i.e. for whom there is listed a 2, 3, etc. kaskal-kaskal. Thus, for the "blank" entries one can presume <1 kaskal-kaskal>.

The many recipients listed in the text were apparently men of Mari, who were already present at Ebla. M12, 25 could thus shed light on Ebla-Mari trade as seen from the perspective of Mari men located at Ebla, in contrast to A7, 9, which shows the perspective of Ebla men on their way to Mari. M12, 25 suggests that there could have already existed at this early point in time a type of commercial settlement of Mari at Ebla. M12, 25 could have been written by a Mariote, who was part of this community, and the

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[207] It could even be possible that the same scribe wrote both A13, 4 and M12, 25, but this point requires a deeper investigation, beyond the present scope.

metals could have been issued by a Mari "office" located at Ebla, after which, for some reason, the tablet came to be stored in the Palace G archives. On the other hand, it is also possible that the metals were actually issued by the Ebla palace, in which case we would have demonstration of the closeness of Mari-Ebla commercial relations, even if the true nature of this arrangement remains obscure – was the Ebla palace providing some Mari men with capital, in the expectation that they would return to Ebla with some goods obtained from Mari? Clearly, some of the men from Mari mentioned in M12, 25, were constantly travelling back and forth between Ebla and Mari territories. Particularly important in this connection are the officials referred to here as u_5 "(transport) drivers" and ga'e$š_x$, on whom see further below.

However we exactly choose to interpret its financial background, M12, 25 strongly contradicts the idea that Mari and Ebla were enemies during the reign of Iplus-Il. It demonstrates that ties between the two powers were already close, and that the elationship was, above all, was centered around trade.

Rather than repeating the edition of of M12, 25 by Waetzoldt I present the tablet's information below in an alternate format, organized alphabetically by personal name or title. Both of the available published editions were prepared on the basis of photographs alone; a collation of the original therefore is badly needed. On the other hand, it is fortunate that a published photo is available, allowing one to confirm some of the unexpected readings provided by this text. Reference to additional attestations of the names are presented to give an impression of how common or uncommon a given name is at Ebla, and these are not intended to constitute a complete prosopographical study.

[M12, 25]
Personal names and titles, and quantities of silver issued:

(M = mina; Š = shekel)

*A-ba-a*ʔ: 10 Š.: U5 *Ga-šur*$_x^{ki}$[208] (34b)
Cf. A15 (2x); *A-ba-a-u3*, A15 (1x).

A-gi: 20ʔ Š : *A.* lu2 *Ba*ʔ*-zi* (10)
Cf. A12 (2x); A3 (1x); A1 (1x).

A-ti-il: 20 Š: *A. Ma-ri2*^{ki} (62)
Unique occurrence. Cf. *I-ti-il*, A15 (4x); A12 (1x); A7 (4x); A4 (1x); A3 (2x); M10 (1x). Cf. *I-da-il*, A15, (2x); A7, (2x); A3, (1x); A1, (1x); M12, (1x). Cf. *I-ti-lum* (~45x). The same man is likely *I-ti-lu/lum* in Archi 1981, Text 8 (1x, maškim *En-na-Da-gan*), Text 9 (2x; "of" *En-na-Da-ga-an*; maškim ga:eš$_x$),[209] *I-ti-il* and *I-da-il*, A7, 16 (2x, *Ma-ri2*^{ki}). Possibly represents a variant of **Iddin-Ilum* "the god has given."

*Ba*ʔ*-zi*: 20ʔ Š: *A-gi*. lu2 *B.*
Occurs in a later group of Mari singers, A1, 7 (31′).[210]

Ba-šur$_x$: 1 M: *B.* (22a); 1 M: *B.* 2 kaskal g[iʔ- ...] / D[Uʔ]-SAL-XX-*an*^{ki} (51); 3 M: *B.* 4 kaskal-kaskal
Unique occurrence. The name almost certainly invokes the Jebel Bishri.

Bu3-ur-ti-IN.GIŠ: 10 Š: Puzur4-*aš-dar Gu2-il B.* (41)
Unique occurrence. The unusual spelling IN.GIŠ is clear on the photo. Cf. the unique PN in A15, 8 (51): 1 sal tug2 / *Bur-ti-NI* / *a-ba* Kiš^{ki}, where a similarly-named man is apparently identified as an "elder of Kish."

Da-da-i3-lum: 8 Š. *D.*; 3Š maškim (21)
Unique occurrence.

DAB6-ru12: 2 M. 40 Š: 4 kaskal-kaskal (33)
Unique occruence, cf. A12 (1x *Da-ru*); A3 (1x *Dab6-ru12*^{ki}).

Du-ni-gi-BAR+TE: 1 M ku3-gi, 3 M: 1 kaskal-kaskal; 2 M: 2 kaskal-kaskal; 2 M: 3 kaskal-kaskal nig2-ba *D.*; 1 M: 3 maškim-*SU3* (1a); 1.5 M , *D.*; 40 Š: maškim-*SU3*, 4 kaskal-kaskal (1b)

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[208] The sign read as ŠUR$_x$ is written HI×MAŠ.
[209] Archi 1981: 164.
[210] Also in TM.75.G.2649 (Archi 1985b: 78 no. 126). See Steinkeller 1993a: 238 no. 15.

Unique occurrence. The unusual combination BAR+TE is clear on the photo; it reminds one of BAR+SAL4, at Ebla apparently exclusive to the GN *A-bar-sal*$_4^{ki}$. Interpretation and linguistic affiliation uncertain.

dub-sar mah: 4 M , 1 M ku$_3$-gi: nig$_2$-ba *d.*; 17 Š: maškim (3).

Otherwise unattested at Ebla, this title occurs in a dedicatory inscription from Mari,[211] and is also known in Mesopotamia.[212] It seems thus to constitute evidence for the presence of a high-ranking scribe of Mari at Ebla. Could he have been the author of this text? Cf. also maškim dub-sar in (12).

dumu-nita ga'eš$_x$: 1 M (38)

A reference to a "son of the long-distance trader" seems to be unique.

en *Ma-nu*$^?$:*wa-at*: 1 M: *M.,* month 11 (58)

This earliest reference to the ruler of Manuwat in an Ebla-Mari context is of great interest, because it shows that relationships between all three parties were already underway, during or shortly after the events narrated by the Enna-Dagan letter. Cf. the Mari-Manuwat letter below §3.3.0.

En-na-da-ga-an: 3 M 50 Š: *E.* SUKKAL/U2$^?$ maškim 1 kaskal-kaskal (44a); 2 M 50 Š *E.* SUKKAL/U2 maškim 2 kaskal-kaskal (44b)

The apparently more archaic spelling *En-na-da-ga-an* (as opposed to *En-na-*$^{(d)}$*Da-gan*) occurs also in A2, 6 (19)*; A7, 6 (13)*; A15, 1 (5′); Archi 1981: Texts 7 and 9, and TM.03.G.1000 (Archi 2016b: 12f; see below §3.1.3.3).

En-na-NI: 10 Š: *E.* maškim sagi (56)

A very common name at Ebla with hundreds of occurrences, and with many variant spellings (*En-na-Il, En-na-NI-il, En-na-NI-NI*). This name also belonged to the onomasticon of Mari.[213] Presumably it represents a variant of *En-na-Il* with characteristic Eblaite "L-Weakening." *En-na-Il* occurs already in very early texts of Mesopotamian origin.[214] While an Ebla LUGAL who interacted with Mari existed in this period, the association in this text with title sagi points rather to a man from Mari.

En-nu-lum: 40 Š nig$_2$-šam$_2$ 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 30 Š: *E.* (63)

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[211] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 14, MP 16: *I-bu$_3$-sar* / dub-sar mah....

[212] Eg. Pre-Sargonic Lagash: DP 42 obv. i 5; rev ii 3; HSS 3, 40 obv. iii 15; Genava 26, 1 obv. vi 3; Old Akkadian: BIN 8, 254 rev 3; Ur III: PPAC 4, 280 obv. i 8; PPAC 5 602 rev i 2.

[213] Eg. A4, 2 (44): ...*En-na-NI* lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*

[214] Eg. the Chicago Stone, rev. viii 10 (Gelb/Steinkeller/Whiting 1989: 53)

Cf. A15 (5x); A12 (4x); A11 (2x, vers. 1 and 2); A4 (1x); A3 (3x); M12 (3x). There existed a high official of Ebla with this name, who occurs in both version of the royal ritual.

En-si-NE: 40 M: *E.* [...] (47)

Unique occurrence. Read En-si-de$_3$ and cf. EN.ŠID.UD below?

EN.ŠID.UD: 1 M (66)

Unique occurrence. C.f. EN.ŠID, A15 (2x); A8 (3x); A4 (2x); A3 (1x); A1 (2x); M12 (1x); M10 (46).

Gal$^{?}$*-bu$_3$*: 10 Š: *G. Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (37)

Otherwise unknown at Ebla, this PN, likely to be interpreted as the Semitic word for "dog," is attested in Pre-Sargonic sources from Mesopotamia.[215]

Gu-gu-za-AN: 40 Š *G.* (67)

Unique occurrence.

Gu$_2$-il$_2$: 10 Š: Puzur$_4$*-aš-dar G. Bu$_3$-ur-ti*-IN.GIŠ (41)

Unique occurrence. Cf. perhaps the Mari PN *I-ku-il*, Archi 1981, Text 8 (simug); Text 9 (2x: *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, simug *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki});[216] A15 (2x); *I-ku-i$_3$-lum* (A4, 1x).

Gul-la: 1 M: *G.* 2 kaskal-kaskal (2); 40Š: *G.* 2 kaskal-kaskal (19); x M: *G.* ⸢u$_5$⸣ 3$^{?}$ kaskal [*I*]*r$_3$-peš$_2$*^{ki} (31); 20 Š: *G.* U$_5$ 1 kaskal *A-da-bi$_2$-ig*^{ki}

Brother of Enna-Dagan according to A7, 17 (2). This PN is also attested in a dedicatory inscription from Mari.[217] Probably all of the occurrences within the early Mari-Ebla corpus refer to the same person: Archi 1981, Text 8 (1x); A7, 17 (1x); A7, 16 (2x), A7, 1 (1x). Cf. A15 (2x), A12 (3x), A8 (1x); A3 (1x); A2 (1x); M7 (3x).

Ha-zi-lum: 5 Š. (39)

Unique occurrence. Cf. perhaps *Ha-zi-lu* (A4, 1x); *Ha-zi-rum$_2$* (M12, 1x).

HI-da-ar: 5 M, 1M ku$_3$-gi: *H.* (24)

Future ruler of Mari.

lu$_2$ giš-HUB$_2$×ŠE$_3$: 40 Š: l. month IX (60)

Unique occurrence.

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[215] BIN 8, 11: obv. i 3 (origin uncertain; Northern Mesopotamia?); OIP 14, 51 ii′ 7′ (Adab).

[216] Archi 1981: 164.

[217] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 6–7.

I-da-ma: 1 M: *I.* (6)
Cf. A12 (1x). Cf. perhaps *A-da-ma* (A8, 1x; A3, 3x; A1, 1x).

I$_3$-lum-BALA: 20 Š: *I.* šu-mu-tak$_4$ *Za-a-lu-um* (55)
A common name at Ebla. Here however it could likely be the same man, likely from Mari in Archi 1981b, Text 9 (3x), who occurs among smiths of Mari and ga'eš$_x$-traders.

I-ti-^{d}A.AMA: 1 M: *I.* (31)
The name invokes the goddess Ishara.[218] Likely the same man is *I-ti*-^{d}AMA, Archi 1981, Text 8 (1x), Text 9 (2x, u$_5$ *Ir$_3$-peš$_2^{ki}$*)[219]

Ib-du-nu: 1 M: *I.* 17 š maškim (45); 8 š maškim *I. gu-zi-*<*tum*>-tug$_2$ *M*[*u*]-x-*ru$_2$* (64)
Cf. A15 (1x).

Ib-ki-tum: 6 Š: *I.* (15); 1 m: *I.* u$_5$ *Ga-šur$_x^{ki}$* abba$_3$-abba$_3$ hi-DU (32a); 3 M 40 Š: *I.* igi-gun$_3$ u$_5$ *Ga-šur$_x^{ki}$* 6 kaskal-kaskal (32b); 1 M: *I.* [ig]i-[gu]n$_3$; 5 Š: maškim 5 kaskal-kaskal (57).
Only here is the name spelled with KI instead of the more common GI. All occurrences in the early Mari corpus of a man with this name likely refer to the same individual.

Il$_2$-maš-NI: 10 Š (40)
Only one other occurrence in a "conscription list," M12, 19 obv iv 5.

Ir$_3$-a-gi$^{?}$*-il*: 5 Š: *I.* (59)
Unique occurrence.

Ir$_3$-NI-bu$_3$: 10 Š: *I.* (28)
Unique occurrence. Cf. *Ir$_3$-NI-ba*, A15 (13x), M7 (4x);

Ir$_3$-ra: 1 M 1 gir$_2$ AN.A.AMA 7 M AK.AK: *I.* šeš *Sa$_2$-ba*
Unique occurence.

Iš-dub-bu$_3$: 10 Š: *I.* (22C)
Unique occurence. Cf. *Iš-dub-NI*, A8 (1x) M7 (3x), all referring to Mari.[220]

Iš-dub-utu: 25 Š: nig$_2$-an.an.an *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$ Tir$_5$-ga^{ki}* AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ (22d)
There seems to be one additional occurence in an unpublished source.[221] Cf. *Iš-dub-šar* of the Enna-Dagan letter.

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[218] See Pomponio/Xella 1999: 202.
[219] Archi 1981: 164.
[220] A8, 534 rev. i 3–4: *Iš-dub-NI Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*; M7, 23 obv ii 19–iii 2 *Iš-dub-NI*... lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*; M7, 47 obv. viii 20–21 *Iš-dub-NI Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*.

Iš-ma$_2$-il: 40 š: *I.* NI-DU-GAN$_2^{ki}$ [...] sukkal *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} (54)

A common name. The reference to Hassuwan in this early context, not long after the events of the Enna-Dagan letter, is of interest. A sukkal of Hassuwan is not attested later; this occurrence probably reflects the influence of Mari.

maškim dub-sar: 4 š : *mds*. (12)

A "maškim dub-sar" seems to be a unique occurrence. Possible meant is the same dub-sar-mah of (3).

Ma-tum-i$_3$-giš: 10 š: *M. Ib-su*^{ki} (5)

Unique occurence. This name seems to refer to diplomatic oil-ceremonies.

NE: 2 M ga'eš$_x$

A PN written NE seems unique, but gibil(NE×KAS) occurs in texts of the ArruLUM period, cf. A15 (6x), which could possibly stand for the common name written *ʾA$_3$-daš* or *ʾA-da-ša/še$_3$*. The same man could be NE.NE, Archi 1981, Text 8 (1x), Text 10 (1x, maškim *En-na-Da-gan*);[222] and/or *ʾA$_3$-daš* of Archi 1981, Text 8 (1x, maškim ga'eš$_x$).[223]

Puzur$_4$-*aš-dar*: 10 š: *P.* lu$_2$ ga'eš$_x$ (11); 10 š: *P. Gu$_2$-il Bu$_3$-ur-ti*-IN.GIŠ (41)

The name undoubtedly points towards Mari and Mesopotamia. The same man is likely attested in A7, 1; A7, 16 (3x); Archi 1981: Text 8, Text 9 (2x). Cf. Puzur$_4$-^{d}*Aš-dar*, A8 (2x); Puzur$_4$-*ra*-^{d}*Aš-dar*, A8 (1x); A7 (1x) A1 (1x).

Puzur$_4$-AN: 2$^?$ M 40 š: *P.* nar (29)

Unique occurrence. Cf. Puzur$_4$-il (A

Puzur$_4$-*ra*-^{d}Utu: 20 š: *P.* (26); 2 M LA$_2$+BAR-NI-GA-IŠ (erasure) *P.* simug *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$* (68)

Cf. A12 (1x); A2 (1x). The invocation of ^{d}Utu surely points to Mari.

Puzur$_4$-*rum$_2$*: 1 M: *P.* (8)

Unique occurrence. Cf. Puzur$_4$-*ri$_2$*, A13 (2x, merchant of Mari); A12 (3x); A4 (3x); A3 (1x); A1 (2x).

Sa$^?$*-da-ha*$^?$-[...]: 5 š (25)

Unique occurrence (?).

Sa$_2$-ba: 30 š.: *S.* (27); 1 M: *S.* / *in* ud / en DU / *Bi$_2$-na-aš$_2$* (50)

Likely the same man in A7, 16 (u$_5$ / *Du-ub*^{ki}) and M10, 20 (lu$_2$ u$_5$ / *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*).

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[221] Krebernik 1988: 229 (76.93 rev. i 1).
[222] Archi 1981: 165.
[223] Archi 1981, 162, s.v. "*A$_3$-lik*".

SA2-*u3*-*mu*: 26 š: *S.* *U2*? maškim giš-dug-DU hi-DU (20)

Cf. the ruler of Mari in the Enna-Dagan letter. In the time of Ibbi-Zikir, an important official of Nagar also bore this name.[224]

SA2-*u3*-*mu*-*um*: 30 š *S.*: nig2-AN.AN.AN / 2 kaskal-kaskal / dumu-dumu-nita / lugal Kiš^{ki} / šu-du8 (52)

Cf. above. Unique occurrence.

sagi: 4 M, 1 M ku3-gi, 1 zabar-ku3:bar6, 06 š zi-bar-tur, 03 š giš-PI-la2$^{!?}$, 1 *BU*-<*DI*>-zabar, 1 *ma*-*la*-*tum*-zabar, 1 gir2-zu2$^{?}$-AN.A.AMA, 10M AK.AK: sagi 2$^{?}$ kaskal-kaskal (9a); 2 M , 18 š ku3-gi zabar-u2-zi-bar-PU2$^{?}$: sagi 2 kaskal; 4 M, 1 M ku3-gi: sagi 3 kaskal-kaskal (23); 20 M AK.AK: sagi (56)

The occurrence of the title sagi "cupbearer" at Ebla points to Mari.[225] Most likely this anonymous cupbearer is identical with the sagi Silim-Utu (DI.UD),[226] who appears in roughly contemporary (or slightly later) Ebla-Mari texts characterized by the presence of Enna-Dagan.[227]

Si-*ir*-^{d}Utu: 10 š: *S.* maškim ga'eš$_x$ (42)

Unique occurrence. The invocation of ^{d}utu surely points to Mari.

Ša-*gu*-*um*: 5 š: *Š Zu2*-*zu2 Sur3*-*du*-[*u*]*m* (60)

Unique occurrence.

Šu-*i3*-*lum*: 1 M: *Š.* lugal [...$^{?}$] DU nig2-AN.AN.AN (7)

Cf. A15 (8x); A12 (5x); A8 (8x); A4 (1x); A3 (4x); A2 (1x); A1 (1x); M10 (3x); M7 (1x).

Sur$_y$(HI×AŠ)-*du*-[*u*]*m*: 5 š: *Ša*-*gu*-*um Zu2*-*zu2 S.* (60)

Unique occurrence.

u5: 02 š : u5 *Wa*-*ra*-*nu*^{ki} (16); 05 š u5 *NI*-*ti*-*rum2*$^{<ki?>}$ (17); 40 š: u5 *Mu:ru12*^{ki} (18a); 26 š u5 *Mu:ru12*^{ki} (18b); 10 š u5 *Zu2*-*na*-*an*^{ki} (48)

On the title u5, see below §3.1.3.3.

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[224] See Archi 1998: 6–7 for the quotations of this figure from unpublished sources. Other important figures of Nagar were named *Ib*-*lu5*-*NI* (i.e. Iplus-Il) and *NI*-*zi* (Ibid.: 5–6), reflecting the influence of the royal onomasticon of Mari on Nagar.

[225] On the Mari cupbearers at Ebla see Archi 1999, with Silim-Utu (DI.UD) Ibid.: 147.

[226] On the name see Steinkeller 2015.

[227] Archi 1981: 165 ("*Sa2*-UD"). TM.75.G.1564 (Ibid.: Text 7) rev. v 1–5, corresponding to TM.75.G.1233 obv. iii 5–9. Archi 2016: 14 dates both of these sources to the LUGAL-ship of Enna-Dagan, but note that neither of them attribute any title to Enna-Dagan at all.

Ur-na-zi nar[228]: 40 š: *T.* (14)

The same PN occurs as Ur-na-zi-a* in a group of Mari singers, A1, 7 (31′). Certainly represents the Sumerian PN Ur-^{d}Nanše,[229] attested also on a famous statue found at Mari, dedicated to Iplus-Il,[230] likewise described as a singer. Considering the dating of the present text to Iplus-Il, the individual attested here could very well be the same one depicted on the statue.

^{d}Utu-*a-ha*: 10 š Ag.: nig$_2$-ba u. (12)

Unique occurrence. The invocation of ^{d}Utu surely points to Mari.

Zi-lum: 15 š: *Z.* (36)

Cf. A12 (1x); A3 (1x).

Zu$_2$-zu$_2$: 5 š: *Ša-gu-um Z.. Sur$_3$-du-*[*u*]*m* (60)

Cf. A15 (1x); A8 (1x); A3 (2x); *Zu-zu*, A8 (1x); *Zu-zu$_2$*, A3 (1x); *Zu$_2$-zu* (A12, 1x); *Zu-zu-um*, A4 (1x, lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}), M7 (1x); *Zu-zu$_2$-um*, A4 (1x).
Probably the same man in A7, 11.

Ø: 3 M 40 š: nig$_2$-ba *Ga-šur*$_x$^{ki} (34a)
Ø: 04 š: DU^{ki} (35)
Ø: 40 š Ag.: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / lugal DU^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ (4)
Ø: 10 š: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / kalam / *aš$_2$-ti* / lugal al$_6$-tuš (46)
Ø: 10 š: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / en *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / lugal (49)

/x x x\: 20 š: x. giš-taškarin / *Ga-kam$_4$*^{ki} (30)

Toponyms:

A-da-bi$_2$-ig^{ki} (43):

Likely the modern town of Dabiq, known also for its place in later Islamic eschatology. In the Ebla period this was an important center from which many merchants came. It is quite significant therefore that, in the present occurrence, *Gul-la* the brother of Enna-Dagan took a trip there.

Bi$_2$-na-aš^{ki}: (50)

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[228] Read by Waetzoldt 2001: 181 as "*Teš$_2$-na-ṣi$_2$-lu$_5$*" with reference (Ibid.: 193) to the alleged*"Teš$_2$-na-ṣi$_2$-lu*" in A1, 7 (31′). However, according to Steinkeler 1993: 237 no. 6, the sign read in A1, 7 (31′) as *-lu* is almost certainly *-a* (see the photo in Mander 1990: pl. IX). In the parallel source TM.75.G.2649 (Archi 1985b: 78 no. 126) the name is written *Ur-na-zi*^{i}(GI)*-a*. In both cases *-a* represents a Sumerian genitive, -a(k).
[229] See Steinkeller 1993a: 237.
[230] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 13, MP 14.

Possibly the modern village of Binnish located near Ebla, it was visited on the cultic itinerary of the Ebla king and queen as seen (A11).[231]

DU^{ki}: (4); (35)

A later chancery text[232], dating to the time of Ibrium and Išar-Damu, details another episode involving Mari and this toponym. It also mentions an official of Mari named *Ib-gi-tum*, possibly the same man as in the present text and in A7, 6.

Ib-su^{ki}: (5)

Ga-kam$_4$^{ki} (30)

Seems to have been a small state located near Ebla.[233] The mention in such an early source of this place in relation to a type of timber, giš-taškarin,[234] seems quite significant. See below §3.1.3.3.2.

Ga-šur$_x$^{ki} (32a); (32b)

Mentioned in the Enna-Dagan letter A13, 4 (19), though apparently not directly affected by an attack, instead three other defeated places are attributed to it, incluing Šatap. This shows it could not have been too far from Emar. Later, Mari and Ebla would interact there; occurs frequently in relation to u$_5$ and other terms suggestive of Euphratean trade. It is not identical with the Sargonic Gasur = Yorghan Tepe = later Nuzi, near Kirkuk.[235]

Ha-su-wa-an^{ki}: (54)

Discussed in detail below §5.0. This early mention shows that relations between Ebla, Mari, and Hassuwan were underway not too long after Iplus-Il's "departure" from that place (see above §3.1.1)

Ir$_3$-peš$_2$^{ki} (31)

This center was located close to Emar.[236] If the likely etymology from Semitic **rpš* "to be wide" is followed, it could have been located at a place where the Euphrates was particularly wide and not easy to cross.

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[231] See Bonechi 2016c.

[232] A13, 14.

[233] The rulers of *Ga-kam$_4$*^{ki} and NI-rar appear along with the ruler of Ebla when meeting a group of high-ranking officials of Ibʾal in A13, 11 (2): al$_6$-DU / *I-ga-li-im* / Puzur$_4$-*ha-al$_6$* / *A-ba$_4$-il* / *Bi-ni-ma-ni* / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / en / *NI-la-ar*^{ki} / *wa* / en / *Ga-kam$_4$*^{ki} / i$_3$ nidba$_2$. On NIrar see below §6.1.2.

[234] On the reading of giš-taškarin in this passage see below footnote 300.

[235] See Bonechi 1991b.

[236] Demonstrated above all by the occurrence of *Ir$_3$-peš$_2$*^{ki} in a dossier related to the holdings of Tiša-Lim, queen of Emar: A13, 7 (1).

Kiš^{ki}: (52)
Tells Uhaimir and Ingharra located in Babylonia.

Ma-nu$^{?}$:wa-at: (58)
See below §3.2.2.

Ma-ri$_2$^{ki} (22d); (37); (62); (68).
Tell Hariri on the right bank of the Middle Euphrates.

Mu:ru$_{12}$^{ki} (18a); (18b); (64);
Seems to have been located along the Euphrates in between Ebla and Mari.[237]

NI-du-gan$_2$^{ki}: (54)

NI-ti-rum$_2$ $^{<ki>}$ (17)

Tir$_5$-ga^{ki} (22d)
Tell Ashara on the Middle Euphrates, about 50km north of Mari.

Wa-ra-nu^{ki} (16)
Cf. *Wa-ra-ne*^{ki} in a dedicatory inscription found at Mari.[238] There was also a *Wa-ra-nu*^{ki} located within the kingdom of Ebla (see below §6.2.1), but the present occurence with the title of u$_5$ could point to the one near Mari, which in Ebla sources seems to be spelled *U$_9$-ra-na-a*^{ki}, and is likewise mentioned in association with u$_5$.[239]

Zu$_2$-na-an^{ki} (48)

Thus, the Mari onomastic background of this text is clear, and it exceeds that of any other tablet found at Ebla. Likewise, the titles u$_5$ and ga:eš$_x$, and several of the places mentioned – located along the Euphrates between Ebla and Mari, such as a *Ga-sur$_x$*^{ki} *Ir$_3$-peš$_2$*^{ki}, and *Mu:ru$_{12}$*^{ki} – speak unambiguously of an active Euphratean trade. As shown

[237] Cf. the occurrence in A15, 24 (51) (discussed below §5.5) which seems to attest a journey from Ebla to Muru via Abarsal, with Mari as a final destination. For a juridicial-ur agreement involving Muru, cf. the text A13, 12.
[238] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 8–9, MP 7: *Al-ma* / dam / *I-kun$_3$-ma-ri$_2$* / lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / ^{d}NIN.ZI *Wa-ra-ne*^{ki} / SAG.RIG$_9$.
[239] See Bonechi 1993: 311.

above, many of the Mari individuals reoccur in texts which are all, however, of slightly later date, and which do not display the same strong Mari scribal influences, or the same exclusive focus on Mari individuals.

Section (4) rewards an anonymous individual with 20 shekels for the following news item: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / lugal DU^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$. Following the division into cases, it is likely that this is to be interpreted as "the king of DU^{ki} was defeated," with the inflictor of the defeat not being specified. Less likely, it could mean "the king (of Mari) has defeated (the forces of) DU^{ki}." The news item (?) in (7) is unfortunately not readily interpretable, and needs to be collated: 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / *Šu-i$_3$-lum* / lugal [???] DU nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.

In (22d) a uniquely-attested individual named *Iš-dub*-Utu is rewarded 25 shekels for the news item: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *Tir$_5$-ga*^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$, "News: (the forces) of Mari have defeated (the forces) of Terqa." Considering that Terqa (Tell Ashara, only about 50km upstream from Mari) should have been part of the kingdom of Mari proper, this event casts the military affairs of the time of Iplus-Il in a different light. Apparently, at around the same time that, or shortly after, Iplus-Il had been campaigning in the area of the Upper Euphrates, Mari had to deal with a rebellion in its own heartland. Perhaps this could help explain why Mari felt it prudent to "withdraw" (e$_3$) from the Upper Euphrates at Hassuwan, leaving Ebla in charge of the area around Abarsal, Emar, and ma$_2$-NE^{ki} instead. The situation perhaps suggests that Mari was dealing with internal unrest, possibly as a result of overexpansion. This paints a somewhat more balanced picture of the power of Mari under Iplus-Il.

Perhaps the news item several entries later in (46) could be directly related: an anonymous man receives 10 shekels for: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / kalam / *aš$_2$-ti* / lugal al$_6$-tuš,

"news: the land is dwelling (peacefully) with the king." It is hard to imagine what this could otherwise mean, but in light of the previous context involving an apparent rebellion against Mari by Terqa, its quite possible that "kalam" here refers to the land of Mari, while "*aš$_2$-ti* lugal / al$_6$-tuš" is meant to indicate the restoration of a peaceful state.

Also related could be the news item listed shortly thereafter in (49), when another (or the same?) anonymous individual receives 10 shekels for: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / en *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / lugal: "news: the EN of Mari has become a LUGAL." There do not seem to be any other options for the interpretation of this phrase. The verbal use of a royal title with the meaning "to become" is otherwise attested at Ebla.[240] A "scribal error" is highly unlikely.[241] The progression from EN to LUGAL matches, moreover, the transformation in Iplus-Il's titulary seen in the Enna-Dagan letter (see above §3.1.1.4), which likewise matches the proposed dating of M12, 25. It seems much less likely that this news item could refer to a change in title instead on the part of NI-zi, because, on the one hand, internal criteria of M12, 25 (such as the use of MAŠ instead of TAR to write half a shekel) suggest an earlier date, and secondly, because NI-zi himself is, unlike Iplus-Il, never attested to have borne the title of EN. The fact that in the news item concerning "dwelling" (al$_6$-tuš), the ruler of Mari was already referred to as LUGAL need not contradict this interpretation. The two news items could have been directly connected to one another. In the Sargonic period, Naram-Sin famously achieved a deification, requested by his city's assembled population, as his reward for having protected Akkad

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[240] A13, 13 (2): DIŠ mu / uš$_2$ / en / *Ir$_3$-kab-da-mu* / dumu-nita / *I-ga-li-im* / dumu-nita / Engar / en, "During the year when king Irkab-Damu died, the son of Iga-Lim the son of Yinkar, became ruler (of Ibʾal)."
[241] Cf. footnote 131 above.

against a rebellion.[242] According to M12, 25, Iplus-Il's promotion EN to LUGAL apparently likewise came about shortly after he too had defeated a rebellion by Terqa against Mari.

3.1.3.3 The u_5 "transport drivers" and their commodities

In M12, 25 and other slightly later texts, men from Mari are given the designation of u_5 in relation to certain geographical names, which generally all have a Euphratean connotation, and were located more or less in between Ebla and Mari. For example *Gul-la* – the brother of Enna-Dagan according to A7, 17 (2) – is referred to in M12, 25 (31) as u_5 *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_2^{ki}$, a designation he receives also in A7, 16 (3). Also in M12, 25 (43) *Gul-la* is exceptionally an u_5 in relation to the northern Syrian town of *A-da-bi-ig*^{ki} (probably modern Dabiq). It is rather unlikely that we are dealing with two or three different identically named individuals; in all cases it was probably the same person, namely, the brother of Enna-Dagan. In M12, 25 (32a) and (32b) *Ib-ki-tum* is an u_5 in relation to *Ga-sur*$_x^{ki}$; later occurences feature him (spelled instead *Ib-gi-tum*) in a similar situation, but without the designation u_5.[243] There also occurs an individual in M12, 25 who is not specifically called an u_5, but who does receive this designation in another text.[244] We can deduce from these and other occurrences that the GN that follows u_5 does not necessarily denote the place of origin of the preceding PN. Instead, it seems to describe a destination, specific to each occasion, but often on a recurring basis. U_5 functions in this way thus

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[242] As narrated on the Bassetki statue inscription, see Frayne 1993: 113–114.
[243] Eg. in A7, 16 (dating to the time of NI-zi) (4), *Ib-gi-tum* is assigned silver in relation to "3 kaskal," and occurs in between *Gul-la* u_5 *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_2^{ki}$ in (3), and an anonymous ga'eš$_x$ *Ir-ra-KU*^{ki} in (5).
[244] M12, 25 (31) *I-ti-*[^{d}]A.AMA (occuring directly alongside *Gul-la* / $^{/}u_5^{\backslash}$: 3$^{?}$ kaskal/ *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_2^{ki}$), corresponding to Archi 1981, Text 9, obv. ii 4–6: *I-ti-*^{d}AMA / u_5 / *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_2^{ki}$.

somewhat more like a verb (i.e., like DU) than a title. Thus, on multiple occasions Enna-Dagan's brother *Gul-la* "rode" or "drove" (u_5 = *rakābu*) some sort of vehicle to *Ir-peš*$_3^{ki}$, while on at least one other he "drove" instead to *A-da-bi-ig*^{ki}.

In the texts of the ArruLUM period, there are multiple references[245] to anonymous men from Armi, who are designated u_5 *ʾA*$_3$*-ma*^{ki} and who are to involved in the transportation of a type of timber (giš-taškarin).[246] It could be that this timber was too large and heavy to be transported by ordinary means (on the identity of giš-taškarin at Ebla see below §3.1.3.3.2), and required some sort of vehicle, alluded to by the term u_5. In later texts, certain named individuals, who were clearly involved in the manufacture of wagons, chariots, and their accessories, receive material assignments marked as "for the drivers(s)" (u_5),[247] strongly implying that the main vehicle employed by the u_5 was a wagon or cart.[248]

Given the Euphratean connotation of many of the toponyms with which they are associated (e.g. *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_2^{ki}$, *Ga-sur*$_x^{ki}$, *Mu:ru*$_{12}^{ki}$) it is possible that the u_5 could have also piloted boats, but an unambiguous reference directly connecting u_5 and boats seems to be currently lacking. It is possible that some u_5 drove wagons along well-trodden paths,

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[245] See Pomponio 2013: 478 s.v. u_5.

[246] Eg. A15, 51 (22) 1 gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / u_5 / *ʾA*$_3$*-ma*^{ki} (30): 4 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / e-gi$_4$-maškim / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / u_5 / *ʾA*$_3$*-ma*^{ki} / giš-taškarin / šu-mu-tak$_4$. For Catagnoti 2016: 33, "la sintassi di [A15, 51 (30)] può essere piuttosto spiegata considerando la presenza di u_5, da intendersi molto verosimilmente come indicazione della modalità del trasporto del legname di bosso fino a *ʾÀ-ma*.^{ki}"

[247] E.g. the wheelwright named BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X: A1, 1 (88′): 2 KIN siki / 2 u_5 / BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X "2 K.-measures of wool to produce s cf. A4, 4 (51): 4 KIN siki / BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X / šu-ba$_4$-ti / 1 giš-gigir-ii gibil en ; A3, 810 (2′): [x]+5 siki *nu-za-a-dum* / kin$_5$-ak / 5 giš-gigír-II / u_5 / BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X: / [šu-ba$_4$-ti].

[248] For the use of wagons and carts in later trade, cf. Barjamovic 2011 §1.5, with attestations in Appendix 1.4.

which ran alongside, or some distance away from, the river. Nevertheless, a possible connection between the u_5 and boats is not to be ruled out.

Thus the u_5 was probably not merely a "messenger" as has often been rendered.[249] He was a "(transport) driver,"[250] of a vehicle whose main purpose was not the transportation of humans, but of commodities, which were too heavy or bulky to be carried by ordinary porters or pack animals. The u_5 seem to have been the "truck" (or "lorry") drivers of the Palace G period. The nine occurrences of u_5 in the text M12, 25 thus attest a heavy transport traffic, already during the reign of Iplus-Il, between the areas of Ebla and Mari, even if the specific items they were carrying are not listed.

3.1.3.3.1 Olive Oil

An important clue as to some of what the u_5 "transport drivers" were shipping from Ebla to Mari could be found in the recently published text TM.03.G.1000,[251] found in the room L.8506, which predates the main phase of the Ebla archives.[252] Unfortunately, the published photo is not easily legible, and the tablet is in need of collation.[253] The text could be close in date to M12, 25, perhaps even earlier. It lists a total of 1,081 la-ha vessels of olive oil (1 *li-im* 81 la-ha i_3-giš i_3-giš) exported to Mari (e_3

[249] Archi 2016: 8 refers to "Gulla 'the messenger' (u_5)," and also considers this Gulla to have been a different person from the brother of Enna-Dagan, but this is unjustified. Significantly however, in Ibid.: 6 no. 20 the term u_5 is rendered instead as "merchant."
[250] Regarding the u_5, Waezoldt 2001: 68 stated, "Als Übersetzung möchte ich 'fahrenden Händler' vorschlagen, da der [u_5] offensichtlich mit einem von Tieren gezogenen Wagen unterwegs war. Gegen die... vorgeschlagene Übersetzung 'mounted messenger'... sprechen die zahlreichen Belege aus Ebla, nach denen die [u_5] im Zusammenhang mit Kauf und Lieferung von Waren genannt werden."
[251] Archi 2016: 12–13.
[252] For Room L.8606 see Matthiae 2004: 306–308.
[253] Archi 2016: 12, fn. 51, "This transliteration needs to be collated on the original tablet."

Ma-ri$_2$^{ki}) during a "2nd year" or "over 2 years" (2 mu). Like M12, 25, it mentions *En-na-da-ga-an* (with the same archaic spelling in *-ga-an* instead of *-gan*). It also lists HI-*da-ar*, and Enna-Dagan's brother, here written *Gu$_2$-la* and designated a "transport driver of/to Mari" (u$_5$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}). 800 of those 1,081 vessels are "received" (šu-ba$_4$-ti) by an anonymous LUGAL of Mari – almost certainly Iplus-Il given the high amount of oil, and archaic nature of the tablet. Only 20 vessels are received by Enna-Dagan, and another 20 by his agent (maškim$_x$ = UGULA.DU). Also appearing as oil recipients are some apparently otherwise unknown officials, perhaps not all of them from Mari: *Ad-da* (and agent), *Iš-ti-il*, *U$_9$-NE-šum, Du-bu$_3$-hu-da-mu*. Conspicuously, NI-zi is missing.

At Ebla, a la-ha vessel had a capacity of 30 sila$_3$ (ca. 30 liters).[254] Altogether, Ebla thus exported to Mari over 32,000 liters of olive oil during this early period – either during the course of a single year labeled "2," or, perhaps less likely, over a period of two years. Such a vessel, filled with olive oil, would have weighed roughly 28 kilograms, plus the weight of the vessel itself. While a full la-ha vessel may have represented an amount that could be lifted by a single human, it doesn't seem very likely that porters could have carried this oil all the way from Ebla to Mari, a distance of roughly 400 kilometers of mostly desert road. Nor does it seem likely that donkey caravans, loaded in the manner known from the later Old Assyrian period, transported so many vessels. Wheeled vehicles and/or boats would seem to have been the only option to transport olive oil in such large quantities, in the same way that boats were used to carry wine down to Mari in

[254] Archi 2016: 13.

later times.[255] Even if one imagines that la-ha was merely a term of accounting, and that the oil was shipped in smaller-sized containers, one still runs into difficulties, considering how bulky such individual containers would have been shipped together. Since *Gul-la* (*Gu$_2$-la*) the u$_5$ is himself listed in TM.03.G.1000, it seems likely that vessels of olive oil were among the commodities that the u$_5$-drivers were commonly bringing from Ebla to Mari (as alluded to in M12, 25 and other sources).

Another text, of roughly contemporary or slightly younger date, gives another perspective on the early Ebla-Mari olive oil trade, and proves that large boats (ma$_2$-gal) were indeed involved in this transport:

[A7, 11]
(2a) 13 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / 90 la-ha i$_3$-giš /
(2b) nig$_2$-sam$_2$ / 417 tug$_2$-tug$_2$ / 12+[x] nig$_2$-la$_2$-sag / 10 la$_2$-1 ib$_2$-iii-babbar-tug$_2$ /
(2c) 1 *mi-at* 20 siki na$_4$ sa$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / al$_1$-tar / ma$_2$-gal
(2d) nig$_2$-sam$_2$ / KI:LAM$_7$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}
(2e) *Zu$_2$-ba-LUM* ur$_4$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$

(2a) 13 minas of silver being the exchange value of 90 large (30L) vessels of olive oil –
(2b) (the oil was) given in exchange for 417 assorted garments, 12+x headscarves, 9 white sashes;
(2c) 120 N.-measures of high-quality wool and one mina of silver (were the wages for) the work[256] of the large boats (to transport the oil to Mari).
(2d) Transaction of the market of Mari.
(2e) ZubaLum the (Eblaite) *executor* completed the transaction.

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[255] Cf. Michel 1996: 387f .

[256] On Sumerian al-tar "work" (attested already at Archaic Ur in the form AL×TAR according to Civil 2013: 44), see CAD A/1: 373 s.v. *altar(r)um*, "assigned work… Loanward from Sumerian al.tar 'apportioned (work of a hired man)'… refers to the work and not to the workman…" In the lexical list Ad-gi$_4$, M3, 47 obv. v 10–11, the sequence al-tar / al-tar-ŠE$_3$ occurs. This latter form could be interpreted as "one assigned to work," and is attested in EV 032 (Pettinato 1982: 351) with the Semitic rendering *ar-ša-um*, /ʾ*arḏāl-um*/ "man of low status, menial" cf. Arabic **rḏl* "to be low" (Fronzaroli 1984a: 136).

The text thus provides us in (2a) with a silver value of the olive oil – 8 ⅔ shekel per jar, or a little more than ¼ shekel per liter. This was apparently merely a theoretical calculation, used to facilitate the conversion of oil to garments; the 417 assorted garments, 12+x headscarves, and 9 white sashes should likewise have been assessed as having a combined value of 13 minas of silver. There does not seem to be any reason, in the present context, why any actual silver should have been involved here; on the other hand, this calculation itself strongly implies that both oil and garments could be readily "converted" (šu-bala-ak) into silver. This could also be implied by the very important reference in this context to the market (KI:LAM$_7$) of Mari (2d). This market apparently constituted the means through which this "transaction" (nig$_2$-sam$_2$), the purchase of garments through the selling of oil, was made.

The 438 garments would be worth a little less than 2 shekels each, although the "assorted garments" (tug$_2$-tug$_2$) may have been worth considerably less than other two kinds. In particular, the "white sashes" seem to have been known as a characteristic and presumably valuable product of Mari.[257]

The 120 measures of wool and 60 shekels of silver for the work of the boat(s) (al-tar ma$_2$-gal) probably implies the participation of 60 men in this labor. The quantity of oil and number of workers implies more than one boat; if six men were assigned to each boat, we would be dealing with ten boats each carrying nine 30L vessels of oil. For this text, the transportation of the Mari garments back to Ebla seems to be a moot point,

[257] C.f. Pomponio 2013: 432 sv. ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-babbar. Interestingly, there is also an attestation of an ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$ *I$_3$-mar*, A15, 14 (53). See also below §5.2.3.

possibly because it could be accomplished by ordinary means; it seems unlikely that the boats would have taken a trip back upstream on the Euphrates.

It is no coincidence that the Ebla official *Zu$_2$-ba-LUM* was mentioned in connection with this transaction; another text mentions the same man in connection with a plot of land containing 1,000 olive trees.[258] This seems to suggest not only that olive cultivation and oil production[259] constituted a state-run industry at Ebla, but that the same official who was responsible for overseeing olive cultivation also took part in its commercial export to Mari. Syrian olive oil would have likely been in quite high demand in Mesopotamia as an alternative to Mesopotamia's traditional main source of plant-based oil, the sesame plant.[260]

3.1.3.3.2 Timber

Another very important commodity, which could have been transported towards Mesopotamia by the u$_5$ from Mari, via Ebla, was timber. The area to the west and northwest of Tell Mardikh – in the direction of the Lebanon, Amanus, and Taurus mountains – was much more heavily forested in ancient times than it is today.[261] Only

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[258] M7, 45 obv. i 1–ii 3: 2 *li-<im> 2 mi-<at>* 60 GANA$_2$ kešda ki / 1 *li-<im>* giš i$_3$-giš / al$_6$-tuš / *Zu$_2$-ba-LUM*. "2260 *units* of agricultural land (with) 1000 olive trees *planted*." The exact size of a GANA$_2$ kešda ki unit remains unknown. Traditional olive groves in the Mediterranean plant 120 trees per acre. The term al$_6$-tuš could likewise be subject to multiple interpretations. It could indicate the mere presence of trees as "planted," or perhaps it could refer to a specific stage in the agricultural cycle. Olive trees much reach about five years old for first fruiting, but variation exists depending on the cultivar, the care given the tree, and whether the tree came from seed or cuttings.

[259] On the olive oil industry at Ebla see Archi 1991.

[260] See Reculeau 2009.

[261] Possibly even the area northeast of Ebla could have been likewise forested and served as a nearby source for timber, but direct textual hints towards this possibility are lacking at present.

some scanty patches remain of what was once dense cedarwood forest.[262] The massive Lebanese cedars, which grow at the highest altitude, can supply not only huge timber logs, but also a distinct, pleasantly fragrant resin that also has strong antiseptic and insecticidal properties. At lower altitudes grew trees of less monumental, but still significant stature, including deciduous and evergreen oak, cypress, and pine.[263]

Lakebed pollen core analysis in the Ghab Valley has detected a major anthropogenic deforestation in this region already beginning at around 7000 B.C.E, with deciduous oak forest being cleared to make room for wheat and barley agriculture.[264] The Lebanese cedars began to be cleared away already around 5700 B.C.E. – some 3000 years before the putative historical Gilgamesh would have lived.[265]

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[262] Cf. Yasuda/Kitagawa/Nakagawa 2000: 127, "Visiting Mt. Lebanon, Mt. Amanos, or Mt. Ansarie [the northern end of the Lebanese mountains] nowadays, we only would find few traces of the Lebanese cedar forest that used to be huge. Barren land stretches as far as the eye can see. On Mt. Lebanon, only four small patches of cedar forest remain. On Mt. Toros, some artificially preserved Lebanese cedar forest survived to the north of Antalya. With the small preserved patches of forest in mind it is difficult to imagine the huge extent of ancient forests protected by Humbaba." For a literary description of this area as a "jungle" in the context of the late Standard Epic of Gilgamesh (Tablet V), see the description in George/Al-Rawi 2014: 74, "The cedars drip their aromatic sap in cascades... a trope that gains power from cedar incense's position in Babylonia as a rare luxury imported from afar... surprising is the revelation that the Cedar Forest was, in the Babylonian literary imagination, a dense jungle inhabited by exotic and noisy fauna... The chatter of monkeys, chorus of cicada, and squawking of many kinds of birds formed a symphony (or cacophony) that daily entertained the forest's guardian, Humbaba."

[263] Yasuda/Kitagawa/Nakagawa 2000: 128.

[264] Yasuda/Kitagawa/Nakagawa 2000: 134, "The sudden decline of deciduous *Quercus* and the abrupt rise of charcoal occured at 900 ^{14}C yr BP…. This sudden decline of deciduous *Quercus* was caused by forest clearance by Neolithic PPNA and PPNB people, who had already begun wheat and barley cultivation. This is the earliest forest clearance by humans."

[265] Yasuda/Kitagawa/Nakagawa 2000: "The Lebanese cedar forest… began to be destroyed at 7700 ^{14}C yr BP, more than 3000 years prior to the murder of Humbaba."

When one thinks of timber in the context of ancient Mesopotamia, immediately the Epic of Gilgamesh comes to mind, and the famous episode involving Gilgamesh and Enkidu's expedition to the Cedar Forest, in order to defeat the forest's monstrous guardian Huwawa/Humbaba and obtain cedar logs for construction works in Uruk. In the first millennium canonical version of the Epic, this Cedar Forest was said to have been located in Lebanon. Very significantly, in an earlier Old Babylonian manuscript, only recently made available, the two heroes, while on their way to confront Huwawa, are said to have "approached the land of Ebla."[266] Having reached the "land of Ebla," Gilgamesh climbs up onto a hill, from which he is able to see some (apparently heavily forested) mountain ranges.[267] This image seems to match the historical reality of the Ebla Palace G period. Ebla itself was not the land in which these exotic timber resources were to be found, but, coming from Mesopotamia, one had to pass through the land of Ebla on the way to reach these forests. The plain of Ebla may have in some ways seemed more familiar to a Mesopotamian visitor, with its urban centers, agricultural and livestock resources, and active craft industries. Further beyond lay a different, wilder, more exotic land, characterized by mountains and trees, and the narrow paths that led through them. In the

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[266] George 2003: 94, "An important new detail provided by one of the Old Babylonian tablets now in Norway is that, on their journey to the Cedar Forest, Gilgameš and Enkidu travel the road to the 'land of Ebla', a location that the later text alters to 'Mount Lebanon'. Mention of Ebla recalls the landscape made part of heroic narrative by Sargon and Naram-Sin and suggests very strongly that the tale of the heroes' expedition to the mountains of the far north-west was informed by the memory of historical events in the reigns of those kings."

[267] MS 3025 obv. 26–28 (see George 2003: 234–235): *šu-nu iṭ-hu-<u₂> a-na ma-ti-ʿib-laʾ* / *i-li-ma* ^{d}G[I]Š *a-na ṣe-er šadîm*(kur) / *it-ta-na-ap-ʿlaʾ-as₂ ka-li-šu-nu hur-sa*-MI "(And so) they approached the land of Ebla. Gilgamesh climbed up to the top of a hill, and gazed around upon the mountain ranges."

Ebla Palace G period, the forests were not controlled by Huwawa, but rather, above all by the major power of Armi (§4.0), and also the smaller intermediary kingdom of Kakmium (§6.0).[268]

It is likely that the tales of Gilgamesh and Enkidu's exploits in this area were influenced or inspired by the real historical undertakings of the Sargonic kings in this same northwestern region. One inscription describes how Sargon did obeisance before Dagan in Tuttul, and as a result Dagan gave him "the upper land: Mari, Yarmuti, Ebla, including the Cedar forest and the Silver mountains."[269] A later literary tale, excavated from the Old Assyrian trading colony in Anatolian Kaneš, tells how Sargon "dwelled in darkness for seven years, one month, and fourteen days" (i.e., in a dark forest)[270] – an ordeal from which he emerged with lapis lazuli and carnelian in hand, and after which he

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[268] For this conclusion cf. Catagnoti 2016: 48, "Tornando ai testi di Ebla, la spiegazione più semplice per il ruolo di *Ar-mi- um*^{ki} e *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} nell'approvvigionamento eblaita del legname di bosso è che questi due regn controllassero la "Montagna del bosso" e rifornissero fra l'altro le fiere di Aleppo e *Si-'à-am.*^{ki}" On the existence of "markets" (KI:LAM$_7$) in Aleppo and *Si-'à-am*^{ki} where giš-taškarin could be purchased, cf. Ibid.: 32.

[269] Frayne 1993: 28–29 (Sargon no. 11), lines 14–28 = Gelb/Kienast 1990: 164–165 (Sargon C2), lines 17–35 1: *Šar-ru*-GI / lugal / *in Tu-tu-li*^{ki} / *a-na* / ^{d}*Da-gan* / *uš-ka$_3$-en* / *ik-ru-ub* / *ma-tam* / *a-li$_2$-tam* / *i-di$_3$-šum* / *Ma-ri$_2$-am*^{ki} / *NI-ar-mu-ti-a-am*^{ki} / *Ib-la*^{ki}/ *a-di$_3$-ma*/ giš-tir / giš-eren / *u$_3$* / kur-kur / ku$_3$ = ˹*Šar-um*-GI˺ / lugal / Du$_8$-du$_8$-li^{ki}-a / ^{d}Dagan-ra / ki-a mu-na-za / šud$_3$ mu-˹na-DU˺ / kalam igi-nim / mu-na-sum / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}/ *NI-ar-mu-ti*^{ki} / *Ib-la*^{ki} / tir / giš-erin / hur-saĝ / ku$_3$-ga-še$_3$.

[270] The motif of Sargon and his army's experiencing of "darkness" while in the forest is referenced in other genres, including an Old Babylonian literary legend "Sargon, the Conquering Hero" (Goodnick Westenholz 1997: 69f), "Sargon had (barely) ventured into the land of Uta-rapaštim, (when) as if he were hostile, the forest waged war against him. It set darkness in place of the light of the heavens. The sun dimmed, the stars sallied forth against the enemy") and omens (Glassner 1985: 124), "Omen of Sargon, who walked in the darkness, and for whom a light shone forth"; "Omen of Sargon, who overcame the darkness and saw the light" (both Old Babylonian).

then "split the Amanus in two" and set up a representation of himself there.[271] For his part, Naram-Sin claims to have "defeated (the forces of) Armanum and Ebla," after which Dagan grants him the people "from the banks of the Euphrates up until Ulišum" (i.e., Ursa'um or Uršum),[272] upon whom Naram-Sin imposes a corvée obligation; finally, he "completes (an expedition)"[273] to the "Amanus, the Cedar Mountain."[274] A year name of Naram-Sin also refers to an expedition to Lebanon to fell cedars.[275]

Later rulers followed in the footsteps of the Sargonic kings. Gudea tells how he obtained cedar (giš-eren) and giš-taškarin from the Amanus,[276] and juniper, fir, and plane

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[271] Kt j/k 40–50 (see now Alster 2007: 9–11): ...^{d}iM / *u$_3$ Iš$_8$-tar$_2$: at-ma :* MU 7-ŠE$_3$ ITI-KAM / *u$_3$ ša-pa$_2$-tam$_2$: i-na : i-ki-il$_5$-tim* / *qa$_2$-du : um-mi$_3$-ni-ia : lu u$_2$-ši$_2$-ib* / *i-na wa-ṣa-i-a : ša* ^{na4}gug / *u$_3$* ^{na4}za-gin$_3$: *qa$_2$-nu-a-am* / *lu ar-ku-us$_2$-ma : a-na ma-tim* / *lu u$_2$-za-iz* : *ša-du-a-am : Hu-ma-nam* / *a-ši$_2$-ni-šu : am-ha-su$_2$-ma : ki-ma* / *si$_2$-ki-tim : i-ba-ri-šu-nu ṣa-al-mi$_3$* / *u$_2$-ša-zi-iz.*

[272] On Ursa'um, see below §5.0.

[273] Spelled *i-ig-mu-ur*; cf. §5.5 below on TIL.

[274] Frayne 1993: 133 (Narām-Sîn 26), lines 2–28 = Gelb/Kienast 1990: 256 (Narāmsin C5), lines 2–28: ^{d}*Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU / *da-num*/ *Ar-ma-nam*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *en-ar* / *u$_3$* / *iš-tum-ma* / *pu-ti* / UD.KIB.NUN.ID$_2$ / *a-di-ma* / *U-li-si-im*^{ki} / *NI-SI$_{11}$* / *ša-at* / ^{d}*Da-gan* / gibil-*iš* / *i-qi$_2$-su-sum* / *u-ra-iš-ma* / giš-IL$_2$ / *Il$_3$-a-ba$_4$* / *i$_3$-li$_2$-su* / *na-si$_2$-<a>-nim* / *u$_3$* / *A-ma-nam* / *sa$_2$-tu* / giš-eren / *i-ig-mu-ur* . "Narum-Sin, the mighty one, defeated Armanu and Ebla. And from the banks of the Euphrates up until Uršum, he subjugated the peoples whom Dagan had gifted to him anew, and (now) they are carrying the corvée basket of Ilaba, his god. And then he completed (an expedition) to the Amanus, the cedar mountain."

[275] OSP 2, 16 iv 1–8 (=Westenholz 1987: 39–41): [*in* DIŠ mu] / [^{d}*Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU] / [ ]-*at*^{ki} / [ka$_2$.g]al-*at*^{ki} / [*iš$_{11}$*]-*a-ru* / [*u$_3$ su$_4$-ma*$^{?}$] *in* [kur *La-a*]*b-na-an* / giš-eren / *ib-du-kam*, "[In the year when Naram-Sin conquered […]-at and [Abul]lat, [and he$^{?}$] cut cedars in [the mountains of Le]banon."

[276] Gudea Statue B v 28–36 (see Edzard 1997: 33): ama-a-num$_2$ hur-saĝ-eren-ta / [giš-er]en / [gid$_2$]-˹bi 60˺ kuš$_3$ / [giš]-eren / [gid$_2$]-bi 50 kuš$_3$ / [giš]-taškarin / gid$_2$-bi 25 kuš$_3$ / ad-še$_3$ / mu-ak-ak / kur-bi im-ta-e$_{11}$. "From the Amanus, the cedar mountain, he cut cedar logs of 60 and 50 cubits length, and taškarin-wood of 25 cubits length, and he joined them into rafts, and made them thus come 'up' (to Lagash) from their mountains."

from "the city Uršu, (and) the mountain range of Ebla."[277] He joined these logs together to form rafts and floated them back down the Euphrates, from whence they, presumably via canals in the south which connected the two great rivers, ultimately reached Girsu in the southeast Tigridian region, to be employed as building materials in Ningirsu's temple. In the Old Babylonian period, Yahdun-Lim of Mari reports how he first reached the Mediterranean coast, making an offering and letting his troops bathe in the sea, after which he proceeded to "the mountains of TAŠKARIN and cedar," wherefrom he obtained TAŠKARIN, cedar, *cypress* (giš-šu-ur$_2$-man) and *elammakum*-wood.[278] Šamši-Adad I reports that he left a monument in Lebanon, an event which apparently led to his being able to install cedar roof beams and cedar doors in the temple of Enlil at Aššur.[279] Several later Assyrian rulers, beginning with Tiglath-Pileser I in the late second millennium, also refer to their timber-fetching expeditions to Lebanon, and Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon makes multiple mentions of his exploitation of forests of both the Lebanon and Amanus mountains.[280]

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[277] Gudea Statue B v 53–vi 2 (see Edzard op. cit): uru ur-su^{ki} / hur-sağ Ib-la-ta / giš-za-ba-LUM / giš-u$_3$-suh$_5$-gal-gal / giš-tu-lu-bu-um giš-kur / ad-še$_3$ mu-ak-ak / e$_2$-ninnu-a / giš-ur$_3$-še$_3$ mu-na-gar, "From the city Ursu, the mountain range of Ebla, he brought *juniper, big firs,* (and) plane trees, mountain wood, and placed them as roof beams in the Eninnu."

[278] Frayne 1990: 606 (Yahdun-Lim 2), lines 46–55: *a-na ki-ša-ad ti-a-am-tim* / *il-li-ik-ma* / *a-na* A.A.AB.BA *ni-qi$_2$ šar-ru-ti-šu* / *ra-bi-a-am iq-qi$_2$* / *u$_3$ ša-bu-šu i-na qe$_2$-re-eb* A.A.AB.BA / *me-e* / *ir-mu-uk* / *a-na* kur giš-eren *u$_3$* giš-taškarin / kur-*i ra-bu-tim i-ru-um-ma* / giš-taškarin giš-eren giš-šu-ur$_3$-man / *u$_3$* giš *e-lam-ma-ka-am* / *i-ṣi$_2$ an-nu-ti-in ik-ki-is*.

[279] Grayson 19xx: 47–51 (Šamšī-Adad 1), lines 37–42; 81–87: e$_2$ giš-ʿerenʾ / *u-ṣa-li-il* / *i-na* e$_2$-MEŠ / giš-ig-MEŠ giš-eren / *ša* mul-*ši-na* ku$_3$-babbar *u$_3$* ku$_3$-gi / *uš-zi-iz... šu-mi ra-be$_2$-e-em*

[280] For these refrences see Weippert 1980–1983: 644–645.

This context serves to illustrate just how important and prestigious, from the Mesopotamian perspective, the Syro-Levantine timber resources were throughout history. Ebla does not seem to have exercised direct political control over the regions where this timber was located.[281] Rather, owing above all to its geographic position, Ebla was able to act as an intermediary between the forested regions and lower Mesopotamia.

Returning to the topic of trade and transport, as noted above, an an u_5 "transport driver" from Armi (which we propose to locate to the northwest of Ebla in Cilicia, see below §4.0) is mentioned in direct connection with the transportation of giš-taškarin, to or via a place called *ʾA₃-ma*^{ki}[282]:

[A15, 51]
(22) 1 gada-tug$_2$ IGI.NITA / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / u$_5$ / *ʾA₃-ma*^{ki}
(29) 1 gada-sa$_6$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / igi^{l}(ME)-sig / giš-taškarin
(30): 4 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / e-gi$_4$-maškim / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / u$_5$ / *ʾA₃-ma*^{ki} / giš-taškarin / šu-mu-tak$_4$.

(22) 1 linen cloth for an ass (for a man from) Armi (in order for him to) drive (a transport vehicle) to Hama.
(29) 1 fine linen garment, 1 fine multicolored sash (for a man from) Armi, who acted as custodian for taškarin-wood; Ištamah received (the wood).
(30) 4 multicolored sashes for (4) special envoys of Armi, who are driving (a transport vehicle) to Hama (in order to) deliver taškarin-wood.

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[281] Catagnoti 2016: 46, "il Palazzo G di Ebla non controllava i boschi di [giš-taškarin], e per approvvigionarsi di questo legname di grande pregio doveva acquistarlo, pagandolo in argento o lana, presso alcune fiere non troppo lontane da Tell Mardikh… o farselo consegnare da stranieri [i.e., Kakmium and Armi] che ne avevano la custodia."
[282] Note this *A₃-ma*^{ki} is to be held distinct from the place spelled *A₃-ma-at*^{ki} or *A₃-ma-du*^{ki}. It is this latter Ḥamaṭ which is to be identified with modern Hama, located to the south of Tell Mardikh. On Ḥamaṭ in the Ebla texts, see Bonechi 2016a: 52f.

Especially since a "cloth for an ass"[283] is mentioned, this attestation seems to prove that wagons were indeed utilized as an overland transport method in order to bring timber logs from the regions where they were harvested towards Tell Mardikh, and further east towards the Euphrates. On the other hand, the gada-sa$_6$ was a very precious type of garment, being fit also on another occasion for the ruler of Nagar.[284] The exact role played by *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki} in this transaction is not so clear.

The only type of wood that seems to be mentioned in Ebla administrative texts with any frequency is giš-taškarin[285] (usually translated as "boxwood," but see below), and the only significant places that are mentioned as sources of this wood are Armi and Kakmium.[286] Giš-taškarin could also be obtained by Ebla from the "market" (KI:LAM$_7$) of a place called *Si-ʾa$_3$-am*^{ki} (for which Ebla paid a price in wool), or from the "market" of Aleppo, for which Ebla payed in silver.[287]

When Ebla delivered a gift of timber (giš-taškarin to Hamazi, as narrated in the famous letter A13, 3 (6), it was in the form of ten "boxwood *trunks*[288]" (10 giš-taškarin) and two "boxwood *wheels*[289]" (2 giš-GAM giš-taškarin). It seems overwhelmingly likely that "wheel" stands in the letter *pars pro toto* for "wagon," and that the ten "trunks" were

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[283] On the "linen cloth for an ass" see below §4.3.0.
[284] A7, 16 (19): 1 gada-sa$_6$ / *Ma-ra-*AN / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki}.
[285] The Ebla attestations of giš-taškarin were recently collected and analyzed in Catagnoti 2016.
[286] Ibid.: 33. Also mentioned as a source of giš-taškarin is *Ša-nu-gu$_2$*^{ki}.
[287] Ibid.: 31–32.
[288] One could possibly interpret the spelling as gis taškarin (i.e giš $^{<giš>}$taškarin), "tree (trunk) of taškarin." For the understanding as "trunks" cf. Bonechi 2016d: 8, "(tronchi) di albero giš-taškarin," whose translation also seems to indicate skepticism regarding the identification as "boxwood."
[289] For the interpretation of giš-GAM as "wagon" see Michalowksi 1993: 13–14, "...two boxwood wagons." Cf. Steinkeller 1993a: 81 fn. 22 "...2 wagons (?) of boxwood."

actually transported overland to Hamazi overland by means of the two wagons, with five logs loaded onto each wagon. The wagons themselves then also formed part of the gift upon arrival. Otherwise, we would be at a loss to explain how the wood made it all the way from the area where the Euphrates was crossed, across Upper Mesopotamia, and finally reaching the Tigridian region of Hamazi.[290] "Two wheels" alone, without a matching vehicle hardly seems like an appropriate state-level gift, especially considering that the reciprocal gift from Hamazi to Ebla consisted of BAR.AN equids, the highest quality draught animals available, and which were intended to pull just such vehicles. Nor would it have been very practical to roll or carry these wheels all the way to the Tigridian region, instead of attaching them to a vehicle. The two transport wagons themselves would probably each have had four wheels, not two. Possibly, a Hamazian scribal practice could underly the reference to transport wagons simply as "wheel(s)."

This example thus seems to show that timber, in addition to representing a luxurious gift that Ebla could provide to its allies, was also a material out of which transportation vehicles were constructed, which in turn could carry more timber, or yet other commodities. Wagons and boats alike were probably constructed from timber whose main sources were located to the west of Ebla. Four-wheeled wagons played a role in transport, while two-wheeled wagons (or chariots) made from wood held an important elite symbolic role, for earthly rulers and deities alike. They may have also played a real

[290] On the location of Hamazi and its wider history, see Steinkeller 1998: 79–87; Steinkeller 2010: 373, fn. 19: "North of Assur, possibly Tall Haikal on the Tigris."

military significance during this era.[291] Significantly, a lexical list attested in versions from Ebla and Abu Salabikh lists several wagon components made of giš-taškarin.[292]

This raises questions about the identity of the wood called giš-taškarin, usually understood as "boxwood." Boxwood is not a very large tree, only growing 10–25 ft (3–8 m) tall and 4–6 in (12–20 cm) diameter.[293] Objects made of boxwood are correspondingly small in size. Boxwood is particularly well suited and prized for delicate and intricate works like chesspieces, combs, or flutes.[294] It doesn't appear very likely that an entire

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[291] Cf. the entry A4, 5 (36): 6 kin siki / GIŠ-E_2×GIGIR GIŠ-E_2×GIGIR aga_3-us_2 / BAD-SU_3-$ERIN_2$+X / šu-ba_4-ti "6 k.-measure of wool (in order to produce) *covered wagons* for soldiers, B. has received." On the "covered wagon" at Ebla see Conti 1997: 24. On the official BAD-SU_3-$ERIN_2$+X and his involvement in wagon construction see Pomponio 1989a: 302, fn. 9 ("un funzionario dell'amministrazione eblaita addetto all'equipaggiamento di carri delle scuderie reali durante l'ultima fase del periodo di Ebrium e la prima del periodo di lbbi-zikir").

[292] See Civil 2008: 40, 107 nos. 230–232: giš-E_2×AŠ^{tenû}-BAD -taškarin / giš-iš-de_3-taškarin / giš-šudun-taškarin "(a part of a vehicle) made of boxwood; seat (on a vehicle) of boxwood; yoke (of boxwood) (Abu Salabikh manuscript; Ebla versions broken here), rendered Ibid.: 107

[293] Catagnoti 2016: 29, fn. 1, quoting from (updated URL) https://www.wood-database.com/boxwood/ (last acesss August 2018).

[294] Cf. Ibid, quoting Meiggs 1982, 280: "Box rarely grows to a great height and never produces a thick trunk, but it was a valuable wood for small objects or parts of objects which had to be strong and might need delicate workmanship. It was therefore particularly associated with combs, and musical instruments, especially the flute and lyre. In furniture it could be used for beds, couches, chairs, and small tables, but it was more commonly used in inlays and veneers where its pale colour provided an attractive contrast with darker woods, especially in Egypt with ebony, and with gold, silver, and precious stones." The art of carving boxwood into small, intricate works of art reached a peak in the Burgundian and Hapsburg Netherlands during the 15th and 16th centuries, when a corpus of prayer beads, rosaries, and miniature altar pieces were carved on a nearly microscopic level of scale and detail that remains capitvating today; for these works see Scholten 2016.

wagon, or other large object (such as a bed or table)[295] could have been made out of boxwood.

Gudea of Lagash claims in his Statue B that he obtained from the Amanus mountains giš-taškarin trunks of 25 cubits length, alongside giš-erin$_2$, "cedar" trunks of 60 and 50 cubits length.[296] Using a 50-cm cubit,[297] 25 cubits corresponds to 41 ft or 12.5 m – four times the lower range and almost twice the given maximum height of a boxwood tree. Gudea makes it clear that his giš-taškarin logs were half the size of his cedar logs – Lebanese cedars today can reach heights of 100–130 ft (30-40m), thereby dwarfing the boxwood. This average height for cedar would give 60–80 cubits by our reckoning, a range compatible with Gudea's given figures of 50 and 60 cubits for his logs. Finally, one can note one more conspicuous characteristic of boxwood – its high density. Averaging at about .95–1.2 g/cm^3 [298], it is one of the few woods that does not float, a characteristic referred to by Pliny the Elder.[299] This seems to strongly contradict Gudea's important statement that he made the giš-taškarin and giš-erin$_2$ into "rafts" in order to float them back down the Euphrates and ultimately to the city of Girsu in southeastern

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[295] For lexically attested items made from boxwood see M3, 44 obv. iii 2–5 (=Pettinato 1981: 136): DIŠ na$_2$ giš-taškarin(NAM$_2$?) / DIŠ šudun giš-taškarin / DIŠ giš- DIŠ banšur giš-taškarin / DIŠ bur-i$_3$ giš-taškarin, "Bed, *seat*, table, unguentarium of giš-taškarin."

[296] Gudea Statue B v 28–36 (see Edzard 1997: 33): ama-a-num$_2$ hur-sağ-eren-ta / [giš-er]en / [gid$_2$]-˹bi 60˺ kuš$_3$ / [giš]-eren / [gid$_2$]-bi 50 kuš$_3$ / [giš]-taškarin / gid$_2$-bi 25 kuš$_3$ / ad-še$_3$ / mu-ak-ak / kur-bi im-ta-e$_{11}$ "From the Amanus, the mountain range of cedar, he (cut) cedars of sixty and fifty cubits [length] and boxwood of twenty-five cubits length, joined them to form rafts, and (thus) made them come down from their mountains."

[297] Powell 1987–1993: 459.

[298] http://cameo.mfa.org/wiki/Boxwood (last access September 2018).

[299] Pliny the Elder *Naturalis Historia* 16: 76 (see Rackham 1945: 520–521), *Spississima ex omni materie, ideo et gravissima, iudicatur hebenus et buxus, graciles natura. neutra in aquis fluvitat...*" "The most close-grained of all timber, and consequently the heaviest, is judged to be ebony and box, both trees of a slender make. Neither will float in water..."

Mesopotamia. So too does the Ebla evidence seem contradict the idea that giš-taškarin was boxwood, if the gifts for the ruler of Hamazi consisted of large logs loaded onto wagons made from the same material. The long-standing traditional translation of giš-taškarin as "boxwood" thus seems to be wrong, at least for the third millennium.

Like the ruler of Hamazi, so too was Iplus-Il of Mari gifted by Ebla with a type of wagon, as already shown above in §3.1.2 for A7, 3 (1g). His, however, was not a transport wagon (which probably had four wheels), but rather a genuine two-wheeled war chariot (giš-gigir-ii), or at least a luxurious version of one. It is not stated out of what kind of wood this chariot was made, but it could have been made of giš-taškarin. As also mentioned above in §3.1.3.2, the text M12, 25 (30), (which dates to the reign of Iplus-Il and was probably written by a scribe of Mari), contains what is probably the earliest Ebla reference to giš-taškarin.[300] It is mentioned in relation to the small kingdom of *Ga-kam*$_4$^{ki}, located close to Ebla, but the full significance of the attestation, and how exactly the timber was related to Mari, is unclear.

Are there any other clues that timber was already being sent, via Mari, towards Ebla, in the earliest period during the reigns of Iplus-Il, Nizi, or Enna-Dagan? As already mentioned, Enna-Dagan's brother Gulla was involved in trade and transport as an u$_5$, making constant trips between Ebla, Mari, and interstitial locations such as *Ir*$_3$*-peš*$_3$^{ki}. Quite significantly, Gulla is also attested as the recipient of what – there can be little doubt – were carpentry tools, used for the harvesting and finishing of wood:

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[300] Considered as follows by Catagnoti 2016: 32 fn. 14, "L'attestazione di ^{giš}taskarin in questo passo è molto dubbia e, non essendo possibile verificare sulla fotografia, è forse da espungere." This however, seems unjustified; giš-taškarin looks quite clear in the photo (rev. i 2) published in Pettinato 1995.

[A7, 17]
(1a) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / lugal / 5 mana tar-5 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / abba$_2$-abba$_2$ / *in* ud / izi-gar / *I-ba$_x$*(peš$_2$)*-zi-nu* / *Iš$_{11}$-gi-da-ar* / *Il-da-mu* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ /
(2a) 2 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 AGA$_3$ gal / 1 ma-na zabar / 1 AGA$_3$ / TAR zabar / 1 DUB.NAGAR / ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN / zabar / 1 šum / TAR urudu / nig$_2$-ba / *Gul-la* / šeš / *En-na-*^{d}*Da-gan* /
(2b) ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / maškim-*SU$_3$* /
(2c) *in* ud / izi-gar / giš-dug-DU

(2a) 2 minas of silver; 1 large axe (weighing) 1 mina of bronze; 1 axe weighing 30 shekels of bronze; 1 chisel[301] weighing 20 shekels of bronze; 1 saw weighing 30 shekels of copper: gift for Gulla, brother of Enna-Dagan.
(2b) 20 shekels of silver for his agent,
(2c) on the occasion of the fire ceremony, …–assignment.

The ritual or festival izi(NE)-gar is mentioned, also in association with giš-dug-DU, in other texts belonging to the early Ebla–Mari corpus.[302] There may have been relevance between this ritual (which certainly involved fire, see further below) and carpentry tools. At the same time, with the bronze axes, saws, and chisels, we are clearly dealing not merely with ceremonial items, or with weapons, but with tools that served a practical purpose, as demonstrated by the assignment in later texts of the same type of objects, of the same weight and material, to carpenters (nagar).[303] In the Ebla local calendar (used in texts from the food archive L.2712), [304] izi-gar is the name of the 10th month, corresponding to December/January and so the height of the cold season. Also, izi-gar (or

[301] On the meaning of DUB.NAGAR at Ebla as "chisel, burin" instead of "hammer," see Waetzoldt 1995 and Catagnoti 1997: 579. Above all else, the Ebla DUB.NAGAR are too light to be hammers.
[302] A7, 17 (7) 1 ma-na- ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / *I-da-il* / GIŠ.DUG.DU / izi-gar
[303] For these same items in lists of tools assigned to carpenters (nagar), see Archi 1995. See also Archi 2010b: 19, "gin$_2$ [i.e., aga$_3$]… this kind of ax is usually listed among work tools."
[304] The first half of which is published in Milano 1990 (*ARET* IX). *ARET* X remains unpublished.

NE-gar) at Ebla could designate an object, which could consist of as much as 56 minas of copper. On other occasions an izi-gar weighed 7 minas of copper, or 21 minas of copper plus 2 minas 45 shekels of gold (see below). This strongly supports a translation "brazier" (Sumerian ne = Akkadian *kinūnu*).[305] Given the present association with carpentry tools (saws and axes), we might reasonably suppose that wood was used as fuel for the fire, and for torches, in the course of the izi-gar ceremony – which took place in the cold season and involved a large copper vessel. This wood could have been harvested from the forests located to the west of Ebla.

The izi-gar "brazier" was apparently a prestiguous object. It appears listed not only as an income (mu-DU) of the ruler of Ebla, but is also brought to Ebla by the ruler of DU-*lu*^{ki}, and also by a representative of *Du-gu$_2$-ra-su*^{ki} (most likely to be respectively identified with Byblos, and a place linked with Egypt, see above §2.1.5):

[TM.75.G.2073] [306]
rev. v 5: 56 ma-na a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ 1 izi-gar "(mu-DU en Ebla)"[307]

[M12, 3]
obv xi 11–12: 10 la$_2$-3 ma-na urudu / 1 izi-gar ...[308] mu-DU / en / DU-*lu*^{ki})

[TM.75.G.1900] [309]
obv. v 2–6: 1 izi-gar 2 KA-ma 5 gu-si$_4$ gu-gi$_6$ … en DU-*lu*^{ki} mu-DU

[A8, 528]

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[305] See CAD/K: 393 s.v. *kinūnu*.
[306] Archi 2003e: 39.
[307] Provided in this manner in the citation, referring to an entry later on the tablet. This is interpreted by Archi op. cit. as "'delivered,' mu-DU, by the king of Ebla itself." However, it could also mean "income of (i.e., for) the king of Ebla." The actual syntax and context as it appears on the tablet is not made clear by the citation.
[308] See Waetzoldt 2001: 43
[309] Archi 2003e: 39.

rev vi 8f: 2 ma-na ŠA.PI ku$_3$-gi / 21 ma-na urudu / 1 izi-gar …[310] mu-DU / *Du-gu$_2$-ra-su*^{ki} / *in* / *A-ru$_{12}$-ga-du*^{ki}

The term izi-gar is also reoccuringly mentioned in the context of what clearly seems to be the royal ancestral cult. All such references[311] occur on tablets dated to month 10 (iti *i-ba$_4$-sa* of the common calendar, which corresponds to izi-gar of the local one):

[A8, 542; month 10]

rev. iv 7–13: 3 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / 1 izi-gar / dingir en / 1 izi-gar / en / 1 izi-gar / *ma-lik-tum*
"3 multicolored sashes, for one fire ceremony of the 'god of the king' (i.e. of his family/ancestors), 1 fire ceremony of the king, and 1 fire ceremony of the queen."

The equivalents of this Eblaite fire ritual (which, as written, is almost certainly a shortened form of ne-izi-gar, "(ritual of) lighting torches and braziers")[312] are attested over an exceedingly wide span of time and space.[313] In Early Dynastic Mesopotamia such rites referenced already at Ur, Adab, Lagash, and Nippur. Significantly, izi-gar occurs also at Tell Beydar and Pre-Sargonic Mari.[314]

Returning thus to our Ebla–Mari tablet, it seems very likely that we are dealing with a context of a high-level interstate diplomacy (implied also by the term giš-dug-DU)

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[310] Among the other objects delivered by the representative of *Du-gu$_2$-ra-su*^{ki} on this occasion are: 26 gada-tug$_2$ mah / 16 gada-tug$_2$ tur hul / 14 si-am "26 large linen cloths, 16 small low-quality linen cloths, 14 tusks of ivory."
[311] See Archi 2003e: 39–40 for additional quotations from unpublished tablets.
[312] For this reading and the interpretation as "brazier(s) and torche(s)" see Cohen 2015: 135.
[313] For izi-gar at Ebla see Cohen 2015: 23–24; for the wider tradition of ne-izi-gar, Ibid.: 135–140; for the month/festival *kinūnu* "brazier" from the Old Babylonian period onwards, Ibid.: 282–284.
[314] Ibid.: 23–25; For NE-gar at Presargonic Mari see Charpin 1987: 79, no. 19; for Tell Beydar, see Sallaberger 1998: 85.

in a ritualized setting, one which apparently involved the lighting of wood-fueled fires. There are, moreover, several more attestations of the assignment of carpentry tools to Mari men, some of which also mention izi-gar (see below), strongly suggesting that this link was not merely incidental. It is probably not a coincidence, then, that the same tablet, which assigns carpentry tools to *Gul-la* in the context of the izi-gar rite, also contains some of the earliest mentions linking Armi with Mari. This fits with the contention that Armi was located in the direction of the exploited timber sources (see below in detail §4.0):

[A4, 17]

(6) 2 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *I-ti* / maškim / ga'eš$_x$ / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / A.HA
(7) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-ba / *En-na-*^{d}*Da-gan* / 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba / maškim-maškim-*SU$_3$* / 3 kaskal
(9) 15 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *gu$_2$-li-lum* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / 10 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / 2 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / lugal / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}

(6) 2 shekels of silver for Iti, the agent of the long-distance trader, who conveyed fish sauce.
(7) 5 minas of silver, 1 mina of gold: gift for Enna-Dagan. 5 minas of silver: gift for his agents, for 3 journeys (between Ebla and Mari).
(9) 15 shekels of silver (as) a bracelent (in the fashion of) Armi; 10 minas of silver exchanged for 2 minas of gold, for the LUGAL of Mari.

Fish sauce (A.HA) was a characteristic delicacy of Kakmium and Armi (see below §4.2.2.4), and so probably a product of the Mediterrannean coastal region. An agent of a long distance trader (maškim ga'eš$_x$) – probably a man of Mari – "conveys" (šu-mu-tak$_4$) this product, possibly to Mari itself (with Ebla forming a midway point between the product A.HA and its country of ultimate origin). The two shekels he receives could be simply to cover the cost of his journey. This maškim ga'eš$_x$ could also have been linked with Enna-Dagan and his several agents, listed in the following entry, apparently in connection with 3 commercial journeys (kaskal). Finally, section (9) records gifts for the

ruler of Armi, which included a bracelet (*gu2-li-lum*) in the fashion of Armi, directly alongside 10 minas of gold "exchanged" (šu-bala-ak) for 2 minas of gold. In this connection, a later text reveals that a "smith" could travel to Armi in order to exchange (silver for[?]) gold.[315]

The connection between Armi, and carpentry tools assigned by Ebla to Mari, seems to be rendered more explicit by the following fragment:

[A3, 526]
(1′) […] / […[?]] 2 AGA3-gal 4 AGA3 5 DUB.NAGAR / Silim-Utu /
(2′) 7 ma-na ŠU2.ŠA gin2-DILMUN a-gar5-gar5 / ŠA.PI-1 gin2-DILMUN nagga / 1+[x] gin2-DILMUN […] / […]
(3′) [...] / *Zi-x* /
(4′) 5 gin2-DILMUN ku3:bar6 / BAD-*SU3*-ERIN2+X /
(5′) 10 ma-na a-gar5-gar5 / dam / Ur-sag-da / […] /
(6′) [...] / [x ma-na x] gin2-DILMUN a-gar5-gar5 / 4 3-ni gin2 DILMUN nagga / 1 DUB.NAGAR 1 šum / *Zi-lum* /
(7′) 8 gin2-DILMUN [...] / […]
(8′) […] 4 x [(x)] / *Ar-mi-um*[ki] / DU / *Ma-ri2*[ki] /
(9′) 6 ma-na 20 gin2-DILMUN zabar / […]

(1′) ...2 large axes, 4 axes, and 5 chisels for Silim-Utu.
(2′) 7 minas 20 shekels of pure copper (combined with) 41 shekels of tin (in order to make) ...
(3′) ...
(4′) 5 shekels of silver for Baʾalšu-*Ditanu.
(5′) 10 minas of pure copper for the wife of Ursagda.
(6′) [x minas x] shekels of pure copper, (combined with) 4 ⅓ shekels of tin (in order to make) 1 chisel and 1 saw, for Ṣillum.
(7′) 8 shekels of...
(8′) [...] for (a man from) Armi, who is going to Mari.
(9′) 6 minas, 20 shekels of bronze for [...]

[315] A1, 16 (5): ...*I3-sa-tum* / simug / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi*[ki] / šu-bala-ak / ku3-gi.

Since its original publication, this fragment has been joined with several others to form "a single large tablet,"[316] which, however, has not yet been made available for research. This is unfortunate, because the text seems unique and of very early date. It consists of a large account of copper, tin, and bronze, for a reported total of 352 minas of pure copper (a-gar$_5$-a-gar$_5$) and 334 minas 48 shekels of bronze (zabar). It is unclear if the tin (nagga) is also included in the total.

The information which concerns us is provided by (1′), where several woodworking tools are provided to Silim-Utu,[317] who is, without doubt, the same Silim-Utu sagi, "cupbearer"[318] of Mari, who appears alongside Enna-Dagan in Archi 1981: Text 7 (10), Text 8 (2). He is probably also the anonymous sagi mentioned three times in M12, 25 (9a; 23; 56; see above §3.1.3.2). All of the other named individuals on this fragment were also men from Mari who appear in other early Ebla–Mari tablets; although here only *Zi-lum* (who likewise appears in M12, 25 (36)) is additionally preserved as receiving carpentry tools, its possible that the other men received these as well (one will have to await the publication of the joined tablet). It is interesting to note that these Mari men all bore names that point strongly in the direction of Mesopotamia, above all to Kish. Ur-sag-da, like Silim-Utu, undoubtedly represents a Sumerian name spelled according to the Mesopotamian tradition.[319] Likewise is BAD-*SU$_3$*-ERIN$_2$+X a name spelled exclusively

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[316] Reported in Archi 2005: 90 fn. 30. The combined tablet consists of TM.75.G.1915 + A3, 526 + TM.75.G.4222 + TM.75.G.4237 + TM.75.G.4250 + 4664 + 4885 + 11603.
[317] On the reading of DI.UD as Silim-Utu see Steinkeller 2015.
[318] For Silim-Utu the early cupbearer of Mari see Archi 1999: 147.
[319] Ur-sag-da is also listed in A7, 1 (24). The name is also attested in the phonetic Sumerian spelling Ur-sa-da in A2, 6 (3) and Archi 1981: Text 8 (24), and as Ur-sa$^{\text{l}}$(E$_2$)-da in A7, 16 (40) (note here the important observation of Civil 1987a: 241, "The alternation

with logograms, and which also points to the Mesopotamian tradition,[320] even if, in later texts, this name could apparently also be borne by an Ebla man.[321] Two occurrences reveal the Mari BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X to have been the "special envoy" (maškim-e-gi$_4$) of Ur-sag-da.[322] The present reference to a "wife" (dam) of Ur-sag-da seems to be unique.[323] It is not immediately clear for what purpose she could have received 10 minas of pure copper.

It cannot be a coincidence that these high-ranking men of Mari were issued bronze carpentry tools by the Ebla administration – presumably in order to harvest timber – directly alongside the mention of an anonymous man (or group of men) from Armi, who are travelling to Mari, via Ebla (on such journeys, see below §4.1.1f). It is likely that the individual from Armi would have accompanied the Ebla and Mari men towards the western forested areas, located closer to his own home, in order for Mari to retreive

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sa...E$_2$ is just paleographic. The Ebla scribes occassionally write SA with a vertical at the end"). The desire of Tonietti 1998: 89–90 to see here a Semitic name, while doubting that he was a man from Mari, is unjustified. A transliteration of Ur-sag-da as *"UR-sa$_{12}$-da"* is unwarranted, above all because a syllabogram "*sa$_{12}$*" does not exist at Ebla. Possibly, the name Ur-sag-da represents a shortened form of *Ur-sag-da-nu-me-a "Without the hero (i.e., a war deity), there is nothing," cf. such names (in lugal-, nin-, AN-, ^{d}Nanše-, ^{d}Ba-u$_2$-, etc.) *passim* in the Presargonic corpus.

[320] On ERIN$_2$+X see Steinkeller 1992b: 259f. For a Mesoptamian attestation of the name *Il-su*-ERIN$_2$+X see Steinkeller 1986: 28f.

[321] For the Eblaite BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X, a palatial official in charge of the production of chariots and chariot equipment, see Pomponio 1989a: 302 fn. 9.

[322] A7, 1 (24): BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X / e-gi$_4$-maškim / Ur-sag-da; A7, 16 (40): ...BAD-*SU*$_3$-ERIN$_2$+X / e-gi$_4$-maškim / Ur-sa$^{!}$(E$_2$)-da.

[323] Note here the occurrence of a possibly female personal name of Mari *Al$_6$-ma* in A7, 16 (11; 17) and Archi 1981; text 9 obv. i 6, and rev. iv 4. According to a votive inscription from Mari (Gelb/Kienast 1990: 8, MP 7), *Al-ma* was the name of the wife (DAM) of *I-kun$_3$-ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*, a LUGAL of Mari. However, in Archi op. cit: text 9 rev. iv 4, *Al$_6$-ma* receives a dagger (gir$_2$ mar-tu zu$_2$), which would seem to speak in favor of an indentification as a male.

timber. Afterwards, the Armi man could have decided to undertake a trip, under Ebla auspices, towards Mari, in order to conduct further business there, perhaps even bringing timber and/or other products with him (for a similar occurence, see below §4.3.0). The occurrence of these bronze tool assignments for Mari in a text recording copper and tin ratios emphasizes the practical, rather than ceremonial nature of these expenditures. It also provides an interesting link between the timber industry, and the copper and tin trades – presumably, tools of bronze were used in order to chop down trees and work their logs into finished products. Compare the following attestation:

[Archi 1981, text 8]
(1a) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / TAR ku$_3$-gi / 30^{*324} ma-na a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ / 5 AGA$_3$ / 5 AGA$_3$ mah$_2$ / 5 šum / 5 DUB.NAGAR / nig$_2$-ba / *En-na*-^{d}*Da-gan* /
(1b) 6 la$_2$-16 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig-ba / maškim-maškim-*SU$_3$*

(2a) 5 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 30 ma-na a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ / 5 AGA$_3$ / 5 AGA$_3$ mah / 5 šum / 5 NAGAR.DUB / nig$_2$-ba / Silim-Utu / sagi /
(2b) 5 ma-na ŠA.PI ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba / maškim-maškim-*SU$_3$*

(1a) 5 minas of silver, 30 shekels of gold, 30$^{!}$ minas of pure copper (in the form of) 5 (large?) axes, 5 very large axes, 5 saws, 5 chisels: gift for Enna-Dagan.
(1b) 5 minas 44 shekels of silver: gift for his agents.
(2a) 5 minas of silver, 1 mina of gold, 30 minas of pure copper (in the form of) 5 (large?) axes, 5 very large axes, 5 saws, 5 shisels: gift for Silim-Utu, the cupbearer.
(2b) 5 minas, 40 shekels of silver: gift for his agents.

Thus we see that even Enna-Dagan himself was issued carpentry tools, alongside his cupbearer Silim-Utu. Considering the quantity of the tools, it could be that some of them were used by Enna-Dagan and Silim-Utu's agents (maškim), who are mentioned alongside them. By analogy with the previous example, it could also be that these tools

[324] The number is not visible in the published photo (Archi 1981: fig. 42 a–b); the edition has 3 (typo?), but it should be 30 by analogy with (2a).

were actually made of bronze (zabar) and not simply pure copper (a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$) – perhaps in this particular case the tin was not considered an item of acountability, and so only the expenditure of pure copper needed to be recorded. It thus seems possible that Enna-Dagan himself could have participated in the harvesting of timber from the lands west of Ebla. As shown above for the later Mesopotamian context, the felling of a tree by means of bronze or copper tools would have been a feat of strength, endurance, and skill appropriate to a heroic warrior. It could well be, that when making trips from Mari to Ebla, these elite Mari men also made excursions to the forested areas, where they felled trees and brought them back to the Euphrates to be sent back home.

Note that this occcurrence lists first the AGA$_3$ followed by the AGA$_3$ mah, in contrast to the example from A7, 17, which listed instead an AGA$_3$ gal (weighing one mina, or 60 shekels) followed by a regular AGA$_3$ (weighing half of a mina, or 30 shekels). Based on the given figure of 30 minas of copper for five each of an aga$_3$, aga$_3$ mah, šum, and DUB.NAGAR, it would appear that an AGA$_3$ mah was actually significantly heavier than an AGA$_3$ gal – over four times as heavy. Using the standard values of 30 shekels for a saw (šum) and 20 shekels for a chisel (DUB.NAGAR) leaves us still with 1,550 shekels for the two sets of 5 axes; but if we insert for this text's aga$_3$ and aga$_3$ mah the 30 and 60 shekel weights for the AGA$_3$ and AGA$_3$ gal of A7, 17, that would only come out to 450 shekels (a 1,100 shekel discrepency). If we assume that this text's "regular" AGA$_3$ weighed 30 shekels, then each AGA$_3$ mah would have to have weighed 280 shekels, or 4 minas 40 shekels. If instead we assume that this text's AGA$_3$ actually corresponded to an AGA$_3$ gal and thus weighed 60 shekels, then the AGA$_3$ mah would have weighed 250 shekels, or 4 minas 10 shekels. This seems like a fully appropriate weight for a true lumberjack's axe,

meant for felling large trees. There appears to be only one other attestation, of a "3 AGA$_3$ gal mah," which occurs alongside "4 *ha-zi* mah" and "2 DUB.NAGAR mah."[325] The weight of these objects is however unclear, because the text only lists a (partial?) quantity tin that was expended for them. This occurrence would seem thus to bolster the probability that, in the present text, a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ "pure copper" simply stands *pars pro toto* for a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ + nagga (tin) = zabar, "bronze."

In addition to another mention of woodworking tools in association with the izi-gar rite, the following entry from a fragment also contains a rare mention of soldiers of Mari:

[A12, 1224]
(1′) [x+$^{?}$]/ 10 ˹gin$_2$˺-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 2 *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / aga$_3$-us$_2$ / nar-nar
(2′) TAR ku$_3$:bar$_6$ *Wa-ba-rum$_2$* / [...]
(3′) [...] / ˹*Ib-gi*˺*-tum* / giš-dug-DU / izi-gar /
(6′) [x ma-na a-gar$_5$-gar$_5^{?}$] / [x $_{+}^{?}$] 5 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / nagga / kin$_5$-ak / 5 AGA$_3$ gal 5 AGA$_3$ 5 DUB.NAGAR / nig$_2$-ba / *I-ku-wa-an*[326]

(1′) 10 sheekels of silver for 2 men of Mari: (one in charge of$^{?}$) elite soldiers, and (one in charge of$^{?}$) singers.
(2′) 30 shekels of silver for Wabarum.
(3′) … for Ipqitum, …-assignment for the fire ceremony.
(6′) [X minas of pure copper? and] x$^{?}$+5 shekels of silver, exchanged for tin, in order to manufacture 5 large axes, 5 axes, 5 chisels: gift for Ikuwan.

On the one hand, this fragment implies that the Mari singers who visited Ebla were acompannied and protected by soldiers (aga$_3$-us$_2$). [327] We also see again the assignment of

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[325] MEE 12, 35 (101a): 15 (gin$_2$) nagga / šub *si-in* / *ni-zi-mu*/ 4 *ha-zi* mah / *wa* / 3 aga$_3$-gal mah / 2 dub.nagar mah / lu$_2$ e-siki. Cf. Archi 2010b: 28–29. The quantity of tin seems too low to produce this many tools.
[326] Read in Catagnoti/Lahlouh 2006: 329 as *I-ku-pi*-DINGIR, but this reading, reminiscent of a name of the Old Babylonian period, seems unlikely for the Ebla period. A value *pi* of the sign *WA* does not seem to exist at Ebla. More likely seems a derivation from a G stem present of **kwn* "to be firm, true." Cf. Krebernik 1988b: 59.

carpentry tools in close association with a "fire ceremony" (izi-gar). At the same time, the names of the men mentioned all point to a potential commercial background. Although this fragment could be of slightly later date, *Ib-gi-dum* is with little doubt the same man of Mari encoutered already in A7, 6 and M12, 25 (see above §§3.1.2–3.1.3.2), attested in the role of u_5 or "(mercantile) transport driver." Wabarum, in contrast, seems to have been a high-ranking merchant in the service of the Ebla.[328] He is attested in association with large purchases made from several different "markets." On one occcasion[329] he purchased a large quantity of textiles and an unspecified quantity of wooden objects (giš-ti-HAR) from the markets of the goddess ʾAdamma and place called $BAD_3.AN^{ki}$.[330] On another, he received silver in order to make various purchases from seven different marketplaces.[331] Those purchases are themselves immediately followed by another set of purchases (also made by Wabarum?) from the markets of Mari and Kish.[332] Since

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[327] On aga_3-us_2, which at Ebla denotes a military official or leader of high rank, see Bonechi 2016e: 19–28.

[328] Biga 2003: 65, "…il personaggio più frequentemente mènzionato e più attivo nelle fiere anche lontane è Wabarum che sembra essere un mercante di stato al servizio del re di Ebla."

[329] M7, 29 rev. xiii 6–16: 3 ma-na 55 gin_2-dilmun ku_3:bar_6 / nig_2-$šam_2$ 27 ib_2-iii-tug_2-sa_6-gun_3 / 1 *mi-at* 67 ib_2-iii-tug_2-gun_3 / 4 ma-na $šu_2$.ša ku_3:bar_6 / [nig_2-$šam_2$] giš-ti-har / *Wa-ba-rum*$_2$ / ki:lam_7 / ^{d}*A-da-ma* / *wa* / ki:lam_7 / $BAD_3.AN^{ki}$ /

[330] In the Mesopotamian tradition the logogram $BAD_3.AN^{ki}$ refers to the city of Der, which was located on a key route from Mesopotamia into Iran. It seems however unlikely that the present occurrence, mentioned directly along the Syrian goddess ^{d}*A-da-ma*, could refer to the same place.

[331] M10, 29 rev. xiv 10– xvi 19 (various textiles; "Mariote" wool (na_4-siki *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$); copper (3 *mi-at* a-gar_5); nig_2-NE; giš-ti-HAR; turtles$^{?}$ (ba-ba)) / *Wa-ba-rum*$_2$ / šu-ba_4-ti / KI:LAM_7 / ^{d}*A-dam-ma* / KI:LAM_7 / ʾ*A*$_3$*-da-ni*^{ki} / lu_2 ^{d}AMA-*ra* / KI:LAM_7 / *NI-ap*^{ki} / KI:LAM_7 / ʾ*A*$_3$-[*da*] / KI:LAM_7 / *Ši-*ʾ*a*$_3$*-mu*^{ki} / KI:LAM_7 / ^{d}*Gi-ba-lu* / KI:LAM_7 / $SA.ZA_X^{ki}$.

[332] M10, 29 rev. xvi 20–xvii 8: 12 ma-na 54 (gin_2) ku_3:bar_6 / nig_2-sam_2 41 $zara_6$-tug_2 / 13 aktum-tug_2 ti-tug_2 / 21 ʾ*a*$_3$*-da-um*-tug_2-2 igi-tum_3 / 75 ʾ*a*$_3$*-da-um*-tug_2-1 / 10 nig_2-la-sag-sa_6 / 22 nig_2-la_2-gaba / 5 ib_2-tug_2 u_2 *Ma-ri*^{ki} / 15 gin_2-dilmun ku_3:bar_6 / nig_2-sam_2 40 SI-

Wabarum co-occurs in the above fragment with Ipqitum and an assignment of carpentry tools, it seems possible that he could have been here involved in some sort of commercial transaction related to timber and involving Mari. Finally, in (6′) above we see the expenditure of x+$^{?}$5 shekels of silver in exchange for an unspecified quantity of tin, used once again to manufacture 5 sets of large axes, regular axes, and chisels. The recipient, *I-ku-wa-an*, was likewise a man of Mari.[333] He is attested in yet another context involving carpentry tools:

[M2, 13]

rev. i 1f: 4 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$/ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 3 aga$_3$-gal zabar / 3 ma-na zabar / 3 AGA$_3$ zabar / 1 ma-na tar zabar / 3 DUB.NAGAR zabar / 1 ma-na zabar / 1 gir$_2$-zu$_2$ / 1 gada-sa$_6$ / nig$_2$-ba / *I-ku-wa-an* / 1 kaskal / *in* ud / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / nig$_2$-ba / *Kеš$_2$-du-ut*/ E$_2$×PAP

"4 minas of silver, 1 mina of gold, 3 large bronze axes (weighing) 3 minas of bronze, 3 axes (weighing) 1 mina of bronze, 3 bronze chisels (weighing) 1 mina of bronze, 1 pointed dagger, one fine linen cloth: gift for Ikuwan, for 1 journey: on the occasion when he delivered a funerary gift for Kešdut."

This Kešdut has been identified as the wife of king Irkab-Damu, who died in childbirth.[334] Apparently, Ikuwan brought a funeral gift for her (the content of which is not specified), for which he was rewarded with gold and silver, a set of carpentry tools, a dagger, and a very prestigious type of garment.[335] The exact relevance of the notation "1

ʾ*a$_3$-tum* / 11 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ 1 *mi-at* 2 ba-ba / ki:lam$_7$ / Kiš^{ki} / *wa* / ki:lam$_7$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, "12 minas 54 shekels of silver, in order to purchase 41 gowns, 13 heavy cloths for *bedsheets*, 21 two-ply ʾ*a.*-garments …, 75 one-ply ʾ*a.*-garments, 10 fine turbans, 22 breastbands, and 5 sashes *colored* (in the fashion of) Mari; 15 shekels of silver, in order to purchase 40 …, 11 shekels of silver in order to purchase 102 turtles: (acquired at) the market of Kish and the market of Mari."

[333] See the mu-DU income account A1, 30 (23): 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ / mu-DU / *I-ku-wa-an* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}.

[334] Archi 2016b: 6–7.

[335] A gada-sa$_6$ was also gifted to the ruler of Nagar *Ma-ra*-AN in A7, 16 (19).

kaskal" to this transaction is not so clear (it could simply refer to the journey from Mari to Ebla, but perhaps also a commercial background is alluded to). It is also not immediately clear whether there was a specific connection between the tools used for timber harvest and a funeral (E$_2$×PAP)[336] – but it is suggestive, that such tools were also listed (above) in association with the izi-gar rite, which itself likely had a netherworld or afterlife connection. In any case, it is likely that these bronze tools once again served a very practical purpose related to timber harvest, and were not only ceremonial items.

Interestingly, the same *I-ku-wa-an* seems also to have been somehow involved in the olive oil trade:

[M2, 35]
obv. viii 8f: 10 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Mu$^{?}$-rum$_2$* / lu$_2$ i$_3$-giš / lu$_2$ *I-ku-wa-an* / šu-mu-tak$_4$
rev. i 10f: 10 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / e-gi-maškim / *I-ku-wa-an* / u$_2$-il$_2$ / i$_3$-giš

"10 shekels of silver for Mu$^{?}$rum, the one who conveyed the olive oil of Ikuwan.
10 shekels of silver for the special envoy of Ikuwan, who *transported* olive oil (from Ebla to Mari)."

This attestation thus brings us full circle regarding two of the most important commodities, which were likely shipped by the u$_5$ from Ebla towards Mari – olive oil and timber. This same text M2, 35 also mentions several u$_5$ and ga'eš$_x$, in association with some of the same interstitial places seen already in M12, 25, such as *Mu:ru$_{12}$*^{ki} and *U$_9$-ra-na-a*^{ki}. Also appearing in this text is the Ebla chief merchant Wabarum (see above), in a difficult and unusually described context:

[M2, 35]

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[336] The word E$_2$×PAP probably literally means "grave (ceremony)," derived *pars pro toto* from the original Sumerian meaning "water pipe (for libations)." On E$_2$×PAP at Ebla see Biga 2007-2008: 250–256; Civil 1987b: 33.

rev. v 10f: 10 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / e-gi$_4$-maškim / *Wa-ba-rum$_2$* / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / ˹*Ib-dur-*˺*-i-šar* / igi / ga$_2$-ki ga$_2$-ki / *za-ti* / ga'eš$_x$ / giš-NE / ku$_2$

"10 shekels of silver for the special envoy of Wabarum, who went with Ipṭur-Išar (in order to) … the merchant, *the lighting of fire*.

The occurrence of ga'eš$_x$ clearly points to a commercial context, most likely involving Mari; the reference to a journey (DU) too is likely to refer to a commercial trip towards or somehow involving Mari.[337] Furthemore, as we have seen above (§3.1.2), Ipṭur-Išar was one of the Ebla LUGALs who brought gifts to ma$_2$-NE^{ki} for Queen Paba of Mari.

The rest of the passage, apparently further describing the situation or purpose of the verb of motion DU, is unique and not so easily understandable. However, in light of the above-studied contexts, involving the issuing of carpentry tools for Mari men in the context of the izi-gar rite, the phrase giš-NE / ku$_2$ is quite suggestive. For lack of any other options, it seems inherently likely that this is to be taken as a reference to the consumption of wood by fire,[338] perhaps in a context related or similar to the izi(NE)-gar rite. As with the present occurrence of ga'eš$_x$, a commercial connection for izi-gar was also suggested by the participation (above) of eg. *Gul-la* the u$_5$, Enna-Dagan's brother.

Igi could perhaps be understood as a preposition,[339] but a verb might be possible too.[340] The attestations of ga$_2$-ki at Ebla are deep and complicated.[341] The term in general

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[337] Bonechi 2007: 202, "In a rather enigmatic way an administrative text dealing with Mari (*MEE* 2 35) mentions a plurality of GA$_2$.KIs, in the context of a journey of *Wa-ba-rum*'s emissary, certainly along a route Ebla-Mari."
[338] Cf. the later lexical entry in Landsberger 1958 (=MSL VI): 131 (HAR-ra VIIB, 209), [giš-iz]i ˹ku$_2$˺-e = *e-ṣu ša$_2$* izi *ak-lu*, "wood which fire has consumed."
[339] I.e., it could perhaps represent a defective writing for igi-tum$_3$, for which see Steinkeller 1984; Fronzarolli 1999.

seems to denote a kind of enclosed structure. It could refer, in a mundane context, to an "enclosure, fence, pen with stalls" for animals. But it is also mentioned in association with various important Eblaite deities,[342] in which case it seems to denote part of a religious building (though perhaps here too, it is in some way connoted by animals). The present occurrence seems to be the only one where ga$_2$-ki occurs in a reduplicated form; perhaps it could be understood as "*small shrines*." The term *za-ti*, occuring before ga'eš$_x$, is unlikely to be a presonal name, but its meaning is uncertain.[343]

The interpretation of this passage remains unclear.[344] But in light of the close co-occurence of ga'eš$_x$ and giš-NE, and the prosopographical background, it seems likely that this occurrence could have something to do with timber, in an elite ceremonial context involving the use of wood as torches or as fuel for fire.

Given the geographical context of these early occurrences involving Ebla, Mari, timber tools, and the izi-gar rite, it is striking to note that in later tradition, the chief patron of the ne-izi-gar rites was Gilgamesh himself, the same hero who was famous for fetching timber from the Syro-Levantine forests. According to one composition, "Without him (Gilgamesh), no light would be kindled there, during the month of lighting

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[340] For such a verbal use of igi cf. Fronzaroli 2003: 268, s.v., with a translation "vedere, provvedere."
[341] See Bonechi 2016b: 5–6.; Bonechi 2007: 200–203; Bonechi 1997: 532–533, fn. 400; Waetzoldt 2001: 124–125.
[342] See the difficult text M12, 8; cf. Bonechi 2007: 202.
[343] Bonechi 1997: 533, fn. 400, "la graphie *za-ti* qui suit ga$_2$-ki-ga$_2$-ki n'est pas un NP... mais un terme du lexique." Could *za-ti* represent an anomalously spelled pronoun (i.e. equivalent to *sa-ti*)?
[344] Translation attempt: *Wa-ba-rum$_2$* / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *ʿIb-dur-ʾ-i-šar* / igi / ga$_2$-ki ga$_2$-ki / *za-ti* / ga'eš$_x$ / giš-NE / ku$_2$ "W. who went with I. in order to see th*e structures which the chief trader let consume with wood(-fueled) fire"* (?).

torches and braziers (iti ne-izi-gar), during the festival of dead spirits."[345] Already in texts from Pre-Sargonic Lagash – roughly contemporary with the Ebla Palace G – Gilgamesh is attested presiding over what seem to be netherworld rites involving offerings for deceased ancestors.[346] Could the men from Mari, who received woodworking tools from Ebla on the occasion of an izi-gar rite, have already been aware of a tradition about that great hero Gilgamesh, who presided over rites for the dead, and who also was famous for retrieving cedars from the forests located at not so great a distance from Ebla itself?

Important for helping to contextualize all these early occurrences involving the issuance of tools that allude to timber harvest, is a later group of documents, which reveal that existence of a large colony of men from Mari, numbering hundreds of individuals, who were residing at Tunep to the southwest of Ebla, and who receive over one hundred axes (*ha-zi*). It is not so clear exactly how the *ha-zi* differed from the aga$_3$, but given the geographical conext, a purpose of harvesting wood for these axes seems very likely; see below §7.2.

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[345] The Death of Gilgamesh, column V, 10–11 (Cavigneaux/Al-Rawi 2000: 16): iti ne-izi-gar ezen gidim-ma-ke$_4$-ne / e-ne-da nu-me-a igi-bi-a UD nam-ba-an-ga$_2$-ga$_2$.

[346] See the texts DP 54; DP 218; RTC 58; VS 14, 74; VS 14, 172; VS 27, 85; cf. Selz 1995: 105–106. In these texts offerings are made to deceased elite individuals such as the royal ancestor Gu-NI.DU, Enentarzi, and the sanga-priest DU.DU, and (after their deaths) LugalANda and his wife Baragnamtara. The occasion of these offerings is defined as the gu$_2$ ^{d}Bil$_3$-aga$_3$-mes-ka – where gu$_2$ probably does not mean "river bank" (as eg. instead for Selz 1995: 105 and George 2003: 124). Here, and in the related phrase gu$_2$ en-na "assembly of (dead) ENs," gu$_2$ is to be understood in the sense of *naphāru*, referring to an "assembly, congregation," i.e. an gathering of dead spirits over which Gilgamesh presided. See Steinkeller 1995: 542–543; Steinkeller 1999: 110–111; Steinkeller 2017: 30–31 with fn. 41.

3.1.4 The Enna-Dagan Ritual and The Rulers of Mari

The Enna-Dagan ritual A13, 1 features two protagonists interacting with one another, and participating in a ritual together, almost certainly at the city of Tuttul, home of the temple of Dagan. One is an anonymous EN, while the other is Enna-Dagan, who is not given a title. The EN is mentioned over a dozen times – not once, however, in relation to a geographical name. On the other hand, there is a single mention in (38) of the LUGAL / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$. It has been suggested that the anonymous EN refers to a ruler of Mari, either NI-zi or Iplus-Il, while the LUGAL *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ refers to the same character.[347] This, however, seems unlikely. We would have to believe that the scribe of the text wrote EN over a dozen times, never once indicating "Mari." Yet, at the same time he decided, for no apparent reason, once to write LUGAL instead of EN, and on this sole occasion also felt compelled to also specify that it was the LUGAL of Mari to whom he referred. Instead, it is more likely that the anonymous EN was the one of Ebla. Depending on the exact dating of the text, the "LUGAL of Mari" could refer to either one of Enna-Dagan's predecessors, also present during the ritual but in a passive role, or it could simply refer to Enna-Dagan himself, this one time by his title instead of by name.

The participation of the Ebla EN would make more sense within the context of the ritual, and also provide a reason as to why this document was preserved at Ebla in the first place. The ritual seems to be the product of the Ebla scribal school.[348] While there

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[347] Fronzaroli 2003: 12.

[348] Cf. Ibid.: " Un testo così centrato sulla regalità mariota non può emanare che dalla cancelleria della città stessa. La copia conservata a Ebla potrebbe essere della mano di uno scriba eblaita, come suggerisce l'impiego quasi esclusivo del sumerogramma en per

are, as would be expected, some apparently Mariote features,[349] the text shows all the peculiarities of Ebla system of syllabic spelling that one sees, above all, in the Ebla royal rituals (A11, 1 and 2)[350] and in letters. This includes, for example, common "L-Weakening," especially on verbal prefixes (i.e. *la* or *lā*).

This scenario also matches what the Enna-Dagan letter itself shows us – namely, that Enna-Dagan was the one who interacted and communicated with the EN of Ebla. The ritual centers around the bringing of offerings by the EN of Ebla to Dagan and his wife (probably a form of the mother goddess) in Tuttul, in order to obtain an oracular message. However, the EN cannot do this alone, and so requires the intermediation and advice of Enna-Dagan:

[A13, 1]
(3) *i-hu-ma* / en / *En-na-Da-gan* (4) diri / DU
(5) du$_7$ / ˹en˺ / *En-na-Da-gan* /
(6) e$_2$ / *A-B*[*I$_2$*] / dingir-dingir-dingir / DU
(7) du$_7$ / en / *En-na-Da-gan* /
(8) *me-ne-iš* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *na-da-ma* / sikil / *na-ba-na-a* / *lu*-šu-mu-tak$_4$
(9) *an-na* / [en] / i$_3$-n[a]-sum / ʾ*a$_5$-na* / *En-na-Da-gan*

(3) Enna-Dagan confronts the EN (of Ebla): "Have you gone yet?"
(5–6) The EN (of Ebla) *replies* to Enna-Dagan: "I'm going to the temple of the father of the gods (i.e., Dagan)."

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indicare il sovrano (di contro all'uso mariota di lugal)." A simpler explanation is that EN, as expected, denotes the ruler of Ebla. As has been shown above, the Ebla scribes are not haphazard in their use of one title or another.

[349] Among such Mariote scribal features one could name, among other things, the phonetic use of KI, and the use of ʾ*a$_5$-na* (which alternates, however, with *si-in*).

[350] Cf. Ibid.: "In ogni caso, questo testo che ha servito di modello ortografico (e forse anche in parte stilistico) per la redazione del rituale regale eblaita più antico (ARET XI 1), testimonia i rapporti culturali fra le due città nel periodo della preminenza mariota." A simpler exaplanation is that the royal ritual and the ritual A13, 1 both reflect Eblaite scribal traditions.

(7–8) Enna-Dagan *replies* to the EN (of Ebla): "Why are you carrying (your offering) with such care[351]? I would rather carry our pure sifted[352] (barley) (together)."
(9) The EN (of Ebla) agrees with Enna-Dagan.

While this text is admitedly difficult to understand, it seems like Enna-Dagan is challenging the EN. Enna-Dagan "confronts" (**mahārum*) the EN and asks him what his plan is; not satisfied with his response, Enna-Dagan makes a new suggestion, to which the EN agrees. It seems unlikely that Enna-Dagan would speak to his own superior in such a manner.

While a full analysis of the text is beyond the scope of the present study, the dynamic between the two figures seems not to be one of a superior to an inferior, but of equals. The EN must, however, rely on Enna-Dagan to serve as his intermediary, which makes sense, given Mari's political (and probably also cultural) control over Tuttul:

[A13, 1]

(21) du$_{11}$ / en / *ʾa$_5$-na* / *En-na-Da-gan*
(22) *ti-ba-a* / e$_2$ / *ša-a-am$_6$* / *a-sa-a-ma* / e$_2$ / *En-na-Da-gan*
(23) *ti-iš-da-ga-ad* / 5 maš$_2$ 1 LAK 20 / e$_2$ / *si-ni* / *ša* me / *si-in* / *du-uš-gu$_2$-de$_3$*

(22) When you arrive[353] at the temple, please complete[354] the *sacrifice*[355] in the temple, O Enna-Dagan,
(23) Will you slaughter[356] 5 kids and 1 billy-goat[357] in the temple – the one of the divine powers – for my purification ritual[358]?

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[351] On *na-da-ma* as from **nʾd* "to do pay attention, to do something carefully," see Fronzaroli 2003: 14.
[352] On *na-ba-na-a* as from **npy* "to sift, to winnow," see Ibid.
[353] On *ti-ba-a* as from **bwʾ* "to go along," see Fronzaroli 2003: 17.
[354] On *ša-a-am$_6$* as from **ṯll* "prey, plunder" see Ibid.
[355] On *a-sa-a-ma* from **slm* "to be whole, healthy," interpreted as a D form "to make complete" + assertive particle (*l*)*a-*, see Ibid.
[356] On *ti-iš-da-ga-ad* as a Š from **mqt* "to fall," interpreted as a Š form, see Ibid.
[357] On LAK 20, "male goat," see Steinkeller 1992a: 85, with references.
[358] On *du-uš-gu$_2$-de$_3$* from **ḏkw* (Akkadian: *zakû*) see Fronzaroli 2003: 18.

It is difficult to imagine why the EN would need to rely on Enna-Dagan to enter the temple for him, if he were the EN of Mari. Apparently, the right of of this EN to perform sacrifices in the temple is not yet established. Later, when the EN has gained an audience before the divine couple, his privilege to make sacrifices seems to be called into question again by the mother goddess (or her representative). This privilege is supposed to be reserved for the "clans" (*li-im li-im*) a group to which the EN apparently does not belong:

[A1, 13]

(44) du$_7$ / en
(45) *si-ki* / *ZE$_2$* / *A-BU$_3$* / dingir-dingir-dingir
(46) du$_{11}$ / *A-BU$_3$* / dingir-dingir-dingir / *si-in* / en
(47) kaskal / *ba-li*-a / nu du / *wa-a* / kin$_5$-ak / nu kin$_5$-ak / *a-ti* / *ti-sa-a-a* / sikil / e$_2$ *si*-[*n*]*a-ti* / [nu] šu-mu-tak$_4$
(48) du$_{11}$ / ama / dingir-dingir-dingir / *si-in* / *A-BI$_2$* / dingir-dingir-dingir
(49) lu$_2$ šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *li-im li-im*

(44) The EN replies (to Dagan):
(45) My *decision*[359] is whatever the father of the gods desires.
(46) The father of the gods says to the EN:
(47) Do not undergo a journey without my (approval), and do not undertake any works, without having brought the requested[360] pure (barley) to the House of Dreams.
(48) The mother of the gods says to the father of the gods:
(49) (But) the ones who (are supposed to) bring (offerings) are the clans!

It seems unlikely that a Mari ruler would not have already belonged to these "clans." The Ebla ruler on the other hand would have been a foreigner from the Mariote or Tuttulian perspective. The document is unfortunately damaged from this point on, but apparently this discrepency is resolved. In a damaged context, we see in (54) the taking of oaths

[359] For an "ipotesi di lavoro" on *si-ki* as possibly from **slq* "to split, to divide," see Fronzaroli 2003: 22.
[360] On *ti-sa-a-a* from **šʾl* "to request" see Fronzaroli 2003: 23.

(nam-TAR). This speaks in favor of a context involving international relations. Of key importance is the fact that a man is mentioned in the context of this oath, whose name *Iš*$_{12}$(LAM)*-gi-da-mu* implies him to have been a man from Ebla. The element *-damu* "blood, clan" is characteristic for the Ebla onomasticon, but does not seem to be attested for Mari names. The name is also spelled, exceptionally for this text, with standard Ebla *gi*, in place of "Mariote" *ki*. Quite significantly, *Iš*$_{12}$*-gi-da-mu* is attested in a very early Ebla monthly textile account, which also features the presence of *En-na-Da-ga-an*, a spelling that suggests an early date:[361]

[A15, 1; month broken]

(5′) 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$ / *En-na-Da-ga-an*
(10′a) 1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-sa$_6$ / *Iš*$_{12}$*-gi-Da-mu* /
(10′b) 10 sal-tug$_2$ 30 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$ / maškim-*SU*$_3$
(11′a) 1 *gu-ʿziʾ*-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-sa$_6$ / *Ki-li-im* /
(11′b) 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$ maškim-*SU*$_3$

This context strongly suggests that *Iš*$_{12}$*-gi-Da-mu* was an Eblaite LUGAL. Appearing immediately after him, and receiving the same types of gifts, is *Ki-li-im*, known in later texts as *Gi-a-li-im*, who was the Ebla LUGAL[362] of a place called Waʾaran.[363] A later chancery text, possibly dating to the time of Ibrium, deals with the splitting up of *Gi-a-li-im*'s estate in Waʾaran among his his many sons. In the present

[361] The apparently more archaic spelling *En-na-da-ga-an* (as opposed to *En-na-*(^{d})*Da-gan*) occurs in A2, 6 (19)*; A7, 6 (13)*; A15, 1 (5); M12, 25 (44) (see above §3.1.3.2); Archi 1981: Texts 7 and 9, and TM.03.G.1000 (Archi 2016b: 12f; see above §3.1.3.3.1).
[362] On this official see Bonechi 2016a: 55f.
[363] See Bonechi 1993: 321 for the variant spellings: *Wa-a-ra-an*^{ki}, *Wa-la-nu*^{ki}, *Wa-ra-an*^{ki}, *Wa-ra-nu*^{ki}. The Ebla Waʾaran is to be distinguished from a place near Mari called *Wa-ra-ne*^{ki} (attested in Gelb/Kienast 1990: 8–9, MP 7), which appears in Ebla texts instead as *U*$_9$*-ra-na-a*^{ki} (except for *Wa-ra-nu*^{ki} in M12, 25, above §3.1.3.2).

occurence, *Gi-a-li-im* aka *Ki-li-im* could have been still a young man, while *Iš$_{12}$-gi-Da-mu*, apparently possessing far more agents (at least 10 based on the number of textiles), belonged to an older generation. The co-occurrence of *Iš$_{12}$-gi-Da-mu* with Enna-Dagan in A15, 1 and A13, 1 strongly suggests we are dealing with one and the same figure. And so, if the anonymous EN of A13, 1 were not the one of Ebla, there would be little explanation for the presence of an Ebla high official, mentioned in association with an oath (nam-TAR) at the climax of the ritual.

In conclusion, the Enna-Dagan ritual could provide one more piece of evidence that Ebla-Mari relations were amicable during the reign of Iplus-Il and his immediate successors. Mari seems to have held the superior position with regard to Ebla, but there is no indication that Mari was a "great enemy" of Ebla.[364]

3.1.5 The Rulers of Mari: Evaluation

The documents analyzed throughout this study reveal no scribal inconsistency or confusion as to what the title of the highest authority of Mari was. Around the middle of his reign, Iplus-Il changed his title from the EN used throughout the rest of Syria, to LUGAL, likely under Mesopotamian, i.e. Kishite influence. This change is likely also mentioned in a news item, recorded in M12, 25 (49), nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN en *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / LUGAL. This did not, however, spell the end of the title EN at Mari. It could refer a high official, such as Enna-Dagan, who held this title when he was a high-ranking general, and when Iplus-Il was probably advanced in age. NI-zi, on the other hand, is never attested in connection with the title of EN. While this is speculative, it seems possible that NI-zi

[364] As for Archi 2016: 4, referring to the death of Iplus-Il.

could have been of the same generation as Iplus-Il – perhaps an older general or some other high rank – at any rate, already somewhat of a withdrawn presence by the time he became LUGAL. Enna-Dagan instead may have been a junior, active, and mobile official, already visble and prominent when Iplus-Il was old.

Iplus-Il stands out from the rest of the early Mari rulers, almost as a "proto-Sargon." Based on his political and military savy, it is tempting to connect his change in title from EN to LUGAL with the "King of Kish" phenomenon attested in Mesopotamia. Iplus-Il's death is demonstrated in rather dramatic fashion, by a tablet recording rich gifts for his funeral,[365] for which several Ebla elites were apparently present. No other document seems to record a comparable situation for another ruler of the Ebla Palace G period.

It has been asserted that a "year formula" refers to the death of NI-zi,[366] but this seems very uncertain: gu$_2$:an-še$_3$ (totals of gold and silver)… / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *Ir$_3$-ra-ku*^{ki} / *in* ud / NI-*zi* TIL.TIL DIŠ mu / iti *ga-sum*.[367] It seems that *in* ud / NI-*zi* TIL.TIL is a description not of a year, but of the specific event at Irraku that formed the occasion of the deliveries (šu-mu-tak$_4$). The year is simply "year one" or "one year." The reduplicated form TIL.TIL renders a translation "died" very unlikely. A more likely interpretation, that would fit with a reduplicated form, could be "on the occassion when NI-*zi* (and his large enotourage) arrived (at Irraku)," with the reduplication thus expressing a plural subject.[368] There are certainly instances where TIL is to be read uš$_2$ and interpreted as "(a person)

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[365] A2, 4.
[366] Archi/Biga 2003: 3.
[367] Archi 1981: text 3, (3).
[368] On the translation of TIL as "to arrive, to complete a journey," see below §5.5.

died," but the Ebla occurrences of TIL.TIL all seem to belong to a different context. It seems also possible that other occurrences of simple TIL, which have been interpreted as referring to "death," might likewise actually refer to an "arrival," to Ebla or elsewhere, on a diplomatic occasion.[369] It is possible that the appearance of Enna-Dagan as LUGAL means that NI-zi must have died, but by no means certain.

One deals with a similar situation regarding Enna-Dagan; though his death has been reconstructed in a rather dramatic fashion,[370] there does not appear to be any direct textual reference to it. His death is instead assumed by the appearance of a new figure on the scene, Iku(n)-Šar, one who, however, is now referred to by a different title, EN. The use of the appearance of an EN in order to prove that a LUGAL had died is inherently problematic. Moreover, Ebla's relationship with this new EN figure seems to have been different, as he is mentioned very rarely (only two occurrences).[371] One time he receives half a mina of gold, another a set of textiles, both times sent out (šu-mu-tak$_4$) to Mari; he

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[369] Eg. the unpublished passage cited in Archi/Biga 2003, 3, from TM.75.G.1574 obv. iii 2–rev. i 4: *in* diš mu lugal *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} TIL *u$_3$* en [*Kak*]-*mi-um*^{ki} [T]IL, could mean "during the year when the king of Mari arrived and the king of Kakmium arrived (to Ebla, and met each other)." It would seem somewhat odd to date a tablet by the death of two different, unrelated foreign sovereigns. In general, it seems like the Ebla "year formulae" refer to events specific to the tablet they appear on. In some cases, they could serve to describe the circumstances of a given transaction, rather than being proper names of a given year.
[370] Archi/Biga 2003: 2, "Enna-Dagan does not claim any undertaking other than the completion of a military expedition begun by Iblul-Il. It is obvious that the letter, in which Enna-Dagan makes clear his program of continuing Iblul-Il's political hegemony, was written soon after he assumed the throne. Events were, however, to take a different turn as he was soon to die." Ibid.: 5, "Iku(n)-Išar, Enna-Dagan's successor, is mentioned in a [metals account] from the first year of minister Ibrium (in the first months of the same year in which king Irkab-Damu died)… All these elements suggest that Enna-Dagan of Mari and Irkab-Damu of Ebla died during the same year." Here, the fact that Ikun-Išar bears a different title than Enna-Dagan is glossed over.
[371] See Archi/Biga 2003: 5; TM.75.G.1705 (unpublished) rev vi 4–10: tar ku$_3$gi

never appears to have come to Ebla. The appearance of this new figure also just happens to coincide with a moment when major political and administrative changes were underway at Ebla. The start of Išar-Damu's reign, when Ibrium assumed full control over the Ebla state, could likey have marked also a new phase in Ebla–Mari relations. On the other hand, it could be possible that the emergence of an EN of Mari reflects some sort of political development at Mari itself, perhaps in reaction to the change that occurred under Iplus-Il; it is impossible to know for sure. But it seems unlikely to be a coincidence that Iku(n)-Šar is, on the one hand, mentioned so rarely, and at the same time, is only ever referred to as EN, in stark contrast to his predecessors and successors, who were much more visible on the Ebla scene.

Finally, one notes that some time after the appearance of Ikun-Šar as an EN, a figure named Enna-Dagan of Mari starts to be mentioned again. This one has in turn been identified as a different Enna-Dagan, but only so as fit the unproven contention that the previous Enna-Dagan died.[372] A case of homonymy for someone of this stature seems inherently unlikely. If HI-dar could have survived all the way from Iplus-Il's time until the end of the archives, to eventually take the title of LUGAL, there is no reason why Enna-Dagan could not have done so as well. Based on their early appearances, it seems likely that HI-dar and Enna-Dagan belonged to the same generation, and may have been close in age. Like HI-dar, a man with the name Enna-Dagan still occurs in texts from archive

[372] Archi/Biga 2003: 12, "The following fragmentary passage does not say who led the delegation from Mari, which also included a member with the same name as the former king, Enna-Dagan, TM.75.G.1923 (unpublished)."

L.2752, dating to just the before the end of the archives.[373] At present, it is impossible to prove or disprove this later Enna-Dagan's identity with the earlier, but it is a possibility that should be left open, especially in light of the still-unsolved question of the duration of the Ebla archives.

3.2.0 Abarsal

3.2.1.0 Location: A Fallen Euphratean Capital

The identification of Abarsal with Tell Chuera has become widespread in the literature,[374] although no one seems to have embraced this identification with much confidence. Given that Tell Chuera lies over 100 kilometers east of the Euphrates, and also east of the Balikh, such an identification seems unlikely in light of Abarsal's occurrence in the Enna-Dagan letter, which seems mostly or entirely concerned with the Euphrates valley. The identification with Tell Chuera seems to have been based upon the desire to find a capital at a roughly equal distance from the Euphrates as Ebla, which could then presumably have ruled over a roughly equally sized state to Ebla. However, the situation seems to suggest instead that Abarsal was a single city and state located directly on the Euphrates, which had been, prior to the rise of Mari and Ebla, able to grow to a considerable size and wealth because of its advantageous position with regard to river trade traffic.[375] If Abarsal had been a city distant from the Euphrates, it would have been safer from the

[373] A8, 539 obv.? iii 3′: *En-na*-[^{d}*Da*]-*gan / Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$; A8, 542 obv. viii 11:
[374] See Bonechi 1993: 8–10; Archi 1989: 15–19.
[375]Cf. the statement of Biga 2015: 184, "Abarsal, probably on the Euphrates (or on a river)...." See also the map in Milano 2000: 429, where Abarsal is located on the Euphrates north of Karkamiš. See also the map in Astour 1992: 27, who sought to situate Abarsal at Tell Ahmar, the Neo-Assyrian Til Barsip, where, however, no third millennium levels are known.

advancements of Mari and Ebla. A regionally sized Abarsal located at Tell Chuera would also place it somewhat too close to the Haburian sphere of influence of Nagar.

The Abarsal treaty itself, like the Enna-Dagan letter, seems entirely Euphratean in valence. The places mentioned in it, to the extent that we can localize them, seem to reflect an increasing northerly progression along the Euphrates and into Anatolia. The best known of these is Karkamiš. Also important is the mention of Kablul, which administrative texts strongly suggest to have been located near a source of gold – possibly the same source alluded to by Gudea of Lagash (see below §3.2.4.2). There is also mention in the treaty itself of "(riverine) commerce" (ga'eš$_x$) and also of a "great ferry" (addir-ma$_2$-gal), no doubt used to transport traders and their goods across the river, since it occurs in the same context as a "market" (KI:LAM$_7$) – see further below § 3.2.3 on these passages.

All of these reasons suggest a location of Abarsal instead somewhere directly on the Euphrates, controlling an important crossing. Geopolitically, this location would perfectly explain why Abarsal was an enemy of both Mari and Ebla alike, being for both a potential source of competition for control over Euphratean trade traffic. It would explain why and how Abarsal found itself caught in a pincer, with the influence of Mari approaching from the south and Ebla's from the west.

One should consider the name of *A-bar-sal*$_4$[ki376] itself. While the interpretation of the final element *-sal*$_4$ remains not entirely clear, it seems likely that the first element *A-*

[376] BAR+SAL are written as a ligature, possibly in origin reflecting a non-Eblaite scribal practice (cf. BAR+TE in M12, 25 above, 3.1.3).

bar is to be connected with Semitic root *ʿ*br* (Akkadian *ebērum*), "to cross."[377] Needless to say, such a name would be appropriate for a place located on the Euphrates, straddling a point that was easily crossable. For Ebla, access to a "port" on the Euphrates and the assumption of a controlling role over trade traffic was a novel situation, brought about by a new phase of expansion. For Abarsal, in contrast, the role it had with regard to Euphrates trade traffic was a result of its own position since time immemorial. Abarsal lost this position, just as Ebla was gaining it. There are no reasons why one should imagine that Abarsal was a large territorial state that controlled a port on the distant Euphrates. One searches in vain for what the name of this alleged port owned by Abarsal on the left bank of the Euphrates could have been.

Given that the Enna-Dagan letter (A13, 4; see above §3.1.0), reflecting the advancement of Mari's campaigns northward on the Euphrates, mentions Emar (8–9) just before Abarsal (10b), while, on the other hand, the treaty (A13, 5) confirms Karkamiš to belong to Ebla (6), it seems quite likely that Abarsal should be located somewhere along the river between Emar and Karkamiš. One excellent candidate for such a site, in terms of its location, dating, size and apparent importance, is Tell Bazi-Banat.

3.2.1.1 Abarsal = Tell Bazi-Banat?

According to Adelheid Otto, "Bazi-Banat measures alltogether about 40 ha and thus constitutes one of the largest Early Bronze age sites in the area of the Upper Euphrates.

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[377] So already Edzard 1992: 1989–191 and Bonechi 1998: 227. Cf. above, the mention in the Enna-Dagan letter, of a place called *A-bu*$_3$*-ru*$_{12}$^{ki}, from its position in the letter likely close to Mari, and similarly derivable from *ʿ*br* "to cross." *A-bar* seems to represent a construct state with a substantive *-sal*$_4$, "the crossing of...."

The only city along the Euphrates which was certainly larger is Mari."[378] The site of Bazi-Banat was identified as Armi by Otto, who describes it as "not unlike Mari, a strong, autonomous power and rival of Ebla."[379] She further states that, "Bazi-Banat is one of the largest EB sites of the upper Syrian Euphrates region, and it must have been the seat of a powerful kingdom, to judge from the quality and quantity of prestigious buildings. Additionally, it is situated at the most direct route from Ebla towards the Habur triangle, where an easy crossing of the Euphrates was possible."[380] Finally, "Bazi-Banat was the starting point of the southernmost route crossing the western Jezira region between the Euphrates and the Balih. One of the easy crossings of the Euphrates was located near Bazi-Banat and was used until 1999."[381] This all fits the description of the historical Abarsal as outlined above. According to Otto's description, a location at Bazi-Banat would quite literally place Abarsal within Ebla, Mari, and Nagar's crosshairs. It would make very good sense that a state located at this exact juncture would suffer a decline, just as the other three powers of Ebla, Mari, and Nagar were on the rise. Otto even suggested that Banat-Bazi could have been included in the realm of Abarsal;[382]

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[378] Otto/Biga 2010: 487–488, suggesting an identification of Bazi-Banat with Ebla's *Ar-mi-*(*um*)^{ki}.
[379] Ibid. On the impossibility of locating Ebla's *Ar-mi-*(*um*)^{ki} at Bazi-Banat, see in detail below §4.1).
[380] Ibid.: 490. For a text possibly attesting the crossing of the Euphrates at Abarsal by a caravan consisting of men from Ebla and Armi on their way to the Habur region, see below §4.2.5.3 on A15, 17 (34).
[381] Otto 2006: 21.
[382] Otto 2006, 18–19: "Even though the location of Abarsal is uncertain (at least a situation east of the Euphrates is generally accepted), it is plausible that the Euphrates formed the border between Ebla and Abarsal in the region to the south of Karkamiš. In this case, the locations on the east bank of the river (including Banat-Bazi) would have been the property of Abarsal...."

there is little chance, on the other hand, that Banat-Bazi could have controlled a state the size and importance of Armi (see below §4.1).

The argument that Tell Bazi-Banat should instead be identified with Armi can likely be refuted simply by reference to the fact that the Ebla texts demonstrate no Euphratean context at all for Armi (see below § 4.1.0). On the other hand, the Euphrates context for Abarsal is rich and deep. It would, on a geopolitical level, be very difficult to find room for such a large, powerful, independent regional state with a unique onomasticon such as Armi in such a busy, crowded, and contentious area. For this and many other reasons, Armi is better sought, the present study suggests, to the northwest of Ebla, in Cilicia (see in detail below §4.1).

According to Otto, there is evidence that a building at Bazi-Banat "was violently destroyed in a considerable military event, which is attested by thousands of clay bullets and several lancet-shaped flint arrowheads lying in and around the building." Whatever the chronological relationship of this destruction to the period covered by the Ebla archives may be, from the point of view of the Ebla texts it need not necessarily refer to the defeat suffered by Abarsal at the hands of Mari and Ebla, described in the Enna-Dagan letter, which ultimately led to the imposition of the vassal treaty. According to the Enna-Dagan letter, A13, 4 (10b), the defeat of Abarsal's army, which was large enough as to result in the erection of seven burial mounds, took place in a territory called *Za-hi-ra-an*^{ki}, which could likely be identified with the *Za-ʾa$_3$-ar*^{ki} of the treaty itself. Thus the defeat that led to the vassal treaty perhaps didn't destroy the city of Abarsal itself. Abarsal apparently continued to exist throughout the Ebla archives, albeit as a place bereft of any

political authority. The archaeologically attested destruction could thus have been inflicted by a later conqueror, such as Naram-Sin.

In this regard, it is quite intriguing that a place with a similar name to Abarsal, namely, Apišal, was the subject of a rather similar literary-historical topos to the one Otto drew upon in identifying Bazi-Banat with a heavily fortified place. If Apišal was Abarsal as Armanum was Armi, then perhaps the presence of an imposing citadel at Bazi-Banat could be equally appropriate to a potential identification of that place as Abarsal.

3.2.1.2 Abarsal and Apišal (and Armanum)

Although Apišal is not yet attested in any original inscriptions or later copies, the memory of a somehow exceptional siege by Naram-Sin against an apparently heavily fortified place of that name was a powerful one. It was the subject of a tradition that spanned the second millennium and well into the first, appearing in literary legends,[383] historical omina,[384] and a late chronicle.[385]

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[383] Goodnick Westenholz 1997: 173–187 for the text "Naram-Sin and the Lord of Apišal." Although the text is unfortunately not fully preserved, the dramatic dialogue contained within, concerning the exchange of messengers between the two kings, Naram-Sin's hesitation to attack Apišal, and an angry Enlil's encouraging him to do so, could perhaps allude to a situation of imminent, siege warfare, an undertaking which seems to go against all odds (like a Mesopotamian Troy). Note the comment of Ibid.: 173, that "...the Apišal of this composition might have some vague connection with the nomadic chieftain Apiašal, seventeenth king of Assyria according to the Assyrian King List, as well as with the enigmatic state of A.BAR.SILA3.KI with which the state of Ebla contracted a treaty." See also Ibid.: 1997: 244–245 for the mention in "The Great Revolt of Naram-Sin."

[384] See Glassner 1983. The negative assessment of these omens expressed by Cooper 1980 is unjustified. The wide spread of this topos across different genres suggests instead that this was a deep historical memory that existed also outside of the written world of cuneiform, hardly the speculative fantasy of diviners as Cooper makes them out to be.

[385] Grayson 1975: 154.

Naram-Sin's conquest of Apišal, apparently in some way exceptional, turns up already among the earliest known omens, the clay liver models discovered at Mari,[386] dating to the early Old Babylonian period or older – thus neither geographically or chronologically very far removed from the events which concern us. The classic divinatory motif of later periods concerns a "breach" made in the wall of Apišal by Naram-Sin, and plays on the phonetic similarity of the words for "hole" and "to pierce" (*pilšu palāšu*) and the name of Apišal itself (which was probably a later development that took advantage of a pre-existing motif).

The Geneva version of the Old Babylonian literary text known as ″The Great Revolt Against Naram-Sin"[387] identifies the king of Apišal as *Ri-iš-*^{d}Adad, and lists him in between the kings of Namar (i.e., Nagar)[388] and Mari, which would be a fully appropriate position for the Abarsal of Ebla texts (and for the position of Bazi-Banat). The name Riš-Adad turns up again in the first millennium, in an omen,[389] and in an almost identically worded passage in the so-called Chronicle of Early Kings.[390]

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[386] Glassner 1983: 4: *a-mu-ut Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU / *sa*$_2$ *A-bi-sa*$_2$*-al* / *il-qa*$_2$*-ʾa*$_3$ "Omen of Naram-Sin, who conquered Abišal."

[387] Goodnick Westenholz 1997: 244–245. According to Ibid.: 238, this version is the one which most closely follows the original royal inscriptions.

[388] On the identity between Nawar/Namar and Nagar see Guichard 1997: 334–337; Eidem 2011: 32–33. If there was a second place called Nawar in the Habur region, it could not have been located very far from Tell Brak.

[389] See De Zorzi 2016: 142, ...BA$_3$*-ut N*a*-ram-*^{d}30 [*ša*$_2$ *ina* UZ]U *an-ni-i ana* URU *A-pi-šal* DU*-ku-ma* [*pi-il-š*]*u ip-lu-šu* ^{1}*Re-eš*^{d}IM LUGAL URU *A-pi-šal u* SUKKAL URU *A-pi-šal* ŠU*-su* KUR*-du* "...it is an omen of Narām-Sîn [who by] this [om]en marched against Apišal and made a [brea]ch, captured Rēš-Adad, the king of Apišal, and the chief minister of Apišal."

[390] Grayson 1975: 154, ^{1}*Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU DUMU ^{1}LUGAL.GI *a-na* ^{uru}*A-pi-šal*^{ki} [*il-lik*] *pi-il-šu*$_2$ *ip-lu-uš-ma* ^{1}*Ri-iš-*^{d}IM LUGAL URU *A-pi-šal*^{ki} *u* LU$_2$.SUKKAL *A-pi-šal*^{ki} ŠU*-šu*$_2$ KUR*-ud*

Strikingly, the Armanum citadel text, for its part, identifies the king of Armanum by a very similar name: once (apparently) as *Ri*-ID-^{d}Adad, once as *Ri*-DA-^{d}Adad – a name for which an identification with or emendation to *Ri-iš*-^{d}Adad has already been suggested.[391] This similarity opens the possibility that there may have already existed in ancient times an association, or even a confusion between Armanum and Apišal.[392]

The association between Apišal and a fortified place spans millennia and genres, while the link between Armanum and such a fortress comes from just a single tablet, one that also, it should be noted, contains some scribal anomalies.[393] It may be that the OB author from Ur somehow conflated two sources, or applied a citadel description, actually appropriate to Apišal, wrongly onto Amarnum. This, at least, is what the Ebla texts suggest, if Apišal is Abarsal and Armanum is Armi(um). A newly discovered, not yet published original stele inscription describing Naram-Sin's conquest of Armanum does

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"Naram-Sin, son of Sargon, [marched] to Apišal. He made a breach (in the city wall) and captured Resh-Ad[ad], king of Apišal, and the vizier of Apišal."

[391] Gelb 1935: 6, "Often we find mention of [Naram-Sin's] wars against Riš-Adad, king of Apišal," with fn. 61: "Cf. *Ri-id*(or *-iš*!?)-^{d}*Adad*, king of Armânum instead in [the Armanum citadel text]." Gelb/Kienast 1990: 257 emended both occurrences in the Armanum text to *Ri-iš*-^{d}Adad. Glassner 1983: 10, "Seule source primaire, une copie d'inscription de Narām-Sîn mentionne le nom d'Armanum qu'il combattit victorieusement; on est accoutumé à reconnaître en lui Riš-Adad, mais son nom, par deux fois, est écrit *Ri-ID*-^{d}ISKUR."

[392] Other scholars have already perceived the possibility of such a confusion, e.g. Haul 2009: 84 "Es wurde schon oft vermutet, dass der Name Rīš-Adad aus der legendarischen Tradition auf den Namen Rīd-Adad von Armānum zurückgeht, der zweimal in der Inschrift Narām-Sîns über die Eroberung von Armānum und Ebla erscheint. Der Name wird dort *Ri*-DA-^{d}IŠKUR bzw. *Ri*-ID -^{d}IŠKUR geschrieben. Die Annahme lässt sich nicht verifizieren, wirkt... allerdings recht wahrscheinlich." Foster 1990: 42–43: "The later tradition of breaching the wall of Apišal... could have its origin in a play on words, as well as a confusion with the siege of Armanum…"

[393] Kraus 1948: 89; Otto 2006: 2. The fact that the tablet identifies the citadel as of *Si-ku-ma-num*^{ki}," requiring an emendation to *Ar*$^{!!}$*-ma-num*^{ki}, inspires caution.

not contain any mention of a citadel, but instead mentions a large number of ENs and ENSIs, suggests an Armanum that, like the Armi of Ebla texts, was a state of regional dimension (see below in detail §4.0).

Considering that, aside from the newly discovered stele fragment, the Armanum inscription is known to us from just a single source attested in three manuscripts found at a single site, it doesn't seem fair to deny Naram-Sin's conquest of Apišal[394] the possibility of historical reality, simply because no inscriptions or copies of inscriptions of his mentioning Apišal have yet been found. As far as Apišal itself is concerned, it seems to have certainly been a real place – to judge from a singular mention each in two later text corpora: one from Mari and one from Alalakh.

The tablet from Alalakh (Level VII) records the expenditure of gifts[395] on the occasion of the ruler of Alalakh Ammitaku's betrothal to the daughter of the governor of *A-pi$_2$-šal*^{ki}. This was apparently an important place, considering the richness of the gifts, and the presence of Niqmepuh of Yamhad (of which Alalakh was a client state) as a gift recipient. The editor of the Alalakh tablets considered this Apišal to represent a place "probably located in the upper Euphrates valley."[396] The overall situation, whereby gifts are given out to various royal family members, dignitaries, and even servants like

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[394] One could speculate that the Apišal located in the Umma province was named after captives from Apišal who had been resettled there after Naram-Sin's conquest of the original Apišal – a widely attested practice.
[395] Wiseman 1953: 106–107, no. 409. The gifts include 700 shekels of silver, in the form of *GAL*-vessels of various sizes (100, 40, and 20) and a dagger, 9 garments of various types, and a dagger with a golden sheath.
[396] Ibid.

doorkeepers, cooks, and female musicians, reminds one of a situation glimpsed from a tablet of the old Ebla era.

Even more striking is the occurrence of *A-pi$_2$-ša-al*^{ki} in a letter from Old Babylonian Mari,[397] in a context that also concerns Aplahanda, king of Karkamiš (although Karkamiš itself is not mentioned on the tablet). This recalls the mention of Karkamiš in the Abarsal treaty. The letter concerns a dispute over tin and wine, and a messenger in the service of Mari's ruler Yasmah-Addu seems to go back and forth between Karkamiš and Apišal. The exact geographical relationship between Karkamiš and Apišal is not clearly spelled out, but they seem to be located close to each other. In this letter, the apparent king of Apišal is never directly referred to as LUGAL/*šarrum*. Instead, he is called by the name or title[398] of Mekum. This suggests a strong link with Ebla, because the later rulers of Ebla are consistently referred to by such a name or title *mekum*.[399] This includes on a Drehem tablet of the Ur III period,[400] on two seals discovered at Kültepe-Kaneš,[401] on the statue discovered at Ebla of the ruler Ibbiṭ-Lim (dating to the Ur III or early OB period),[402] and even the Hurro-Hittite Bilingual "Song of

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[397] Charpin/Ziegler 1997.
[398] See Tonietti 1997 for an extensive study of the issue of *mekum* and its attestations, with references, and 232–233 for the question of Abarsal = Apišal.
[399] *Mekum* quite likely reflects an Eblaite dialectical form of *malkum*, with the characteristic disappearance of /l/ causing a vowel shift, likely reflecting a palatalization.
[400] Owen 1987: 267, Trout Tablet rev. 15: *Me-gu-um* ensi$_2$ *Ib-la*^{ki}; Tonietti 1997: no. 4 (with references and discussion).
[401] Tonietti 1997: 225–26, no. 2 with references, seal no. 529a of Kültepe II: *Me-ki-im Ib-la*-[x$^?$]; no. 6, seal no. 527 of Kültepe II: *Me-ku-um.*
[402] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 369–371; Tonietti 1997: 225, no. 1 (with references and discussion).

Release."[403] Mekum of Apišal was apparently a powerful man, because the letter reveals that he "concluded a brotherhood" with Yahdum-Lim of Yamhad.[404] Perhaps there could have been a political background as to why Apišal only receives a single mention in the Mari archives. Ebla, for its part, never seems to be mentioned at Old Babylonian Mari. Thus, while it is striking that Apišal receives so few mentions in later textual corpora, this need not suggest that such a place did not exist or was of no importance. On the other hand, if we had not discovered the Palace G archives, we probably would not have been able to deduce what an important place Ebla had been, only from the very few mentions it receives in later textual corpora.[405]

As with Armanum and Armi, the link between Abarsal and Apišal remains impossible to prove. However in both cases it is a possibility that should be taken seriously. In terms of its size and location, with its imposing citadel, Tell Bazi-Banat seems like a good candidate for Abarsal and Apišal.[406] The site, it should be noted, was also occupied in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.[407] Armi/Armanum, in contrast, never seems to be mentioned again after the Sargonic period, its name possibly having been eclipsed by the rise of other Anatolian polities.

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[403] See Tonietti 1997 for an extensive study of the issue of *mekum* and its attestations, with references, and 232–233 for the question of Abarsal = Apišal.

[404] Charpin/Ziegler 1997: 243–244, l. 10-11: lu_2 *šu-u it-ti* ^{1}*Ia-ah-du-li-im* / *a-hu-tam i-pu-uš$_2$*.

[405] For the importance of Ebla as a trading center in the 2nd millennium BC, see Barjamovic in press B.

[406] By analogy with *malkum->mekum* (see above), one could perhaps speculate that a similar phonological change underlies Abarsal->Apišal, i.e. the well-known Ebla change of *r->l*, followed by elision of *l*, and frontward shifting of the adjacent vowel due to palatalization.

[407] Otto 2006: 15.

3.2.2.0 The Treaty and its Context

Returning back to the time of Ebla's Palace G, we turn to the treaty itself. The treaty can be divided into two parts. First is a list of geographical names and fortresses, confirmed to "belong" to the ruler of Ebla. Second come all the various provisions, which the defeated ruler of Abarsal was presumably forced to agree to. The text is concluded by a brief curse formula.

As noted above, the defeat of Abarsal by Iplus-Il of Mari is recorded in the Enna-Dagan letter. An unpublished source[408] suggests that Igriš-Halab, contemporary of Iplus-Il, received during his reign a large income from Abarsal. This potentially places the defeat of Abarsal by Iplus-Il and the imposition of the vassal treaty in favor of Ebla in close chronological relationship. If Abarsal was on the eastern side of the Euphrates (e.g. at Bazi-Banat), then, from the perspective of Ebla, the military assistance of Mari would have likely been a necessity. While Mari itself was situated on the western side of the Euphrates, it seems to have, throughout the period covered by the archives, controlled Tuttul, on the Mesopotamian side of the Euphrates, at the Balikh. This suggests that it was a position to be able to launch military strikes against targets located in Mesopotamia proper. It seems unlikely that Ebla could have defeated an enemy located, from its perspective, beyond the Euphrates. A close reading of the treaty itself could suggest that scribes from Mari itself had a hand in its composition.

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[408] A14, 1 (Archi 2017: 164) lists first 961[(+x)] minas in association with the Ebla king Kun-Damu, followed by 431 minas of silver labeled "Abarsal," followed by another 310 minas attributed to Igriš-Halab.

3.2.2.1 The Shadow of Mari in the Abarsal Treaty?

Simply as a textual artifact, the Abarsal treaty is striking, and stands out from any other text discovered at Tell Mardikh/Ebla. The tablet itself is truly a calligraphic masterpiece[409] and perhaps one of the most beautifully written examples recovered from the entire third millennium. Particularly striking is the fact that the entire available surface of the tablet was utilized, with text wrapping around the left, right, and lower edges.[410] The signs seem perfectly executed, and the arrangement of the text into individual cases is very neat. The scribe seems to have made an effort to ensure that a case consisting of more than one sign was completely filled vertically and horizontally, with as little space left blank as possible.[411] In overall execution, the Abarsal tablet seems to exceed other early products of the Eblaite chancery, such as the Enna-Dagan letter (A13, 4), the Enna-Dagan ritual (A13, 1), the first version of the royal ritual (A11, 1), and the texts published in A15. In this regard, note that the text M12, 25, likely dating to the reign of Iplus-Il (see above §3.1.3), itself displays an impeccable script, and testifies to the presence of a master scribe (dub-sar mah) of Mari at Ebla.

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[409] Edzard 1992: 188–189, "A. Archi hat in der Vortragsdiskussion am 5. April 1991 darauf hingewiesen, dass unser Text zu den am besten und am elegantesten geschriebenen Schrift denkmälern aus Ebla gehöre und dass er als kalligraphisches Meister werk wohl kaum als 'Textentwurf" bezeichnet werden dürfe.

[410] See the photos in Sollberger 1980.

[411] This characteristic is particularly noticeably absent in the Enna-Dagan letter (A13, 4), but it seems to be present instead in the very early administrative account M12, 25 (photo in Pettinato 1995), which could have been written by a Mariote dub-sar-mah "chief scribe," see above §3.1.3. Compare the way each text writes AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$. A full paleographic comparison between the Abarsal treaty A13, 5 and M12, 25 cannot be undertaken here, but could prove fruitful.

Also certain internal textual features could speak of a non-Eblaite scribal influence. On the one hand, the overall compositional style is different than that of other Eblaite chancery texts. The text makes heavy use of logograms, some of which do not occur in other texts; the phonetic spellings that are employed seem to belong to a standard repertoire, rather than constituting novel combinations. Some logograms, e.g. ga'eš$_x$, seem to only occur at Ebla in a situation involving Mari. The logogram lu$_2$-igi occurs nowhere else at Ebla, but is known from Mesopotamia in the fuller form lu$_2$-igi-nigin$_2$, "important man."[412] Certain officials are mentioned that do not otherwise exist at Ebla, such as nu-banda$_3$ and lu$_2$-sikil. Other apparently "Mariote" or "Mesopotamian" features include the use of *ʾa$_5$-na* instead of Eblaite *si-in*, the use of *u$_3$* instead of *wa*, and the use of certain syllabic values, such as *kul* instead of usual *gul*. There occur some very unusual sign forms, e.g. in obv. viii 19, where the sign that had been previously read as *u$_9$*$^{!}$(EZEN×10)[413] more precisely shows LAK 617×10$^{\text{circle}}$, i.e. it has the form of the outer part of BAD$_3$, and not EZEN (LAK 611) – and so it appears to be an otherwise unattested sign (possibly a logogram with a meaning somehow related to bad$_3$). Other logograms are only otherwise attested at Ebla in lexical and literary texts of Mesopotamian origin, eg. URI.[414]

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[412] For lu$_2$-igi-nigin$_2$ in the Presargonic Lagash texts cf. Bauer 1972: 214, "Leute von Ansehen."

[413] Fronzaroli 2003: 46. The sign is so completely different from a proper U$_9$ that the interpretation as a syllabogram "*u$_9$*$^{!}$-" seems impossible. Read perhaps: LAK 617×10 gi-lam, "The ... (and$^{?}$) the market."

[414] Interpreted by Fronzaroli 2003: 63 as Uri$^{(ki)}$, and as a term of geographic reference, which possibly "indicasse nel III millennio la Siria settentrionale, o parte di essa," but this seems uncertain for the context in the treaty. On Uri as an ancient designation of the Semitic population of Mesopotamia see Steinkeller 2013: 137; Steinkeller 1993b: 115

In general, some of the provisions on the treaty seem to have been composed specifically for the Abarsal-Ebla situation, while others seem like they could perhaps have been, in some manner or degree, culled from a pre-existing legal repertoire. Although this point must remain speculative for lack of any other comparable attestations of this genre in Pre-Sargonic Mesopotamia, certain clauses seem to portray an abstract element of legal language that remind one of the later Mesopotamian legal tradition, such as:

[A15, 5; Abarsal Treaty]
(47) iti *i-si* / *su-ma* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *A-bar-sal*$_4$^{ki} / šu šu-ra / uš$_2$ / *du-tum* / 50 udu:nita / hi-na-sum
(48) *su-ma* / [*A-bar-sal*$_4$^{ki}] / [*Ib-la*^{ki}] / [šu šu-ra] / uš$_2$ / *du-tum* / 50 udu:nita / hi-na-sum
(49) *su-ma* / gir$_2$:mar-tu / *u*$_3$ / giš-šu-gur / šu-ra uš$_2$ / *u*$_3$*-ma* gu$_4$ *u*$_3$*-ma* IGI.NITA / zah$_3$ / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / gar$_3$-ra / udu / *u*$_3$*-ma* / udu zah$_3$ / [nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN] / [gar$_3$-ra] / [tu-mušen (?)]

(47) If, (during the festival of?) month 1, a man of Ebla strikes a man of Abarsal with his hand, and he dies, he will provide 50 young rams as a penalty.
(48) If [a man of Abarsal strikes a man of Ebla with his hand], and he dies, he will provide 50 young rams as a penalty.
(49) If he strikes (him) with a pointed dagger or a spear and he dies, if (the required) cows or asses are lacking for the (purification ritual of) announcement, the sacrifice due [415] can be in sheep, and if sheep are lacking, [for the (purification ritual of) announcement, the *due sacrifice* can be in [doves].[416]

It is somewhat difficult to imagine what the "real life" context of such a clause was. Why is it specified that the homicide takes place in month 1? Was this a real problem that Ebla and Abarsal dealt with often? What were the actual legal mechanisms and institutions by

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and fn. 18. For the possible connection of Uri with the western storm deity Meru/Weru, and the occurrence of this element in personal names, see Bonechi 1997: 494–497.
[415] For the likely connection between gar$_3$-ra and later giš-gar$_3$ (Akkadian: *iškaru*) see Fronzaroli 2003: 69.
[416] Fronzaroli 2003: 68–69, suggested "doves" (tu-mušen) as a conjectural restoration based on Biblical parallels. The context does seem to call for some animal of lesser value than a sheep.

which such cases were handled? Why was this apparently "fair" clause (where Abarsal and Ebla are apparently treated the same, if the restoration is correct) inserted in an otherwise mostly unilateral agreement? In any event, the way the clause delineates different possibilities in a somewhat abstract manner certainly seems to foreshadow what we will see centuries later, in law codes like those of Ur-Namma or Hammurabi. It seems unlikely that this legal language reflects a "Syrian" tradition, or something that an Ebla scribe of the very early Palace G period composed specifically for this particular occasion involving Abarsal. In all likelihood, what we are dealing with here is evidence for an otherwise hitherto unattested, but highly developed and widespread Pre-Sargonic legal tradition, whose ultimate origin was in Mesopotamia. From the Ebla perspective, the source of this sort of advanced language could only have been Mari.

Thus, while the Enna-Dagan letter, with its mention of a Mariote defeat of Abarsal, offers political, military, and historical reasons to see the influence Mari in Ebla's eventual assumption of hegemony over Abarsal, the text of the treaty itself probably also suggests such an influence. Along these lines, one might speculate about what the deeper international background of the treaty might have been. It would be hard to imagine what purpose an international treaty between Ebla and Abarsal would have had, if Ebla and Abarsal were the only ones who witnessed it. In general, and throughout history, international treaties involve not just two parties, but a community of nations, who collectively act as guarantors for the order that is upheld. If any other state was a witness to the Abarsal treaty, it would have been Mari. Certainly, it would have directly interested Mari, what went on upstream from it. A large power located on the upper Euphrates (such as the one that was located at Banat-Bazi) would have been a natural

rival for Mari, perhaps even more so than Ebla, a landlocked entity separated from the Euphrates by a good distance.

The purpose of the Abarsal treaty was perhaps not so much for Ebla to dictate a set of rules to Abarsal as it was to soften the unilateral character of the agreement.[417]

3.2.3.0 The Provisions: Trade and Diplomacy

The provisions section of the Abarsal treaty opens with a striking general prohibition:

[A13, 5]
(20) *ma-nu-ma* / en / aš$_2$ / *u$_3$* dingir-dingir aš$_2$ / *u$_3$* kalam-*TIM* aš$_2$ / uš$_2$
(20) Whoever curses the king, or curses the gods, or curses the land – will die.

Such a broad clause in favor of "king, god, and country" seems unique in the Ancient Near Eastern documentatio and raises all sorts of questions. What exactly did it mean to "curse" in this context? Was it something quite specific, like a pronouncement or declaration, or could it apply to any general "bad mouthing" of the authorities? Usually this word (Akkadian *arāru*) is encountered in curse formulas, either as a punishment for destroying a monument, or as part of an oath that someone takes, lest they be cursed. When humans "curse" others in later texts, it has the sense of "to treat with disrespect, to insult, to disown, a disavow."[418] In this way, a slave can curse their master, or a son their parent, severing the ties that bond them. What this clause likely wants to say, is that members of a palatial state such as Ebla or Abarsal were forbidden from simply going off to live life as they wished; though they might travel far from their homelands, they could not cut off their civic ties except under strictest penalty of death. In this regard, it is

[417] Cf. the discussion on bilateral and unilateral treaties in the Neo-Assyrian period in Parpola/Watanabe 1988: XVf.
[418] CAD A/2: 228, 2 s.v. *arāru* A.

noteworthy that the clause lists "king" (en) before "the gods" (dingir-dingir), therefore seeming to put more weight on the earthly political aspect than the divine one, as far as such a crime of "cursing" is concerned.

The next section reveals that authorities of Ebla and Abarsal were supposed to mutually police each other's citizens in the case of such treason:

[A15, 5]
(21a) *su-ma* / lu$_2$-igi *A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki} / *Ib-la*^{ki} / maš$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ /
(21b) *su-ma* / lu$_2$-igi / *A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki} / *A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki} / [uš$_2$]
(22a) [*su-ma*] / [lu$_2$-igi] / [*Ib-la*^{ki}] / [*A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki}] / maš$_2$ / šu-du$_8$ /
(22b) *su-ma* / lu$_2$-igi / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *Ib-la*$^{ki\ i}$ / uš$_2$

(22a) If it is a prominent man of Abarsal (present in Ebla, who does the cursing), then Ebla will hand him over (to Abarsal for punishment).
(22b) If it is (indeed) a prominent man of Abarsal, Abarsal will put him to death.
(22a) [If it is a prominent man of Ebla (present in Abarsal)], then Abarsal will hand him over (to Ebla).
(22b) If it is (indeed) a prominent man of Ebla, Ebla will put him to death.

The passage appears to reveal a lot about the basic dynamics of interstate relations during the Palace G period. There seems to have existed a culture whereby the elites of places like Ebla and Abarsal (or anywhere else) were expected to "watch over" the conduct of their respective subjects, especially while they were abroad in each other's lands. In this way, it was in the best interest of the rulers in each land to cooperate with one another on the international level, in order to ensure that they each maintained their privileged status, especially with regard to their subordinates.[419] Apparently, it was a real possibility that a man from a place like Abarsal could be present in the land of Ebla, or somewhere else where Eblaites were present, and be heard to be "denouncing" his king or other superiors.

[419] For another perspective on these passages from the Abarsal treaty and their concern with control over movement, cf. Ristvet 2011: 3–4.

A core section of the Abarsal treaty is concerned with diplomatic matters, which then leads seamlessly to a context concerning trade and mercantile affairs. This demonstrates well how these two concerns were inexorably linked with one another.

One passage forbids Abarsal from engaging in relations with "Kakmium, NI-rar or Hassuwan," without going through Ebla. The greater context concerns the travel of messengers and caravans, and the relationship of these to diplomatic and commercial affairs. When it comes to these, Ebla is always to have the superior position:

[A13, 5]
(36) *en-ma* / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / ʾ*a*$_5$*-na* / *A-bar*-SAL$_4$^{ki}
(37) *ba-li* / ʾ*a*$_5$*-na* / kalam-*TIM* / *ma-na-ma* / nu kas$_4$-kas$_4$ /
an-da-[*ma*] / [kas$_4$-kas$_4$] / i$_3$ a-e$_3$
(38) *en-ma* / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / ʾ*a*$_5$*-na* / *A-bar*-SAL$_4$^{ki}
(39) *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / *NI-ra-ar*^{ki} / *in-i* / šeš-šeš
2 ud / 3 ud /
me-na-/*ma*\/[ʾ*a*$_5$*-na*] / [kalam-*TIM*] / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ /
a$_3$*-na-sa* / nu kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / i$_3$ a-e$_3$
(40) *me-nu* / inim / hul / lu$_2$ / giš ba-tuku$_x$ /
gi$_4$-maskim / *ar-hi-iš ar-hi-iš* / DU-DU / (41) *in* / kaskal / gid$_2$ / *a-de*$_3$ / na$_2$-na$_2$ /
[ ] / ([ ]) / i$_3$-ti /
an-da-ma / inim / hul / giš ba-tuku$_x$ / gi$_4$-maškim / nu du / i$_3$ a-e$_3$
(42) *Ib-la*^{ki} / *A-bar*-SAL$_4$^{ki} / ga'eš$_x$(KASKAL.GA) /
A-bar-sal$_4$^{ki} / *Ib-la*^{ki} / nu ga'eš$_x$(KASKAL.GA)
(43) *A-bar-sal*$_4$^{ki} / addir(GISAL.A)-ma$_2$-gal /

/ /šu\? [ba$_4$-ti?] /
[*u*$_3$ ugula] / KI:LAM$_7$-*SU*$_3$ / *zi-kam*$_4$ / šu-ba$_4$-ti

(36) The king of Ebla instructs (the man of) Abarsal as follows:
(37) Without my (permission), you will not send any (messengers or caravans) through the Land. If you do send (messengers or caravans), the treaty is violated.[420]

(38) The king of Ebla instructs Abarsal as follows:

[420] From the context, it is clear that i$_3$ a-e$_3$ means that the treaty has been violated. Another text, A13, 20 (8), has the form: a-e$_3$ i$_3$-giš, which should be understood as "exit from the olive oil (ceremony)."

(39) If (lands such as) Kakmium, Hassuwan, and NI-rar (wish to) enter into brotherhood (with you) (for even) two or three days, everything must be sent through [the Land] (as a message). If, on the other hand, (a message) is not sent, the treaty is violated.

(40-41) If you hear someone's evil plan, (your) special envoy must travel as quickly as possible by means of a "long road"[421] until he must sleep. He will approach [...] (in order to inform about the evil plans). But if you hear an evil plan, and a special envoy does not travel, the treaty is violated.

(42) Ebla will exercise trade with respect to Abarsal. Abarsal will not exercise trade with respect to Ebla.

(43) Abarsal will *provide* a ferry (to cross the river). And [the overseer] of its market will receive ...[422]

The first passage (36-37) concerns travel through "the Land"" (kalam-*TIM*), apparently of Ebla proper. It could have had perhaps also a somewhat wider meaning than Ebla's territorial possessions in a strict sense. The second passage (38-39) concerns, on the other hand, relations involving the foreign powers surrounding Ebla.

Other sources demonstrate that Kakmium, Hassuwan, and NI-rar did not actually belong to the same neighborhood. Kakmium was probably to the west of Ebla, NI-rar was quite close to Tell Mardikh, and Hassuwan was to Ebla's northeast, in the Upper Euphrates region north of Karkamish.[423] Thus, rather than a specific prohibition concerning just these three cities, it is more likely that (39) is meant to trace a wide geographic area within which Abarsal was forbidden from conducting relations. Within

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[421] I.e., marching for a long distance without stopping.
[422] Fronzaroli 2003: 50, translated "Per (le merci di) Abarsal sul traghetto grande potrà essere tro[vato] posto [e per il suo sovrintendente] del mercato potrà essere trovato (posto) sulla (*chiatta*) *piccola*." The passage remains, however, difficult to understand, also due to its damaged state. The context makes it clear, however, that it concerns Abarsal's obligation to provide Ebla and its allies with the ability to cross the river, along with the goods they carry.
[423] On Hassuwan see below §5.0. On Kakmium and NI-rar, see below §6.1.2

this "triangle" – the entire region extending west from the left bank of the Euphrates, beyond Ebla itself – Ebla must be the nexus through which all of Abarsal's interstate activity is conducted. In this context, šeš-šeš "brotherhood" possibly refers to relations in general and interaction of any nature; a treaty or agreement involving sworn oaths was referred to by different terms (*gi-tum* or nam-TAR). Given the overall commercial context, it is likely that here the treaty is defining what are essentially mercantalist zones of protected trade, parallel to the ones known from the later Old Assyrian period.[424]

Section (42) speaks directly of mercantile trade with the term ga'eš$_x$(KASKAL.GA). Usually this term refers to the title of an individual, most often someone related to Mari (see above §3.1.3.0f). Here it is exceptionally used as a verb. In later occurrences in Sumerian and Akkadian texts, the term ga'eš$_x$ refers especially to a merchant or trader who travels long distances, including seafaring journeys. In the present context it has been understood as referring to "riverine" commerce, which it quite likely does, but not to the exclusion also of overland commerce, probably also east and west on both sides of the Euphrates. Abarsal was apparently denied any role in the transshipment of goods which were making their way west from the east, having originated in Upper Mesopotamia, Iran, or Central Asia; nor could Abarsal expect to earn a share in goods which Ebla sent west, towards Nagar and beyond. Likewise, a role for Abarsal in riverine commerce downstream towards Mari, Kish, and beyond was forbidden.

Related, section (43) concerns the ferry across the river, which would have carried not just people, but goods as well, likely at times in large quantities. This again suggests

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[424] See Barjamovic 2018.

that the east-west overland trade was important in the context of Abarsal. In this passage seems to be mentioned the [overseer] of the marketplace, if the restoration is correct, as seems likely by the affixed pronoun on "market." Exactly how this was related to the ferry is unfortunately not so clear.

3.2.4.0 The bad_3-ki "fortresses"

In the geographical section, each place is stated to be "in the hands of the ruler of Ebla," along with their "fortresses" (GN^{ki} / *u₃* bad_3-bad_3^{ki} / *in* šu / en / *Ib-la*^{ki}). Some places are not mentioned with "fortresses," but it is unclear whether or not this should be tacitly understood. The places are summarized in two groups, labeled ki and ki-2, as follows: [A15, 5; Abarsal Treaty]

(5a/19a) bad_3-bad_3^{ki} / *kul-a* ki-(2) / lu_2 šu / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *in* šu / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *A-bar-sal₄*^{ki} / *in* šu / en / *A-bar-sal₄*^{ki}
(5b/19b) lu_2 šu / en / *A-bar-sal₄*^{ki} / *in* šu / en / *A-bar-sal₄*^{ki}

(5a/19a) The fortresses, all those of the (first/second) area, which are of the hand of the ruler of Ebla, are (hereby confirmed to be) in the hand of the ruler of Ebla.
(5b/19b) Those of the hand of the ruler of Abarsal, are (hereby confirmed to be) in the hand of the ruler of Abarsal.

The lands and/or fortresses "of the hand of the ruler of Abarsal," are confirmed to be in his hand, but the text does not list any lands belonging to him at all. Presumably this could be taken as a sign of token justice: he has what he has, but he has nothing at all.

One should perhaps be cautious in interpreting exactly what, politically, is meant when a place is listed as "in the hand" of the Ebla ruler. Certainly some level of claim is indicated, but perhaps not necessarily that the Ebla ruler was now also the ruler of all these places. It would be an exaggeration to imagine that the ruler of Ebla, at the time of this treaty, controlled a territorial state extending from Karkamiš to Kablul. The focus

above all seems to be on the "fortresses" themselves, rather than on political control over a city or other entity. It is possible that the Ebla ruler controlled several fortresses scattered up and down the Euphrates river and westward into Anatolia, that did not represent a contiguous territory. Some "fortresses" may have been located directly alongside other independent or semi-independent political entities, such as, for example, Kablul (on which see below).

Some of the enumerated places are never attested to have had their own ruler (en), such as *Gar$_3$-gar$_3$-mi-iš*^{ki}.[425] Others, for example *Kab-lu$_5$-ul*^{ki}, clearly had their own ruler throughout the entire span of the Ebla archives. Karkamiš seems to have been a place of no independent political significance, while Kablul on the other hand was a genuine political entity. Kablul seems to have been too distant from Ebla for it to have been directly incorporated into its territory. Not so long after the Abarsal treaty, a letter from Ebla's ruler Irkab-Damu to an anonymous ruler of Kablul reveals that – apparently in the year of Igriš-Halab's death, and Irkab-Damu's accession to the throne – these two swore an "oath," (nam-KUD) together, in a context which also included gifts to the Ebla ruler from a "merchant" (dam-gar$_3$), see below §3.2.4.2. This cannot have been very many years after the Abarsal treaty was written, if it was writen sometime in the late years of Igriš-Halab.

3.2.4.1 Karkamiš and Jerablus Tahtani

From the textual perspective, Karkamiš seems to have been a place of no political significance during the period of the Ebla arcvhies, and this seems to agree with the

[425] For the variant spellings see Bonechi 1993: 150.

available archaeological data. Karkamiš was probably already an ancient village and the site of a shrine, but no political or economic power radiated from there. Instead, it was probably an important stopping point on the way up or downstream, in and out of Anatolia, along the west bank of the Euphrates.

Archaeologically, the area of Karkamiš has the potential to greatly aid our understanding of the Abarsal treaty and its concern with "fortresses." This information comes not from Karkamiš itself, but from the directly adjacent site of Jerablus Tahtani,[426] which, with little doubt, includes the remains of an Ebla-era bad_3^{ki} or "fortress," one of the ones mentioned in the Abarsal treaty.

Jerablus Tahtani was already settled in the 4th millenium, for which instrusive elements of the southern Uruk culture have been detected.[427] During the early 3rd millennium, the former village at Jerablus was destroyed and replaced by a compact, massively walled fortress. This fort had a stone-based defensive wall enclosing an area of about $300m^2$, still surviving to some 3m in height.[428] The fortress was "perched on a 7m high mound, so it was an imposing brilliant white-plastered monument in the midst of the flat green valley beside the Euphrates. Abutting the interior were well-preserved rooms with buttressed walls, hearths, pot stands, plastered bins, and stone paved entrances with stairs leading out to passages that sloped up to the unexcevated central core of the

[426] See Peltenberg 2016, with bibliography.
[427] Peltenberg/Wilkinson 2008: 28.
[428] Ibid.: 29.

monument."[429] Such features were interpreted by the exavators as "overtly domestic, rather than military, arrangements."[430]

This "mixed" character of the Jerablus fortress could be a clue as to its actual function. It probably was not built with the purpose in mind of defending some specific, wealthy urban center, for the very reason that no such important center existed in the immediate vicinity. Instead, the function of Jerablus could have been that of a type of waystation, or a fortified caravanserai.[431] Its function was as a stopping point above all along the north-south access (since Carchemish was not located near an easy river crossing). Caravans travelling through this area, perhaps neither densely settled nor heavily urbanized, could have used Jerablus as a stopping point, in order to protect themselves and the wares they were carrying.

It has been debated whether Jerablus represented an autonomous development, or a satellite offshoot of Carchemish[432] – which was probably a minor village of little importance at this time. For the Ebla Palace G period, neither of these scenarios looks particularly likely. The fact that a distant power like Ebla could hold the fortresses of Carchemish in its "hands" suggests instead that some other major power could have originally established Jerablus as its distant outpost, after which point, control over it could pass from kingdom to kingdom, with the changing political tides.

It may be, therefore, that the many "fortresses" listed in the Abarsal treaty as belonging to the ruler of Ebla do not represent a swath of continguous territory, but rather

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[429] Ibid.
[430] Ibid.
[431] For the existence and function of such buildings, see Barjamovic 2011 §1.7.
[432] Peltenberg 2016: 122; Peltenberg/Wilkinson 2008: 27.

a chain of outposts, located at key positions along trade routes. Some of these fortresses perhaps did not so much serve a purpose of defense for a major urban settlement, as places where travellers and caravans could stop and be safe, along the long stretches that seperated their origin and ultimate destination.

3.2.4.2 Kablul and the Gold Mountain

The first place listed on the Abarsal treaty as "in the hands of the ruler of Ebla" is unfortunately lost. The second one is Kablul. Throughout the period covered by the Ebla archives, Kablul stands out above all as a place that supplied Ebla with gold.[433] Time and time again Kablul is connected with mu-DU "incomes" to Ebla consisting of several minas of gold. This renders it probable that Kablul itself was located close to a source from which gold was mined:

[A7, 18]

(1) 5 la_2-5 ma-na ku_3-gi / mu-DU / *Kab-lu_5-ul*^{ki}
(7) 5 ma-na ku_3-gi / mu-DU / *Kab-lu_5-ul*^{ki}

Gudea of Lagash mentioned the "mountain range of Hahhum" as a place from which he obtained gold. From his lower Mesopotamian, Tigridian perspective, this place was far up along the Euphrates, beyond "Ebla and Uršu." Hahhum also occurs in the Old Assyrian business documents from Kanesh, where it features as one of the most important Euphrates crossings utilized by the Assyrian merchants on their way west into Anatolia. Recent studies of the Old Assyrian Hahhum have supported a location of

[433] Cf. Archi 2017: 167.

Hahhum at or near Samsat on the Upper Euphrates. [434] Kablul is likewise lent a Euphratean valence by its occurrence here in the Abarsal treaty, alongside Karkamiš, from which it was probably further upstream. In all likelihood therefore, Kablul was situated somewhere in the vicinity of the same "golden mountain range of Hahhum" referred to by Gudea, that is, near Samsast. The possible etymology of Kablul, perhaps a diminutive of a Semitic word for "mountain," [435] could constitute a further piece of evidence in this direction.

The letter from Irkab-Damu to the anonymous ruler of Kablul cannot be very much later than the Abarsal treaty itself. It seems unlikely that this treaty describes some new political situation, radically different from the one attested in the Abarsal treaty. Instead, it could confirm that Ebla's "ownership" of fortresses around Kablul did not mean that Kablul itself did not retain political independence. Control over the fortresses could therefore allude to Ebla's special trade privileges with Kablul, and perhaps Kablul's client status before Ebla.

[A13, 2]

(1) *en-ma* [*Ir*$_3$]-*kab*-[*Da*]-*mu* / en / ˹*Ib*˺-*la*^{ki} / ˀ*a*$_5$-*na* / ˹en˺ / [*Ka*]*b*-˹*lu*$_5$˺ -*ul*$^{[ki]}$
(2) *in* ud / nam-tar / [1 giš]-˹šu$_4$˺ / [ku$_3$-gi] / GA$_2$×LA$_2$ ˹x˺ g[in$_2$-DILMUN] / dam-gar$_3$ / en / *Ib*-*la*^{ki} / i$_3$-na-sum
(3) 1 nig$_2$-banda$_3$ NU$_{11}$-za ku$_3$-gi ša$_3$ ku$_3$:bar$_6$ GA$_2$×LA$_2$ [x] gin$_2$-DILMUN / […] / i$_3$-na-sum
(4a) DIŠ mu / nidba$_2$ / na-˹du$_3$˺ / *I*[*g*]-[*ri*$_2$-*iš*]- ˹*Ha*˺-*lab*$_x$(LAM×KUR) / [en] / [*Ib*]- ˹*la*˺^{ki}
(4b) [*Ir*$_3$]-*kab*-[*A*]*r* / m[u]-DU / ˹x˺ ˹x˺ / […]

(1) Thus speaks Irkab-Damu, ruler of Ebla, to the ruler of Kablul.

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[434] On the identification of Hahhum with Samsat see in detail Barjamovic 2011: 102-105; 214-219; 403.
[435] Bonechi 1997: 229 suggested the possibility of a derivation "from **gabl-* "mountain" (perhaps a diminutive, like the Ar[abic] *jubail*).

(2) On the occasion ofthe oath, a merchant (of Kablul) gave to the ruler of Ebla one golden shield weighing [x] shekels.
(3) […] gave (to the ruler of Ebla?) one small vase with gold foil and silver on the inside, weighing [x] shekels.
(4a) During the year of the offering to the (funerary) stele of Igriš-Halab, ruler of Ebla.
(4b) Irkab-Ar brought (these gifts to the ruler of Ebla?) …

3.2.4.3 ʾAdu and the Places of "The Second Area"

It seems possible that the "second area" (ki-2) could refer instead to toponyms of a southern valence as seen from Abarsal, i.e., the vicinity of Emar and Tell Banat, and further downsteam. This then stands in contrast to the first area, which seems to concern the north, from Karkamiš further upsteam. Section (17) of the Abarsal treaty there mentions *ʾA₃-du*^{ki}, which also occurs in a later chancery text. This text clearly reflects the position of *ʾA₃-du*^{ki} as having been caught up in between Mari and Ebla. Another toponym that seems to have been located between Mari and Ebla is igi^{ki} "the water source, spring"[436] because it appears in a text concerning disputes between Ebla and Mari merchants.[437]

The text contains a back-and-forth dialogue between ʾAdu and Mari, apparently concerning ʾAdu's indecision as to whether it prefers a "brotherhood" with Ebla or Mari. In the end, ʾAdu apparently sides with Mari.[438] One may ask however, how and why did

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[436] For the understanding of igi^{ki} as /ʿAyn/ "the water source" (possibly corresponding to *A-nu*^{ki}, *A-na-a*^{ki}, and *A-na-an*^{ki}) cf. Fronzaroli 2003: 172-173; Archi et al. 1993: 107; Bonechi 1993: 44; Sallaberger 2008: 97. Oases or springs are refered to as "eyes" also in later Akkadian: cf. CAD/I: 157–158, sv. *inu*, definition e, "spring," as well as in local Arab tradition to this day.
[437] A13, 15 (3).
[438] A13, 19 (30): KA.UNKEN-*ma* / *NA-SE*$_{11}$ *NA-SE*$_{11}$ / en / *ʾA₃-du*^{ki} / *wa* / du$_{11}$-ga / (31) *u₃-hu-wa-du* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / nu sa$_6$ / (32) *ap* / *u₃-hu-wa-du* / *Ma-ri₂*^{ki} / sa$_6$ / *ne-si-in* "And so the people of the ruler of ʾAdu convened an assembly, and they declared: "A brotherhood with Ebla is not good, But a brotherhood with Mari is good!"

this dossier enter the Ebla archives? There seem to be few other possibilities to consider, other than that it was Mari itself who provided Ebla with this information, regarding ʾAdu's shunning of Ebla in favor of Mari.[439] This, in turn, could only have been to ʾAdu's disadvantage. But forcing ʾAdu into this difficult position could have, on the other hand, been to Ebla and Mari's advantage alike. It would provide them both with the justification for the continued bullying of their weaker, interstitial, neighbor, portrayed in the text as "duplicitous" and "unfaithful." The situation is thus reminiscent of that portrayed in the Abarsal treaty itself. The "loser" in such a situation was neither Ebla nor Mari, but the Euphratean powers located in between them. Thus, while it is not to be excluded that there existed a genuine rivalry between Mari and Ebla for influence over ʾAdu, the very existence of the ʾAdu dossier in the Ebla archives seems to suggest some level of cooperation on the part of Ebla and Mari. Like the Abarsal treaty, the main purpose of the ʾAdu dossier appears to have been to provide legal and/or moral justification for the oppression of the weaker powers by the stronger ones.

Also implying this kind of situation is the existence of a dossier of communications between Manuwat and Mari. Once again, it is unlikely that Ebla somehow illicitly obtained this information; instead, Mari must have provided it, underscoring the cooperative arrangment that existed between the two powers.

3.3.0 The Manuwat-Mari Dossier

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[439] It seems less likely that either ʾAdu would have provided Ebla with this information voluntarily itself, or that Ebla would have somehow extracted it from ʾAdu. Also unlikely is the possibility of an Eblaite textual fabrication. One could speculate that this tablet date o the late period, when Ebla and Mari's relations were again warming after a cooling off

The Manuwat-Mari dossier (A13, 10) seems as if it could be either roughly contemporary with the Abarsal treaty, or slightly later. The anonymous EN of Mari, for lack of other options, is probably Enna-Dagan. The LUGAL could still have been Iplus-Il or NI-zi. The text could thus be seen in connection with the military campaigns that Mari was pursuing in this area. While Manuwat is not mentioned in the Enna-Dagan letter, nearby Raʾaq is. This document shows that Manuwat was forced to cede control of the fortresses of Raʾaq to Mari, just as Abarsal was forced to cede its fortresses to Ebla. It could potentially date to the early years of the reign of Irkab-Damu[440], while the Abarsal treaty dates rather to Igriš-Halab.

It is significant that in sections 9–10, Enna-Damu of Manuwat speaks an oath that is closely paralleled in Abarsal treaty, linking the two documents on a chronological as well as practical level. It suggests the phrase in question on the Abarsal treaty could have had an ultimately Mariote origin.

[A13, 10]
(1) *en-ma* / *En-na-da-mu* / en / *Ma-nu-wa-ad*^{ki} / *ʾa$_5$-na* / en / [*Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}] /
(2) [ka-(ka)] / sa$_6$-sa$_6$ / du$_{11}$-ga / nam-TAR /
(3) *su-ma* / al$_6$-bal / *gu$_2$-wa-du*

(1) Thus speaks Enna-Damu, the ruler of Manuwat, to the EN of [Mari]:
(2) "I have spoken the oath (with) a sweet [mouth]."[441]
(3) "If you transgress, it is upon you (i.e., Manuwat)."

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[440] A13, 19 (30): KA.UNKEN-*ma* / *NA-SE$_{11}$ NA-SE$_{11}$* / en / *ʾA$_3$-du*^{ki} / *wa* / du$_{11}$-ga / (31) *u$_3$-hu-wa-du* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / nu sa$_6$ / (32) *ap* / *u$_3$-hu-wa-du* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / sa$_6$ / *ne-si-in* "And so the people of the ruler of ʾAdu convened an assembly, and they declared: "A brotherhood with Ebla is not good, but a brotherhood with Mari is good! *We are in agreement!*"

[441] Cf. VE 0203 (Pettinato 1982: 221): ka-sa$_6$ = *du-za-li-um*; EV 0165 (Pettinato 1982: 359): ka-sa$_6$-sag$_9$ = *za-nu-lum* = ga-zi-zi-gi, "sweet mouth" (with syllabic Sumerian rendering; etymology and meaning of the Semitic translation unclear).

(4) ˹*en*˺*-ma* / ˹*En*˺*-na*-[*da-m]u* / [en] / [*Ma-nu-wa*-]-*ad*[ki] / ʾ*a5-na* / en / *Ma-ri2*ki /
(5) nam-TAR /
(6) *su-ma* / *in* / ki-k[i] / *M*[*a*]-*nu*-[*wa*]-˹*ad*˺ki / [DINGIR (x)] / [nu i3-dim] / [*an-na*]
(6b) gaba-[ru] gaba-[ru]-*SU3* / i3-d[im2] / ˹šu˺ [ba4-ti]
(7) [...] / [...] / [...] / [...] / ([...])/ [nu] ˹šu˺ ba4-[t]i /

(4) Thus speaks Enna-[dam]u, the ruler of Manuwat, to the EN of Mari.
(5) I swear:
(6) If I [do not perform the cult of the god/Deity X] in the territory of Manuwat
(6b) *Your* substitute will perform the cult, and he will rec[eive]...
(7) [(But if ...) he will [not] receive.

(8) *Ma-ri2*ki / *u3* / [*Ma-nu-w*]*a*-[*ad*]ki / [...] / [...] / [...] / [...] / ([...])/

(8) Mari and Manuwat...

(9) [*en-ma*] / *En-na-da-mu* /
(10) *Ha-zu-wa-an*ki / *u3* / *Kak-mi-um*ki / *u3* / [*NI-ra-ar*ki (?)] / [2 ud] / [*u3*] / [3 ud] / e11 /
al6-ma / *Da-bi2-na-ad*ki / DU / *ar-hi-iš ar-hi-iš* / bad3˹ki˺-bad3ki / [(*Ra-*ʾ*a3-ak*ki)]

(9) Thus speaks Enna-Damu:
(10) "If Hassuwan, Kakmium, or [*NI-rar* (?)] [for even 2 or 3 days] come up into the territory of Dabinat, I will go as quickly as possible to the fortresses of [Raʾak]."

(11) dBAD *Ga-na-na-um*ki / nu i3-dim2 / *an-na* / gaba-ru-*ga* / *aš2-˹tum-ma*ʾ / e3 / [...] / [...] /
Ma-r[*i2*ki]

(11) If I do not perform the cult for the Lord of Ganana, your susbtitute will come forth, and [return (?)] ... to Mari.

(12) *wa* / du11-ga / *Ma*-[*nu*]-˹*wa*ʾ*-ti-iš*ki / *Ma-ri2*ki /
(12b) e11 / *aš2-du-na* / i3-til3 / [*si-in*] / ˹*Šu*ʾ*-ra-nu*ki /
(12c) *wa* / zi-ga-*ma* / ˹*an*ʾ*-na* /
(13) *wa* / il2-*ga* / *al6* / zag<-us2?> zag<-us2?> (14) *wa* / mu-DU mu-DU / [...] / [...]

(12) And Mari orders Manuwat as follows:
(12b) You will come up with us when we depart for Šuran.
(12c) And if I call up a levy,[442]

[442] For the meaning "levy" of zi-ga cf. the usage in the Cylinder A of Gudea (Edzard 1997: 78), xiv 10, 13, 17), in the context of a "levy" raised by Gudea in order to build Ningirsu's Eninnu. Cf. also CAD/T: 319 s.v. *šutbû*, "to mobilize," with an example from

(13–14) then your contribution is for the *troops*[443], you will bring it all to me, [and...][444]

(15) [ki-ki] / [*Ma-nu*]-*wa-ad*^{ki} / [en] / [*M*]*a*-[*nu*]-*wa-ad*^{ki}
(16) bad$_3^{ki}$-bad$_3^{ki}$ / *Ra-ʾa$_3$-ag*^{ki} / en / [*Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*]

(15) [The territories of Manu]wat (belong to) [the ruler of M]a[nu]wat.
(16) The fortresses of Raʾaq belong to the EN of Mari.

In one text dating to the tenure of ArruLUM and the reign of Irkab-Damu, Enna-Damu of Manuwat receives a rich gift consisting of a golden dagger and a valuable "colorful garment of Armi."[445] Significantly, *En-na-da-mu* is attested again, in a text of the same period,[446] but this time as the EN of *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki}. It seems likely therefore that *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki} represents a variant spelling of the same place as *Ma-nu-wa-ad*^{ki}. Yet another unique variant is *Mu-nu-wa-at*^{ki} also from the period of ArruLUM.[447] The spelling *Munu$_4$-wa-du*^{ki} occurs in a late text from the food archive, where different scribal practices were employed.[448] The spelling *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki} seems to have fallen out of favor after the ArruLUM period. Possibly therefore *Ma-nu-wa-ad*^{ki} was the spelling

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OB Mari, ARM 2, 101: 8, *ṣabam ša halṣim ana Habūr ušetbi,* "I have mobilized the work force of (my) district for the Habur."

[443] Or: "your contribution is for the *borders*," note however that a reduplicated form zag-zag seems to be attested only here; this, and the context, could jutify an understanding zag<-us$_2$> zag<-us$_2$>. For zag-us$_2$ "troops" cf. VE 1176 (Pettinato 1982: 325): zag-us$_2$ = *ba-i-la-tum* /baḥir-āt-um/ "selected (troops)," from **bḥr* "to select" for which cf. VE 701 (Ibid.: 278) IGI.ZAG (LAK 159) = *ba-ʾa$_3$-lu-um(-lum), ba-i-ra-tum* "to select" (Akk. *bêru*; see Civil 1984: 87); cf. Hajouz 2013: 158f. For the reduplicated form zag-us$_2$ zag-us$_2$ cf. Catagnoti/Fronzaroli 2010: 283.

[444] Differently, Fronzarolli 2003: 117, "(12) E (se) Mari ordina a Manuwat di far scendere (quelli) presenti presso di noi [verso] Šuran, io mi leverò. (13) E (li) porterò a te sui confini." A rendering "porterò a te" for il$_2$-*ga* seems difficult because the 2nd person dative pronoun should be *-kum* (Catagnoti 2012a: 72).

[445] On this type of textile see below §4.2.5.2.

[446] A15, 16 (28).

[447] A15, 18 (35)

[448] A9, 61 rev. i 14.

preferred at Mari, with whose practices Ibrium sought to bring Ebla into accordance with his scribal reforms at the start of his tenure.

In any event, Enna-Damu of Manuwat's receipt of a valuable gift, most likely while visiting Ebla, matches the situation implied by the presence of a dossier on Manuwat-Mari relations at Ebla. Manuwat was clearly caught up between both states, and had to engage in diplomacy with both of them.

Apparently, Mari was willing to share with Ebla textual information about the obligations that Manuwat had towards Mari. One might speculate that Ebla would have shared similar information with Mari in return. This could have been of practical or legal relevance, considering also that Ebla held relations with *Ra-ʾa$_3$-ag*^{ki}, another state mentioned in the dossier.

Another roughly contemporary Ebla administrative document records Enna-Damu's receipt of 30-shekel golden sheath upon his departure from Ebla for a journey to Mari.[449] With its king seemingly being sent off from one powerful neighbor to go visit another, this again seems to show how Manuwat had to live with one foot in each world, so to speak, balancing relations between Ebla and Mari but to some degree subordinated to both.

For reasons of scope a full study of the hundreds of attestations of *Ma-nu-wa-ad*^{ki} in the Ebla texts cannot be undertaken here. Future studies are likely to shed additional light on the complicated relations between Manuwat and its two powerful neighbors. For now, it should be noted that Manuwat was, along with, on the one hand Mari, and on the

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[449] M2, 12 rev. i 3f: 1 ib$_2$-la$_2$ ku$_3$

other hand Kakmium and Armi, among the places from which the most merchants (lu_2-kar) came to Ebla.[450]

[450] Cf. Archi 1993: "[The merchants, lu_2-kar] came from various city-states, but their largest numbers were from Kakmium, Manuwat, and Mari." Cf. Archi 2011: 27, "No other state [than Armi] sent so many people to Ebla, especially merchants, lu_2-kar." See also further below §4.0 on Armi and §6.0 on Kakmium.

4.0 Armi: A Cilician Capital

4.1.0 Introduction and overview

There can be no doubt that Armi holds a unique status among the numerous foreign polities attested in the Ebla archives. The archival footprint of Armi and of men from Armi is second only to that of Mari. Moreover, the Armi onomastic tradition was completely different from that of Ebla, Mari, Nagar, Ib'al, or any other of the sundry Syrian kingdoms surrounding Ebla,[451] all of which are characterized by names belonging to a broad Semitic tradition. From no other place came so many travellers to Ebla, especially merchants (lu$_2$-kar),[452] and Eblaites were likewise regularly travelling to and from Armi. Armi appears to have been a privileged destination for brief sojourns carried out by the king of Ebla himself,[453] while the ruler of Armi seems to have been on at least one occasion present at Ebla.[454] Armi was so important to Ebla that some Ebla men even carried a Semitic personal name invoking Armi in the syntactic position of a divine element: *Yinḥar-Armi*,[455] to which one can compare a name invoking the important

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[451] Archi 2011: 27; Bonechi 1990b: 21-25; Bonechi 1991a: 74.
[452] Archi 2011: 27. Significantly, merchants from Armi are the only kind attested in the food archive L.2712 (=A9), dating to the very end of the Ebla archives; see Milano 1990: 395 for attestations. This means that during this late period, the Armi merchants were the only kind who resided directly in the Ebla palace and received food rations there.
[453] Milano 1990: 335, with reference to the texts A9, 27 and A9, 104, two records of food provisions from close to the end of Ebla, which, according to Milano's interpretation, document the travel of the Ebla king to Armi and then back to Ebla again in the context of a religious activities. (cf. Ibid: 86–89; 301–304).
[454] See below §4.2.5.
[455] Spelled *En-ar$_3$-Ar-mi*^{ki}, translated "Armi has smitten;" Pagan 1998: 147. On the significance of *Ar-mi*^{ki} in the Ebla lexicon, see the discussion in Bonechi 1997: 508–519.

religious center of Aleppo, *Yinḥar-Halab*.[456] These facts alone make it clear that the location of Armi and an understanding of the nature of its diplomatic and economic exchanges with Ebla are matters of key importance to the topic of this work. It is telling therefore for the present state of research, that the geographical location of Armi on the map remains a matter of controversy, with radically different solutions having been proposed.

Adelheid Otto suggested locating Armi at the site of Tell Bazi-Tell Banat on the left bank of Euphrates between Emar and Karkamiš.[457] Alfonso Archi instead places it about 80 miles (~130 km) upstream at Samsat, on the right bank of the river.[458]

Neither position, however, accounts satisfactorily for a number of points brought out in the following analysis, and perhaps a more satisfying solution to this problem is possible, if Armi is taken away from the Euphrates and located instead to the northwest of Ebla.[459] Connecting Armi with the Cilician Gates through the Taurus mountains would locate it near the historical key route from Northern Syria into Anatolia and the metal and timber resources of the Anatolian plateau.

Indeed, there are no indications in the Ebla sources that Armi was associated with the Euphrates. Placing Armi instead to the northwest produces a more balanced political geography of Ebla's relations with its neighbors. It explains well the different and conspicuous nature of Armi's appearance, and its special status among the foreigners recorded at Ebla. Armi's position seems to have excluded it from having a role in the

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[456] A4, 17 (117): *En-ar$_3$*!(HA)-*ha-lab$_x$*. Cf. Bonechi 1997: 482 with fn. 37.
[457] Otto 2006; Otto/Biga 2010.
[458] Archi 2011.
[459] See already Bonechi 1990a: 34-37; Bonechi 1993: 54. See also Barjamovic in press B.

complicated game of international affairs concentrated on the Euphrates region. It is absent from the so-called "chancery" texts dealing with this region, characterized by the jostling of the three great powers of Ebla, Mari and Nagar and the smaller polities caught in between them. The main Euphratean powers all had direct relations with one another, but only Ebla appears to have had direct contact with Armi; when Armi did interact with the Euphratean powers, it was through Eblaite intermediation.

Both Otto and Archi were influenced, in their respective choices of Bazi-Banat and Samsat, by the desire to identify Armi with a citadel in the modern ruin landscape,[460] an image gleaned from an inscription of Naram-Sin describing his siege of a place called Armanum, known through an Old Babylonian copy. This search for a citadel as means for situating the Armi of Ebla texts is methodologically problematic, considering the potentially spurious nature of the information contained in this *Sammeltafel* description, so far removed from the Ebla evidence in space and time. On the other hand, there is nothing from Ebla itself suggesting that Armi was characterized by a citadel. Even if Armi did have a large citadel, one can by no means be certain that it would have survived in an identifiable form until the present day. Conversely, any number of cities other than Armi could have had citadels.

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[460] Otto 2006: 13, "The citadel of Bazi is a fortified, astonishingly high and steep hill situated near a river, features it shares with the Armanum described in Naram-Sin's inscription."Archi 2011: 29, "If Armanum is Armi, the written sources from Ebla force us... to locate this city further north.... north of the [Atatürk] dam stands the high and large artificial mound of the citadel of Samsat."

The identification of Ebla's Armi with Naram-Sin's Armanum remains but a possibility, predicated upon little more than partial assonance.[461] That Naram-Sin mentioned Ebla and Armanum alongside one another however does not necessarily mean that we should expect to see this Armanum in the Palace G texts from Ebla; Sargon for his part, writing at a time less far removed from the Palace G period than Naram-Sin, mentioned Ebla alongside a place called Yarmuti[462] – an entity apparently not attested at Ebla.[463]

One significant datum that may affect the debate on whether Ebla's Armi(um) and Naram-Sin's Armanum are identical, is the existence of an original stele fragment of Naram-Sin narrating his conquest of Ebla and Armanum,[464] excavated in the late 2000s by an Iraqi team at the site of Tulul al-Baqarat. Full assessment of the significance of this new piece will, however, have to await final publication. The preserved part of the stele does not contain any description of a citadel. It does however mention Naram-Sin's

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[461] I cannot agree with the statement of Matthiae 2014-2015b: 108, "...Armi, certes correspondant à l'Armanum des inscriptions de Naram-Sin d'Akkad et à identifier à Tell Bazi/Banat ou à Samsat...." Far from it being certain matter, there is no solid evidence at all that Naram-Sin's Armanum and Ebla's Armi(um) were one and the same.

[462] Frayne 1993: 28 (Sargon E2.1.1.11, line 23 (Sum): *Ia$_3$-ar-mu-ti*^{ki}; line 28 (Akk.) *Ia$_3$-ar-mu-ti-a-am*^{ki}); 30 (Sargon E2.1.1.12, line 17′ *Ia$_3$-ar-mu-ti-a-am*$^{<ki>}$. Unlikely to be related is the "e$_2$ *Ir$_3$-mu-ut*^{ki}" of A2, 22: iii 4–5, which designates the name of an Eblaite private estate (cf. Astour 2002: 70).

[463] Regarding outward similarity of "Armi(um)" and "Armanum" one is in an analogous situation as with Naram-Sin's legendary besieging of a city called "Apišal," and the "Abarsal" of the Ebla texts. Unattested in original inscriptions, the siege of Apišal was the subject of a deep and long-lasting tradition including literary compositions and historical omens (see above §3.2.1.2). Any connection between "Apišal" and "Abarsal," like the one between "Armi(um)" and "Armanum" is impossible to prove at present. For a general discussion of homonyms and methodological problems of identically named settlements for the study of historical geography, cf. Barjamovic 2011: 66f.

[464] Information courtesy P. Steinkeller, who has seen photographs and a preliminary copy of the original.

capture of a very large number of officials of Armanum,[465] suggesting that this Armanum was not merely a single urban settlement, but a large regional entity.

As for the Armi(um) attested at Ebla, as already pointed out by Archi, all the textual evidence from Ebla points in the direction that Armi was not merely a single site, but a state of regional dimension,[466] and so the attempt to identify Armi with one specific prominent ruin mound may not be the correct approach at all. In the end, it must be the Ebla evidence, which decides the location of Armi; the Naram-Sin *Sammeltafel* inscription can be of little relevance.

Above all, the geopolitical situation at the time of the Ebla archives renders it impossible to locate Armi at Bazi. There is simply no room for a major power of Armi's status in the crowded Euphrates region between and around Emar and Karkemish, peppered as it is with sundry kingdoms of minor status. Considering that both Emar and Karkemish fell under Eblaite control or influence,[467] it would make little sense to imagine that Armi, an independent foreign power of such great prominence at Ebla, could have been located directly in between them (even if Bazi-Banat is on the opposite side of the river from Emar and Karkemish).

More importantly, Armi seems to have had access to significant amounts of silver and gold, a fact for which there would be no explanation, were it located at Bazi. Armi

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[465] Unpublished Naram-Sin Armanum original, iii' 3'-14: [*u-sa*]-*am*-[*gi*]-*it* / [ ] lugal / ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ 142$^?$ dumu-lugal *Ar-ma-nim*^{ki} / ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ 120 en / ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ 30 ensi$_2$ / ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ 14 šagina / šu-nigin$_2$ 54 *ra-bi$_2$-a-nu* / ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ 40$^?$ nu-banda$_3$/ ŠU.NIGIN$_2$ / 486$^?$ šaga$_x$(LU$_2$×EŠ$_2$) / *in* KAS.ŠUDUN / *i-ik-mi*

[466] Archi 2010: 27. For Biga 2008: 318 Armi was instead merely "une ville."

[467] Karkemish was one of the states said in the Abarsal Treaty to be "in the hands of the ruler of Ebla," see §3.2.4.1. The situation with Emar was more complicated, see §2.1.2.

seems simply too different in political status and character from the many rather generic kingdoms located east and northeast of Ebla for it to be considered one of them.

Ebla was at one point, late in the period covered by the archives, involved in a military episode alongside Armi, as an ally, in an area called Tarhatum, apparently located in the region or vicinity of Armi itself.[468] This kind of military situation would be hard to make sense of, if Armi were but a single settlement located right in the middle of a stretch of the Euphrates controlled by Ebla, and moreover in a politically crowded region.

It seems impossible that Armi could have represented an onomastic island at Bazi, within an otherwise completely homogenous Semitic region.[469] Otto's example of DU-*lu*^{ki} as another linguistically anomalous settlement supposedly situated in northern Syria, with names different from, but reminiscent to those of Armi,[470] can be of little help, because it seems equally impossible to locate DU-*lu*^{ki} as an onomastic island in that region. It is unlikely that the occurrence of DU-*lu*^{ki} in certain Ebla monthly textile lists among other Northern Syrian centers has any bearing on its location; this organization instead reflects these states' rank at Ebla.[471] Certain more meaningful co-occurences

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[468] On this episode see Bonechi 2016b: 2–5, and further below §4.6.0.
[469] Cf. Archi 2011: 27, "The onomastic tradition of Armi, so different from that of Ebla and her allies, obliges us to locate this city on the edges of the Semiticized area...."
[470] Otto 2006: 19 (referring to Bonechi 1990b: 25; Bonechi 1993: 112).
[471] See above §2.2. The occurrence of the ruler of DU-*lu*^{ki} in A1, 1 and 3–7, where he receives textiles alongside the rulers of northern Syrian centers such Ursa'um, Utig, Irritum and Harran, is purely incidental. It says nothing about the location of DU-*lu*^{ki}. It only shows that its ruler of was present at Ebla at around the same time as those other Syrian rulers, for similar reasons, and that he was considered to hold a similar rank to them. Similarly, Armi does not appear among these powers precisely because it held a superior rank to them (for Otto 2006: 19, "The absence of a ruler (en) of Armi in the lists

between DU-*lu*^{ki} and toponyms of a clearly southern valence oblige us to locate DU-*lu*^{ki} instead in that direction.[472] Most important of these is the link between DU-*lu*^{ki} and *Du-gu-ra-su*^{ki}, for which recently a convincing argument for an identification with Egypt has been proposed.[473] While it is so far impossible to prove for certain, it seems likely that DU-*lu*^{ki} is to be read *Gub-lu*^{ki} and identified with Byblos. This localization of DU-*lu*^{ki} = *Gub-lu*^{ki} = Byblos, and the fact that DU-*lu*^{k} and Armi seem to share a related non-Semitic

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ARET I: 1-9 is indeed a problem, because the cities listed in those documents seem to cover the area of the Euphrates bend from downstream of Emar to upstream from Karkamiš"). The Ebla lists of textile allotments are not organized geographically, but rather according to incidental circumstances. These circumstances can, sometimes, through a deep and informed analysis, reveal information about various places locations with respect to one another. There are much richer and more meaningful textual occurrences than those in A1, 1 and 3-7 where DU-*lu*^{ki} appears alongside toponyms of clearly southern valence, obliging us to seek DU-*lu*^{ki} in that direction. With a very high degree of probability, DU-l*u*^{ki} is indeed to be read *Gub-lu*^{ki} and identified with Byblos.

[472] See e.g. the link between DU-*lu*^{ki} and the southern town of Tunep such as in eg. A4, 17 (119): 5 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 5 sal-tug$_2$ / 4 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / DU-*lu*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *Du-ne-ib*$_2^{ki}$ (on which see Bonechi 2016a: 50). See also the link between DU-*lu*^{ki} and the southern Ne'ayu, eg. TM.75.G.2350 obv. vii 12–15: mu-DU / DU-*lu*^{ki} / *in* / *Ne-a-u*$_3^{ki}$ (on which see Bonechi 2016a: 35).

[473] Biga 2014b: 97–99, "After studying the references to DUlu in the Ebla texts I recently concluded that there is no better candidate for Byblos in the Ebla texts than DUlu…. The name of Egypt or of an Egyptian city has not been identified with certainty in the Ebla texts, but there is one good candidate: the town/region of Dugurasu… DUlu and Dugurasu are often mentioned together. People from DUlu come to Ebla with the news that the journey of some merchants to Dugurasu has ended successfully." Unconvincing is the proposal of Archi 2016a to connect Dugurasu instead with Tukriš, and seek it thus in Iran. Ebla sent quantities of lapis and tin to Dugurasu, which is the exact opposite of what one would expect if Dugurasu were in Iran, considering that Central Asia is certainly the origin of the Ebla lapis lazuli, and possibly tin as well. It is unlikely that the onomastic element *-ti-lu* (var. *-du-lum*) – invoked by Archi 2016a: 3 in favor of a reading "*Du-lu*^{ki}" – has anything at all to do with the name of the city.

onomasticon[474] (as well as other textual links) in turn further bolsters the case for seeking Armi in Cilicia (cf. the map above, §2.1).

While the Armi = Bazi-Banat equation lies completely outside the realm of possibility, the proposal of Archi to situate Armi at Samsat has at least the advantage of linguistic and geopolitical plausibility. Archi recognized for the same reasons as outlined above that Armi had to be situated someplace beyond the core region of all the various Syro-Euphratean kingdoms. But based on the *Sammeltafel* inscription of Naram-Sin, he also believed in the necessity to identify Armi with a citadel on the Euphrates, and therefore looked further up the river and chose Samsat, an impressive mound located roughly 90km north of the Syrian border in modern Turkey and on the right bank of the Euphrates.

Samsat, it must be emphasized, controls an important crossing point on the river, and represents thus an important gateway into Anatolia for a traveler approaching from the east. This is one of many reasons why Samsat has been identified as a plausible candidate for a different settlement, namely, Hahhum, which in the Old Assyrian archives was the main crossing point for Assyrian merchants entering Anatolia on their way to

[474] Cf. Bonechi 1990, 1991. The possibility that Cilicia and the Levantine coastal area possibly shared a related onomasticon already in the third millennium could be of great relevence for the history of Anatolian Indo-European languages in that region, cf. Kroonen et al. 2018.

Kanesh.[475] Hahhum is also identified on a statue of Gudea of Lagash as a source of gold.[476]

But if there was for Ebla such a "gateway" into the resource-rich Anatolian plateau, then Samsat would have been an illogical one, lying some 250 km in the opposite direction of the nearest route leading into Anatolia. Certainly, the main route from the perspective of Northern Syria was always the one leading northwest of Ebla through the AMuq and Cilicia.

The Cilician Taurus Mountain passes have always been the main path in and out of a region rich in resources not found in Syro-Mesopotamia, especially metals, stone, and timber. In the Presargonic Period, no major power on the Near Eastern scene, other than Ebla, was situated in such a favorable location to access these routes. Indeed, from what we can tell, it was Ebla alone who held a privileged relationship with Armi, a situation, which would make perfect sense if Armi were to be placed northwest of Ebla. In such a case, the heartland of Ebla would lie directly in between all of the other major powers mentioned in the archives and Armi, thus blocking those states' access to Armi.

It is significant in this regard that Armi is, already in the texts from the time of Irkab-Damu, by far the toponym most frequently attested in association with the verb DU "to go," indicating that there was a frequent traffic of persons and goods running between Ebla and Armi from the earliest period (see below). If Armi were located at Samsat, then

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[475] Barjamovic 2011: 102-105; 214-219; 403. ,

[476] Edzard 1997: 34 (Gudea E3.1.1.7 Statue B vi 33–35): ku$_3$-GI sahar-ba / hur-sag ha-hu-um-ta / im-ta-e$_{11}$ "He brought down gold in its ore from the mountain range of Hah(h)um."

not only does the physical distance seem too great given the great frequency of journeys between the two places, but several other Euphratean minor powers would surely have been situated along the route between Ebla and Samsat.

No such intermediaries[477] are mentioned in the context of Armi-Ebla relations and, from what we can tell, Armi and Ebla always dealt directly with one another without mediation or involvement on the part of any of the smaller Syrian kingdoms. While Ebla certainly also had frequent and intense contact with the distant power of Mari, one can clearly glimpse, in their relationship, the role played by those minor powers lying in between Ebla and Mari (such as, for example, Manuwat). No such intervening polities are perceivable between Ebla and Armi, suggesting that the spheres of influence of Ebla and Armi directly abutted upon one another.

Even if the Ebla texts do not record the provenance of the vast quantities of silver that they possessed, we can know for certain that the silver's ultimate origin had to be Anatolia. However exactly the silver may have made it out of the mines and into Ebla's storerooms, Anatolia is quite simply where the metal in question naturally occurs.[478] In this regard, it would be shocking were one unable to find in the texts any link between Ebla and Anatolia whatsoever. Armi is the best and only candidate for such a link.[479]

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[477] With one important exception – the kingdom of Kakmium, which was probably located to the west of Ebla, between Ebla and Armi, most likely in the Amuq valley. See below §6.0.

[478] For metal resources and their exploitation in in Early Bronze Age Anatolia, see Massa 2016: 169f.

[479] The same conclusion is drawn in Barjamovic in press B.

Previous studies have claimed that Ebla engaged in a series of military conflicts against Armi, as enemies.[480] According to the present assessment, these reconstructions are wrong. Throughout the entire period covered by the Ebla archives, Ebla and Armi were never in conflict; they remained allies, and whenever a person from Armi appears in a text from Ebla, he has the status of a "friend." Whenever military affairs are mentioned in the context of Armi, Ebla and Armi were fighting on the same team against a third, common enemy, whose name is sometimes left unmentioned.

4.1.1 The "Itineraries" and Armi's Location

In order to demonstrate a location of Armi to northwest of Ebla one must study some of the "itineraries" recorded by the Ebla palace scribes. Such records do not represent itineraries per se, but are rather lists of items (for the most part textiles), given out by the administration at the Ebla Palace G, the occasion of which is specified as a departure on (or, less commonly the return from) a journey to another location. Sometimes, the recipient is simply an Ebla man, who leaves to go to some "Point B." But sometimes there are three parties involved; it is a foreign man from "Point C" who receives some goods at Ebla ("Point A") and then departs to go to "Point B," sometimes explicitly accompanied by an Ebla man. These three-participant journeys are of particular interest to us, not only for their geographic, but also political and economic implications.

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[480] Otto/Biga 2010 *passim* and 482 with the claim that "the texts document ... several wars against Armi." Archi 2011 also refers *passim* to alleged wars and conflicts with Armi, but also with some reservations. Ibid.: 7 ambiguously refers to a "military expedition of Armi" (but Ibid.: 18 renders identical phraseology with "against"), while Ibid.: 14 expresses self-doubt in reference to an "(unexpected) war against Armi."

In three-participant journeys Ebla was clearly acting not only as the departure point, but probably also as a facilitator of the journey itself; its role as middleman or go-between is to be emphasized. Ebla was acting as an intermediary, not only physically, but socially and diplomatically as well. The three-participant journeys are moreover a strong clue that, Ebla must *grosso modo* have been located in between the two foreign polities. If Ebla were not in the middle, the two independent powers would presumably have been able to conduct relations directly with one another, without relying on Ebla.[481]

It is quite striking then, that already in the ArruLUM texts from the reign of king Irkab-Damu, the attested three-participant journeys overwhelmingly involved men from Armi. This is exactly what one would expect, if Armi were placed to the northwest of Ebla, thus physically separated from most of the other foreign lands by Ebla itself. Ebla arranged meetings between Armi and, among others, Nagar and Mari. Men from Armi were apparently interested in visiting the Habur and the Middle Euphrates regions. Likewise, Ebla facilitated travel in the opposite direction, of men from Mari and Nagar to go to Armi, situated, from their perspective, on the opposite side of Ebla. Some Armi men even travelled, with Eblaite accompaniment, further east beyond Nagar to the land of Subartum, on the upper Tigris, an area corresponding to the heartland of later Assyria and modern Iraqi Kurdistan.

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[481] In cases involving dependent polities, one could argue against a geographical explanation in favor of a political one. Namely, based on traditional rules of feudal interaction structure, client states were not generally free to interact as the pleased, but had to manage foreign relations through their superiors (on this phenomenon in the Amarna period, see Liverani 1990). In many cases, however, three-participant journeys are recorded between places where one or both of the entities involved are demonstrably not clients of Ebla. In such cases only the geographical explanation seems probable.

Had Armi been located on the Euphrates, whether at Samsat or at Tell Bazi, then it would make little sense for Ebla to have acted as a middleman between Armi and Mari, or Armi and Nagar. Travellers from Armi seeking to visit Mari or Nagar could have simply proceeded along the river without making an unnecessary detour to Ebla, receiving a gift there, and then relying on some Ebla men in order to return to the river and complete their journey.[482]

Characteristically, Ebla is not attested to have acted as a middleman between states whose locations would render such a role illogical. In particular, Ebla did not facilitate journeys between Mari and Nagar, in the same way it did instead for Armi and other places. When Mari and Nagar wished to conduct relations with one another, they were clearly able to do so directly, without the interference of a major polity like Ebla situated in between them.

4.1.2 The Rank of Armi

Gift records from the reign of Irkab-Damu establish the status and rank of Armi with regard to Ebla as comparable to that of Mari. In two early accounts, rich gifts consisting of gold, precious garments, weapons, chariots, and chariot accessories are given to the ruler of Armi, members of the royal family, and other high ranking personages. Like the gifts for the rulers of Mari, some these are gifts personally conveyed by the Eblaite vizier:

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[482] It is possible that Ebla's control over stretches of the Euphrates between Karkamiš and Emar could influence the itinerary of a traveller downstream to Mari; for such an example note the case of Hassuwan below §5.0. That Ebla also acted as a middleman between Armi and Hassuwan (likely to be near the Euphrates) is a further suggestion that Armi was not on the Euphrates.

[M10, 27][483]

(about 5–6 columns lost)

(1') [...] en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / [i$_3^?$]-ti
(2′) 1 ku$_3$-sal GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 5 ½ gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi 2 *BU-DI* GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 10 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-ba / dumu-MUNUS / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} /
(3′) 2 ku$_3$-sal / [...] / [nig$_2$-ba] / [x-munus$^?$] / [*Ar-mi*^{ki}]
(4′) [...] giš-dub giš-PA BAR.AN giš-PA BAR.AN 1 šita$_x$(SILA$_3$) GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-ba / *Šar-da-da* / nig$_2$-ag$_2$ / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} /
(5′) *Ar-ru-LUM* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ /

(1') [Rich gifts …] for the ruler of Armi (when he [ca]me to Ebla$^?$).
(2′) 1 'jewel' weighing 5 ½ shekels of gold, 2 pendents weighing 10 shekels of gold, gift for the daughter of the EN of Armi.
(3′) 2 'jewels' [and other gifts for a female$^?$ of Armi].
(4′) [Gifts including chariot parts…], a *board* (for a chariot),[484] staves for equids (for a chariot),[485] and a mace[486] (decorated) with 1 shekel of gold, gift of Šardada, the *measurer* of the ruler of Armi.
(5′) ArruLUM conveyed (these gifts to Armi).

Unfortunately, the gifts for the ruler of Armi are not preserved. For the metals, one notes that these gifts consist of gold, but no silver. The fact that at least one of the Armi ruler's daughters received gifts as well, reminds one of the situation with Mari at ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, when the queen Paba received gifts alongside king Iplus-Il. At Zalagatum, the gifts Iplus-Il received (above 3.1.2), according to A7, 3 (1) were quite similar to what the *measurer* (nig$_2$-ag$_2$) of the ruler of Armi named Šardada receives here. They included a bar-us$_2$

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[483] Section numbers are not original to the published edition. See Mander 1990: 130f.
[484] On giš-dub as part of a chariot, see Waetzoldt 2001: 232 on M12, 27 rev iii 2, where dub occurs alongside giš-šudun and is apparently described as having "two feet": ˹60˺+15 ma-na 50 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$-gi / kin$_5$-ak giš-šilig giš-šudun dub 2-DU
[485] In this context giš-PA is probably to be compared to giš-bar-us$_2$ "goad," for which see Conti 1997: 57.
[486] On SILA$_3$ occuring as an acccessory for a chariot, see Conti 1997: 56. Because a "cup" does not seem like an appropriate chariot accessory, this possibly represents a defective or simplified writing, with one wedge omitted, of šita "mace." Such simplified writings are characteristic for Ebla, such as with KUL written in place of BALA, or ME-sig in place of igi-sig.

BAR.AN "goad for equids" which probably describes a similar or identical object to the giš-PA BAR.AN "staff for equids" of the present text, as well as a šita$_x$(SILA$_3$), likewise decorated with one shekel of gold. Indeed, it seems possible that the broken parts of this text included chariots for the ruler of Armi and his nig$_2$-ag$_2$ official.[487] Such an official occurs in the second version of the Ebla royal ritual, where he performs some action likewise described as nig$_2$-ag$_2$.[488] In the lexical lists, nig$_2$-ag$_2$ is rendered as *ša-gu$_2$-um*, which could be interpreted as from **ḏkw*, Akkadian *zakû*, "to purify,"[489] or, alternatively, from **ṯql*, Akkadian *šaqālu* "to weigh."[490] This latter option corresponds more closely to the meaning of ag$_2$, "to measure" (Akkadian *madādu*). Such a meaning seems also more appropriate to the present context, of a highly-ranked official who appears alongside the king. An official described as a "measurer" (*mâdidu*) is known from later Old Babylonian Mari, where he was in charge of the economically critical task of measuring grain, and played an important commercial and political role.[491]

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[487] A second nig$_2$-ag$_2$ of the ruler of Armi is attested later in the same text, receiving a gold plate, M10, 27: rev. ii 7f: 1 dib$_2$ GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / nig$_2$-ba / *Sa-ma-an* / nig$_2$-ag$_2$ / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}. This official appears again in M10, 35, rev. i 3f, where his high rank is made clear by his position, following the ruler of Armi, the queen, a royal daughter, and royal sons.

[488] A11, 2 (77): nig$_2$-ag$_2$ / nig$_2$-ag$_2$ / e$_2$ *ma-tim*; see Fronzaroli 1993: 164. The corresponding passage in the first version of the ritual, A11, 1 (73) has instead: *na*-[*i$_3$*]-*bu$_3$-um* / *a-na-ba-ab* / e$_2$ *ma-da-am$_6$*, interpreted by Fronzaroli 1991: 33 as from a Semitic root **np* "asperger." This seems possible, but uncertain. The Conti 1990 compared *ša-gu2-um* instead to Akkadian *šaqālu* (**ṯql*) "to weigh."

[489] Fronzaroli 1992: 172, fn. 27.

[490] Conti 1990: 65.

[491] See Chambon 2011.

Interestingly, the only other foreign place than Armi attested to have had a nig$_2$-ag$_2$ official seems to be DU-*lu*^{ki},[492] who likewise appeared directly alongside the king. The presence of a nig$_2$-ag$_2$ official could thus possibly reflect a western tradition; the nig$_2$-ag$_2$ "measurer" seems to have held a rank equivalent to the sagi "cupbearer" of Mari in the east.

In the present context, it is striking that a high official of Armi, appearing alongside his ruler (EN), was afforded the same sorts of gifts as someone so high-ranking as Iplus-Il himself had received on another occasion. Gifts of chariots and chariot equipment, it would seem, were reserved for the most renowned warriors of the Ebla Palace G period. Monthly accounts of the ArruLUM period reveal that various named individuals of Armi – without title, but appearing to have held the rank of "generals," i.e., similar to the Ebla LUGAL – were repeatedly being gifted chariots by the Ebla palace administration. This would appear to emphasize not only Armi's high political status, but its military reputation as well. It also appears characteristic for Armi that there were a large number of officials of high rank, whose gifts all approach that which would be expected for a ruler. This all suggests that Armi was a large and powerful entity.

4.2.0 Armi and Nagar

Proponents of the hypothesis that Armi is identical with the modern Tell Bazi/Banat presented ' itineraries,' which in their view demonstrate the correctness of the

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[492] A15, 11 (1a) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / en / 1 *gu-zi-tum* / 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / en / (1b) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$/ nig$_2$-ag$_2$-*SU$_3$* / DU-*lu*^{ki} / *Dul$_3$-da-Il* / šu-mu-tak$_4$

hypothesis that Armi lay in between Ebla and Nagar.[493] However, the evidence is vague and can be interpreted differently.

"At the time of Išar-damu and vizier Ibrium a military campaign against Armi is attested, a clear prove of a deterioration of the relationship. The military campaign against Armi is quoted in the text 75.G.1790[494] ... The text does not, however, furnish any information regarding a possible itinerary to Armi ... A messenger arrives in Ebla bringing the news that Armi has been defeated[495] near the town of Batin ... Apparently, from this text, the army of Ebla didn't do a long trip to defeat Armi's army. There are not many data about Batin from the Ebla texts and the location of this town remains unknown but it seems quite possible a location north-east of Aleppo. This location fits very well with the proposition to consider Armi = Tell Bazi-Banat." (Otto/Biga 2010: 484).

Ibid., 487: "Frequently, messengers, troups, and others seemed to have passed by Armi during the conflict; therefore it seems highly probable that Armi was situated on the direct route from Ebla to Nagar." (Ibid., 487).

Otto has referred to the text A13, 18 (a fragmentary tablet which has been interpreted as constituting the remains of a treaty between Armi and Ebla) as evidence for "Armium's position on the route to Nagar."[496] However, the text in question contains no information to that effect. In fact, collation of the original tablet from the published photo raises doubt as to whether Nagar is mentioned at all.

4.2.1 Armi Between Ebla and Nagar?

[A13, 18]

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[493] Otto/Biga 2010: 481, 484, 490, 493.
[494] Because 75.G.1790 remains unpublished, it is difficult to evaluate the claim that it proves the existence a "military expedition." In all overwhelming likelihood, the text does not contain explicit reference to a battle (me$_3$), to soldiers or weapons, or any unambiguously military affairs. Probably the only term present is nig$_2$-kas$_4$, which has only the generic, unspecific definition of "expedition."
[495] The word interpreted by many authors to mean "defeated" is TIL. For the meaning as "to arrive, to complete a journey," instead, see below §5.5.
[496] Otto 2006: 21.

(5) šu-du$_8$-maš$_2$ / *-gu$_2$-nu* / me$_3$ / *si-in* / DU.DU / [S]A.ZA$_x^{ki}$[497] / [u]ru^{ki} / [šu ba$_4^?$-t]i
"The city (i.e., Ebla proper) has received your (pl., i.e. Armi's) omen[498] of battle[499] for a mission[500] of the (Ebla) realm."

Even if, for argument's sake, one remains with the reading of [*N*]*a-gar$_3^{ki}$* instead of, changing to the (in present view preferable) reading [S]A.ZA$_x^{ki}$, still no geographical information could be derived from this passage alone. The mention of uru^{ki} strongly implies the city of Ebla itself as the locus for the main event narrated by this clause, namely, the "receipt" ([šu-ba$_4$-t]i) of Armi's "omen of battle" (maš$_2$-šu-du$_8$ me$_3$, originally understood as "delivery of battle").[501] The purpose of this omen is defined as *si-in* DU.DU Nagar/SAZA. If anything, this would imply that the men from Armi stopped at Ebla (uru^{ki}) on the way to Nagar, implying a position in the middle for Ebla, not Armi.

A presumptive reading "ŠU.DU$_8$.MAŠ$_2$-*kunu* **tāhazi šin* **halak* Nagar," "battle-contribution towards a going of Nagar" by no means would force one to assume that Nagar was on the receiving end of an aggressive military effort on the combined part of

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[497] Read as [*N*]*a-gar$_3^{ki}$* by Fronzaroli 2003 (=A13): 188 and Pettinato 1981 (=M3): 26, but as [S]A.ZA$_x$ by Fronzaroli 1989: 19.
[498] Fronzaroli 2003: 60 translated the present occurrence of šu-du$_8$-maš$_2$ as "consegna," but the understanding of this term has recently been clarified by an extensive study on divination at Ebla with numerous examples, Archi 2010a: 50f. See also above on šu-du$_8$ in the Enna-Dagan letter §3.1.1.
[499] Fronzaroli op. cit. translated me$_3$ as "campagna militare." However me$_3$ means "battle," and not "military campaign." The term refers, at Ebla and elsewhere, to a punctual occurrence, a single clash rather than a prolonged undertaking, hence the translation "battle" (cf. CAD T: 43 s.v. *tāhazu*). The "contribution of battle" is in a genitival relationship with "journey of Nagar." The text uses DU.DU (for Fronzaroli, "la andata") in a context where one might instead have expected nig$_2$-kas$_4$(DU.KASKAL), "expedition."
[500] Literally: "going, journey."
[501] Cf. Archi 2011: 19 fn. 24, for whom the passage "refers to an expedition against Nagar," with the translation "the omen you took (for) the battle concerning (your) going (to) Nagar (and) [the conquest$^?$] of the city."

Ebla and Armi. In general, such large-scale conflicts between distant, major regional powers seem like an unlikely possibility for the Palace G period.[502] More probably, Ebla and Armi would have been involved together in a combined policing effort against general unrest on the part of marginal, seminomadic population groups, whose activities threatened the stability of the whole international system, and who thus were of concern to Armi, Ebla, (and possibly Nagar) alike.

This text – a rough and sloppy draft, which has been interpreted as having the character of a scholarly exercise[503] – most likely refers to chaotic events taking place very close to the final catastrophic end of the Palace G archives. The reference to a battle (me$_3$) could likely be taken as a foreshadowing of Ebla's impending doom. Another text with the character of a draft, which certainly dates to very soon before the end of Ebla, similarly makes mention of an omen taken just before a battle.[504]

It is because of this context that a reference to a journey (DU.DU) to Nagar seems inappropriate. A reference to chaotic events in the territory (SA.ZA$_x^{ki}$), that is to say, the environs surrounding Ebla (uru^{ki}) is more likely. Also on paleographic grounds the reading SA.ZA$_x^{ki}$ seems preferable.[505] On the photo[506] one can see that the signs [N]A/[S]A

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[502] Note that Otto/Biga 2010: 485 reconstructed, in addition to the conflict putatively referred to by A13, 18 (Ebla and Armi versus Nagar), yet another war where the sides were completely reversed, with Ebla and Nagar teaming up to attack Armi. Such radically shifting allegiances, involving grand scale conflicts between the greatest powers on the international scene, seem unlikely. See §5.5 and §7.1.

[503] Fronzaroli 2003: 189 characterized the text as follows: "Questo piccolo testo, che ha tutti i caratteri di un esercizio scolastico, può riflettere alcune clausole di un trattato fra Ebla e Armi, anche se non si può escludere che esso possa essere stato redatto, almeno in parte, senza riferimento a documenti realmente esistenti."

[504] A16, 19 (6).

[505] SA.ZA$_x^{ki}$ was the original reading in Fronzaroli 1989: 19.

and GAR3/ZAx are written directly abutting upon one another, like a ligature, even though there was plenty of room in the right side of the case, and no reason to cramp signs. This ligature is a characteristic often seen with the compound logogram SA.ZA$_x^{ki}$ but not the phonetically spelled toponym *Na-gar$_3^{ki}$*. Moreover, there is a deep scratch, represented also in the handcopy by Catagnoti,[507] at the tip of the putative GAR3 (which at Ebla can look similar to ŠA, especially in the more "cursive" script such as used on this tablet). This would appear to be the oblique wedge, which makes ŠA into ZAx, either poorly inscribed, or scratched in after the clay was dry. This fits with the generally untidy and draft-like nature of the text.

In spite of the various possible interpretations and complexities posed by this short text, it is nevertheless clear that the passage in question does not furnish any concrete geographic data. It merely says that men from Armi were somehow involved in military events centering in the first place around Ebla itself (uru^{ki}). If the men of Armi did travel further on to Nagar, then Ebla was the first stopping point on the way.

The many travel records, which will now be examined in detail, all suggest the conclusion that it was indeed Ebla who lay in the middle, in between Armi to the west and Nagar to the east.

4.2.2 Armi visits Nagar, via Ebla

[A15, 50; month broken]

(65) 2 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / DU / *Na-gar$_3^{ki}$*
"2 cloaks and 2 thin cloths for (2) men of Armi, who went to Nagar."

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[506] Fronzaroli 2003: Tav. LVIII.
[507] Ibid.: Tav. XXVI.

In this simple example, two men from Armi, whose names are not recorded, each receive a two-piece set of textiles at the Ebla Palace G. A scribal remark explains the circumstance of the disbursal: DU *Na-gar*$_3$^{ki}, which one could render literally as "a journey (lit: a going) of Nagar." The gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$, "cloak" which they receive seems to be a particularly characteristic item for journeys; it probably provided a traveler with extra protection against the elements. Perhaps the association between cloaks and travel served a practical purpose, probably also a symbolic one.

Even if one chooses to render such DU-notations in English as verbal phrases, it is most likely that on a grammatical level, they actually represent nominal forms. The word "trip, journey (lit: going)" DU.(DU) appears to be in genitival construct with the destination, since a preposition is not used.[508] In the texts dating to the period of ArruLUM and king Irkab-Damu, just a single DU sign was used. Starting with the scribal reforms initiated under Ibrium after the accession of king Išar-Damu, the reduplicated spelling DU.DU was used instead.

Why then, did the Ebla palace administration provide two men, from a foreign, independent kingdom, with textile allotments, right before they departed from Ebla to travel west to Nagar in the Habur region? The full and exact nature of this arrangement will remain hidden. But there can be little doubt that Ebla was, as enabler and facilitator

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[508] C.f. the rare example of finite DU + preposition, in a dependent temporal clause: A15, 53 (66-67): 1 *gu-zi-tum* / *Ha-ra-du* / 1 *gu-zi-tum*/ *Du-da-ra-u*$_3$ */ Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / *in* ud / *In-da-mu* / DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / nig$_2$-ba "1 g. for Haradu (of Armi) and 1 g. for Dudarau of Armi, on the occasion when In-Damu (of Ebla) went to Armi, he gifted (the men of Armi with the textiles).

of the journey, acting as a middleman between Armi and Nagar. This state of affairs would be difficult to explain if it were Armi who occupied the geographic middle ground instead of Ebla.

Here we should note that these travel records do not always provide a complete picture of who travelled; travel parties could have consisted of additional members, but only those who were provided with an allotment get mentioned. Sometimes there are clues that individuals appearing in a separate section of the text were also connected with the same journey, even if the text does not make this explicit. In the present example it is likely that the men of Armi who received textiles to go to Nagar did not travel alone. Almost certainly they were accompanied and led by Eblaites. Possibly, one can even identify the name of the Eblaite man who led them and was responsible for their security, listed in an earlier section (5) of the text. His name was *En-na-NI* and he bore the title of -*ma-za-(l)um*.[509]

4.2.2.1 The **maṣṣarum* "guardian"

Without doubt, the spelling *ma-za-um* conceals the same lexeme as *ma-za-lum*.[510] Most likely the term is to be to be analyzed as **maṣṣarum* "guardian," a participial form of **nṣr* (Akkadian *naṣārum*),[511] attested in the Ebla lexical equation en-nun-ak = *na-za-*

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[509] *En-na-NI* occurs with both forms of the title, as pointed out already by Bonechi 1990: 26 fn. 28. A4, 16 (48): *En-na-NI ma-za-lum*; A15, 5 (24): *En-na-NI ma-za-um*, etc. See also the case of *BAHAR-Il*: A15, 27 (12): *BAHAR-Il ma-za-lum*; A15, 45 (59) *BAHAR-Il ma-za-um*.

[510] "Mazaum" was wrongly considered to be a personal name in Otto/Biga 2010: 483.

[511] Pettinato 1980adel : 30; Fronzaroli 1984b: 170; Bonechi 1990: 26 fn. 28; Conti 1990: 75 fn. 55; Bonechi 2016a: 2 ("watchman of the caravan (*ma-za-lum*)").

lum.[512] A less likely possibility would be to connect it with the root *ʾzl "to go forth" (or an alleged **mzl* "to run"),[513] a derived form of which is attested instead in the equation kas$_4$-kas$_4$ = *du-da-zi-lu-um*, a reciprocal term having to do with the exchange of messengers.[514] Although he was indeed a mobile official, the contexts in which this officer occurs show that the *ma-za-*(*l*)*um* was not merely a "courier" or "messenger" in general, but rather an escort, who accompanied groups of other travellers. The *ma-za-*(*l*)*um* are relatively few in number, and they probably travelled slowly, with a caravan, compared to the quickly moving messengers who carried news and instructions to distant locations. There are no published instances of a *ma-za-lum* being rewarded for bringing news to the Ebla court. Instead, he travlled "with" (*aš$_2$-ti*) officials of relatively high rank, or is listed after another official as "his *ma-za-lum*" (*ma-za-lum-SU$_3$*). Messengers generally received rewards of low value, but the *ma-za-lum* was awarded goods equal in value to those he escorted. A meaning "(mobile) bodyguard, protector, guardian (of a caravan)" thus seems far more appropriate to the contexts in which the *ma-za-lum* official occurs. The existence of the byform *ma-za-um* can hardly be used as an argument that the underlying consonant cannot have been etymological *r*.[515]

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[512] VE 908 (Pettinato 1982: 301); see Hajouz 2013: 501.
[513] Pettinato 1981: 183; Fales 1984; Fronzaroli 1984b: 171; Archi 1998: 391, Archi 2005: 40; Lahlouh/Catagnoti 2006: 565; Bonechi 2006: 85 fn. 7.
[514] VE 980 (Pettinato 1982: 307); see Hajouz 2013: 93. See further below §4.2.5.1 on this term.
[515]For Ebla it is well known that, on the one hand, an expected *r* can be written as *l* (on which see Peust 2014 with further literature), and that furthermore an expected *l* can disappear from the writing altogether (Catagnoti 2012: 40f; Krebernik 1982: 210-211; Tonietti 1992). Although examples are admittedly rare, there is no such "rule" (as for Archi 1998: 391 and Archi 2005: 40) that the two phenomena cannot co-occur (in the latter reference, Archi himself cites the unpublished TM.76.G.974 with *na-gu-um* for

It has been claimed that Enna-NI the guardian was a man from Armi,[516] but this is unlikely in light of his typical Eblaite name. While there are indeed occurrences where he is identified as "*En-na-NI ma-za-um Ar-mi*^{ki}," [517] the genitive "guardian of Armi" expresses most likely not his country of origin, but the scope of his activity.[518] Although in the present instance, the text does not explicitly connect him with a journey, we shall see from numerous other examples that he was constantly accompanying men from Armi during the ArruLUM period. On one other occasion he even accompanied some men of Mari on a trip to Armi. We can thus expand our quotation of the text as follows:

4.2.2.2 A Caravan to Nagar

[A15, 50; month broken]

(3) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *A-ba-lu*
(4) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$*
(4b) 7 *gu-zi*-mug / maškim-*SU$_3$*

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expected **naqqurum* "engraver"). Furthermore, *ma-za-um* is not a free variant but is limited to the ArruLUM period, disappearing after the scribal reforms initiated by Ibrium. Although Peust op. cit.: 139 fn. 10 referred to l-*Reduktion* as simply "another peculiar feature of Eblaite spelling," it seems likely that the two phenomena, both unique to Ebla, are directly related. It is unlikely that l-*Reduktion* was a mere graphic phenomenon – it is hard to imagine that such a writing practice would originate independent of phonology. The disappearance of /*l*/ was most likely the result of a palatalization, a common phenomenon known, for instance, from French (e.g. *fille*). For a similar conclusion cf. Krebernik 2018: 173–174. As far as we know, the Semitic root **nṣr* could have been fully lexicalized as **nṣl* at Ebla – a form of this verb written with *r* is unattested.

[516] So Archi 2010: 22.

[517] A15, 5 (24) and A15, 43 (70). Note that in A15, 13 (4) he is instead "*En-na-NI ma-za-um* DU *Ar-mi*^{ki}."

[518] This interpretation is in agreement with that of Pomponio 2008: 41, for whom *En-na-NI* was "un funzionario di Ebla in rapporto con il centro di Armium." By far the overwhelming balance of Armi PNs are non-Semitic. Most or all of the Semitic PNs, which have been listed as belonging to men from Armi in Archi 2010: 21f, are probably in reality Ebla men who acted in some role related to Armi. A genitival relationship "PN / (title) / GN" or even simply "PN / GN" need not always indicate PN's ultimate country of origin.

(5) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *En-na-NI* / *ma-za-um*
(6) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / [ ]-NI / ugula guruš-guruš / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} ...
(20) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI maškim / *Mu-du-ri$_2$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / A.HA
(52) 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / i$_3$-ti / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki}
(53) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / A.HA
(65) 2 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / DU / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki}

(3) 1 cloak, 1 heavy garment, 1 colorful sash for Abalu (of Armi).
(4) 1 cloak, 1 heavy garment, 1 colorful sash for Irʾam-Gamal (of Ebla).
(4b) 7 *g*.-MUG for his (or: their?) (7) agents.
(5) 1 cloak, 1 thin garment, 1 colorful sash for Enna-NI, the travelling guardian (of Ebla for Armi).
(6) 1 NI.NI, 1 colorful sash for [...]-NI, the overseer of the men of Armi.
(20) 1 NI.NI for an agent of Muduri, who conveyed *fish sauce*.
(52) 2 thin garments for (2 anonymous men) of Armi who departed for Nagar.
(53) 1 thin garment for (1 anonymous man) of Armi who conveyed *fish sauce* (to Nagar).
(65) 2 cloaks and 2 thin garments for (2 anonymous men) of Armi who went to Nagar.

Thus we see the travelling guardian Enna-NI occurring in a cluster of sections (3–6) all pertaining to Armi. In (3) Abalu was certainly a man from Armi, identified in other texts as "the one in charge of the caravan" (lu$_2$-kas$_4$-kas$_4$).[519] As for Irʾam-Gamal of (4), the bearer of this uncommon Semitic name was probably from Ebla. He is attested in other texts as has having travelled not only to Armi,[520] but to Nagar as well, where he on multiple occasions personally conveyed a gift from the Eblaite court to the king of Nagar.[521] This connection of Iram-Gamal with Nagar makes it seem highly probable that

[519] See A15, 18 (59) and A15, 33 (109). On kas$_4$-kas$_4$ see below §4.2.5.1
[520] A15, 56 (month 6) (6-7): 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / *in* ud / DU / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} "1 cloak, one thin cloth, 1 colorful sash for Irʾam-Gamal, on the occasion when he went to Armi."
[521] A15, 45 (21): 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ "1 gown, 1 fine colorful sash for the ruler of Nagar, Irʾam-Gamal conveyed (to Nagar); A15, 36 (38) 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra* 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$-gi / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / *NI-zi-ma-il* / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ "1 'colorful garment (in the fashion of) of Ura and 1 golden m.-dagger for the ruler of Nagar, *NI-zi-ma-il* and Irʾam-Gamal delivered (to Nagar)." Unfortunately, the month is broken away from both of these texts so they cannot be put into a clear chronological relation.

the travelling guardian Enna-NI, listed immediately after him, was himself connected with journey to Nagar, mentioned in (52) and (65). Most likely, Enna-NI was responsible for the safety and protection of the whole group. Indeed, it seems that the whole section of the text from (3-6) should be connected with the journey to Nagar, including the 7 anonymous agents of (4b), and the "overseer of the men of Armi" of (6) – a designation or title, which occurs in relation to Armi, to my knowledge, only here. Nor was this the only time that Abalu of Armi and Enna-NI journeyed together. In another month, they went together to Armi.[522]

Muduri of (20) was certainly the name of a man from Armi. He delivers or conveys (šu-mu-tak$_4$) the same item, identified as A.HA (for which I propose the understanding "fish sauce," see below), as an anonymous agent of Armi in (53). Immediately preceding (53) is an entry mentioning some motion (i$_3$-ti) relative to Armi (52). It is possible therefore that (20) also had something to do with the journey to Nagar.

4.2.2.3 The verb of motion i$_3$-ti

As for the meaning of i$_3$-ti, in this context it is most likely that entries (52) and (65) describe the same parallel motion, rather than opposing ones. Thus, a translation "depart for" rather than "return (from)" is preferred for i$_3$-ti. In all likelihood both entries refer to the same wider event, concerning a large party of men from Armi and Ebla, who convened at Ebla and departed thence for Nagar. Certainly the phrase "i$_3$-ti *mi-nu*" is used at Ebla to express "to return from (a place) (to Ebla)." But in this instance, we lack the

[522] A15, 13: (3) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *A-ba-lu* / (4) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *En-na-NI*/ *ma-za-um* / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki} "1 *g.* and 1 fine colorful sash for Abalu, 1 cloak and one fine colorful sash for Enna-NI the guardian (both of whom) went to Armi.

preposition *mi-nu* "from," and it does not seem appropriate to suppose that it was omitted.[523]

The basic meaning of Sumerian ti.ĝ or te.ĝ (=Akkadian *ṭehû* is) "to approach; to draw near (to something)." Depending on whether "something" is located "here" or "there" with respect to the speaker, one can alternatively translate "to depart for (a place)" or "to arrive coming back (here) from (a place)," or even "to depart (a faraway place) to come (here)."[524] Proper Sumerian expressed these differences of perspective using system of deictic prefixes.[525] The verbs mu-ti and ba$_4$-ti seem to be used in administrative and chancery texts with a meaning distinct from i$_3$-ti.[526] Eblaite relied instead on prepositions, and possibly also ventive elements affixed to verbs. The literal meaning of i$_3$-ti in (52)

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[523] Pomponio 2013: 155 simply translated "arrivano da," assuming from other contexts that the preposition *minu* had been omitted, but without providing comment (or even putting 'da' [scil. 'from'] in parentheses). This solution seems somewhat reckless. While it is true that prepositions can sometimes be omitted at Ebla, it seems more likely that, in general, the use of i$_3$-ti + ∅ + GN produces a better sense if understood "to depart for GN."

[524] Archi/Biga 2003: 14 translated the unpublished passage TM.75.G.12450 obv. iii 10-13: i$_3$-ti nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, "(who) took part at the expedition (against) Mari," but on the other hand, Ibid.: 17, TM.75.G.2250 obv. iii 6-3: PN$_1$ PN$_2$ maškim PN$_3$ i$_3$-ti *mi-nu* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, which they rendered "...(PNs) returning from the.... expedition of Mari." The opposition between simple i$_3$-ti and i$_3$-ti *mi-nu* is in agreement with the present view, but it is more likely that we are in both cases dealing with the same underlying verb, rather than to suppose that only simple i$_3$-ti means "to be present" while with *mi-nu* "from" it means "returning from." A combination of a putative verb "to be present" with a preposition meaning "from" would be nonsensical. The occasional use of *in* instead of *mi-nu* seems to have the same meaning, and perhaps reflects a Mesopotamian influence: Ibid.: 21, TM.75.G.2278 obv. iv 5–9: PN... lu$_2$ i$_3$-ti *in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}, which they render "[PN]... who returned from the expedition [of] Mari."

[525] On the deictic prefixes in Sumerian see Woods 2008.

[526] Cf. Sallaberger 2018: 120 and fn. 32, translating ba$_4$-ti as "arrival," with the remark that the relationship of the three forms "should be carefully restudied." For an occurrence of ba$_4$-ti with apparent seperative meaning see A4, 17 (40): nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN en *mi-nu Ar-mi-um*^{ki} ba$_4$-ti "...news, that the ruler (of Armi$^?$/Ebla$^?$) has departed from Armi (approaching Ebla)."

could thus be "... men from Armi, who drew near to (i.e., departed for) Nagar." There is thus no substantial difference in meaning with DU of (65) and the distinction possibly arose for reasons having merely to do with how the monthly accounts were redacted.

Very doubtful is the existence at Ebla of a putative reading of i_3-ti instead as "i_3-til_3" with a translation "to be present" (derived from Sumerian til_3 = *balāṭu, wašābu*).[527] A putative rendering of i_3-TI as "to take part in, to participate in"[528] is in fact rather far removed from the semantics of either *balāṭu* "to be alive, to prosper" or *wašābu* "to sit down, to dwell." By all appearances, ti is always a verb of motion at Ebla; static concepts were expressed, instead, by verbs such as tuš or gal_2. An understanding of i_3-til_3 as "to be present" can only coincidentally and very awkwardly arrive at the correct rendering "to come back, to return from (a place)," through a forced "to be present (at Ebla after having been present at) someplace else."[529] It is far more likely that the Eblaites read and understood i_3-ti as some Semitic equivalent of later Akkadian *ṭehû*. Appropriate parallels for the uses of i_3-ti at Ebla can be found in examples from Old Babylonian letters.[530]

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[527]Originally proposed by Krecher 1984: 78-83. C.f. the remarks of Sallaberger 2008: 104: Dieses Verb [scil. TI] deutete Krecher... als "anwesend sein," der das Sumerogramm til_3 "leben" ansetzt. Dieser Deutung haben sich die Bearbeiter von Ebla-Texten angeschlossen. Eine Prüfung der Kontexte legt allerdings nahe, für i_3-ti wie bei mu-ti... besser das Verb ti, te "sich nähern, ankommen" anzusetzen...."

[528] As used e.g. by Archi/Biga 2003: 16 *et passim*. The index of Pomponio 2013: 430 reads til_3 but translates "arrivare" (does he think of TIL = *gamārum* "to complete a journey?). Despite this, for various occurrences he translates instead with something equivalent to "to be present." Eg. for A15, 46 (57): nig_2-AN.AN.AN.AN *Ar-mi*^{ki} i_3-ti (=Ibid.: 93) "la notizia che (l'uomo di) [Armi] è presente." A far more sensible translation for this occurrence could be: "news: some men from Armi approaches (Ebla)."

[529] Such as for Archi 2010b: 16, who reads "i_3-til_3 (*mi-nu*) nig_2-kas_4 GN" and translates "when he presented himself (i.e. returned) from the military expedition (against) GN."

[530] From here to there: *ištu inanna ana* iti ud.30.kam *eṭehhiakum* "Within one month from now I will depart from where I am now and come to you" (UET 5, 82 rev. 12′);

4.2.2.4 The delicacy A.HA "fish sauce"

One could possibly understand the commodity A.HA as zah$_3$ "fugitive." However, the other contexts in which A.HA is delivered make this seem unlikely. A.HA is associated with only a very limited set of toponyms including Armi, Kakmium, and *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki}. A.HA was delivered at the same time as geštin-a "vinegar," and tu-mušen-tur "small *birds*."[531] This makes it seem like A.HA was a comestible product, available only in certain regions. It seems inherently unlikely that an entry would record the simultaneous delivery of escaped or missing human beings and simple food products.

Logographically A.HA is composed of signs meaning "water" (a) and "fish" (ku$_6$). It is explained by the Ebla lexical entry VE 610 as *dam-ri$_2$-gu*, interpretable as /*tamrīqu*/ from the root **mrq*, comparable to Hebrew *mārāq*, Arabic *maraq*, and Ethopian *maraq*, all of which mean "broth, sauce, cooking liquid."[532] In light of the association with vinegar, and the meaning of ku$_6$ "fish," it seems likely that A.HA could represent a third-millennium equivalent of the condiment known in Akkadian as *siqqu*[533] and in the Greco-

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from here to a faraway location: *belī ana* GN *qadum gamarat ummānātišu iṭṭeheām ... ana* UD.20.kam *iṭehheām* "My lord has departed for Mankisum with the totality of his troops.... in 20 days he will come back here" (TIM 2, 15: 15 and 19); from there to here: *mārū šiprika... ana ṣerīya la iṭṭehunima* "your messengers must not come to me" (ARM 10, 101: 20) (passages culled from CAD/T s.v.; translations are the author's own).

[531] A15, 22 (46): 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-gun$_3$-tug$_3$ / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / geštin-a / A.HA "(Textiles) (for a man of) Kakmium who conveyed vinegar and fish sauce." A15, 34 (147): 2 sal-tug$_2$ / […] / [šu]-mu-tak$_4$ / tu-tur-mušen / A.HA.

[532] See Hajouz 2013: 437f with literature; Sjöberg 2003: 257; Dahood 1984: 446.

[533] For *siqqu*/*šiqqu*/*šikku* c.f. Landsberger 1962 (=MSL 8/2): 108-109, Bottéro 1995: 216; CAD Š/3: 99 s.v. *šiqqu* (where the definition "garum (a brine or sauce made of fish or locusts)" is almost certainly to be corrected to "fish or shellfish" – while the consumption of locusts is indeed known throughout the Middle East and elsewhere, locusts can hardly have served as a source of flavor).

Roman world as *garon*/*garum*– a pungent fermented fish sauce[534] highly prized for ability to impart the flavor which we today know as glutamic savoriness (*umami*). The suggestion, on numerous other grounds, regarding the location of Kakmium and Armi to the west/northwest of Ebla,[535] fits with their status among the exclusive sources[536] of A.HA "fish sauce" and the coastal provenience of such a commodity (even if fish sauce can also be made from freshwater fish).

Given the overall context, involving a large party journeying from Ebla to Nagar, and the adjacency of entries (52) and (53), it would seem that šu-mu-tak$_4$ A.HA refers not to a delivery to Ebla, but instead, a conveyance to Nagar. In proper Sumerian šu-mu-tak$_4$ means "to dispatch, to send something away,"[537] and this is the meaning with which it is used in the early Ebla texts recording rich gifts that were sent to Mari. There also evolved, however, a practice at Ebla whereby šu-mu-tak$_4$ means "to deliver (to Ebla)" – a context where one should more properly expect mu-DU, "to bring here." This is possibly because the Semitic equivalent of šu-mu-tak$_4$ was ambiguous with regard to the direction

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[534] For an example from a medieval Egyptian cookbook of the Arabic word *maraq* in the meaning "fish sauce, brine, broth" see Nasrallah 2018: 199 (recipe for seasoned anchovies); 617 ("The ready to use salt-cured anchovies, or any small fish cured in a similar manner, were stored in a briny liquid, referred to in *Kanz* recipes as *maraq* and *māʾ*. This liquid is a by-produt of the preserving process. After spreading the salted fishes on mats, and leaving them away from direct sunlight for a period, and then letting them cure in non-porous stone jars… the preserved fishes release the remaining juices, which melt the salt into brine."

[535] On Kakmium see §6.0.

[536] The third attested source of A.HA, *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki}, could potentially to be associated with the region of the Jabbul lake. Note in this regard that *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki}, like certain Euphratean riverine locations such as *Ir$_3$-peš$_2$*^{ki} and *Ga-sur$_x$*^{ki}, occurs particularly often as the destination of the u$_5$ "(transport) drivers," whose vehicles could have been wagons or boats (see above §3.1.3.3)

[537] Civil 1990.

in which the good was "delivered" or "sent." Alternatively, "šu-mu-tak$_4$ (to Ebla)" could have been stated, in such cases, from the perspective of the one who was sending the good in question to Ebla (i.e., a foreigner who "delivers" something to Ebla, is recorded as rewarded for having "sent" the item from his homeland). In the present context there is no logical reason why a delivery of A.HA to Ebla would be mentioned. Thus, in (20) and (53) we can likely see a valued delicacy of the Mediterranean coastal region, conveyed by Armi, via Ebla, as a gift (or other article of exchange) to Nagar in Habur region.[538]

Thus what at first glance seemed to be a journey involving only two anonymous men from Armi may have actually been a rather significant, high-level affair. A party composed of as many as a dozen or more individuals, originating from both Armi and Ebla, convened first at Ebla, and then departed for Nagar, led by Enna-NI the guardian. The high-ranking man of Armi Abalu participated in this journey, as did the Eblaite Iram-Gamal, along with seven anonymous "agents." The syntactic position of the seven agents renders possible an interpretation that some of them actually belonged to Abalu and some to Iram-Gamal, even if the nature of their role is in either case not so clear.

4.2.3 Armi, Nagar, and Tārib

[A15, 6; month 4]
(48) 3 *gu-zi*-mug-tug$_2$ 3 sal-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Da-ri$_2$-ib*^{ki} / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki}

[538] It is possible that in (20), Muduri himself did not travel to Nagar; possibly the initial delivery of A.HA to Ebla is referred to, some of which remained there, and some of which was taken further onward to Nagar in (53).

(48) 3 low-quality robes, 3 thin garments, 3 colorful sashes for (3 anonymous men from) Tārib, who went with (one or more anonymous men of) Armi to Nagar.[539]

In the above example, Tārib is the name of a town belonging to the Eblaite kingdom, which had a special association with the Ebla cult of deceased rulers.[540] And so, we can safely consider the men from Tārib to have been Eblaites. The name probably means something like "entrance," being a noun derived from the same root as Akkadian *erēbum* "to enter." It is almost certainly identical with the modern town of Atārib, located about 20 miles (35 km) north of Tell Mardikh, and roughly the same distance west-southwest of Aleppo. This is quite close to the modern Turkish border; from Atārib it is again only about 20 miles northwest to the modern Turkish town of Reyanhlı in the Hatay province. A third-millennium lifesize stone statue head, allegedly found at Atārib, seems to provide physical proof that Ebla royal ancestors were venerated there in the form of statues.[541]

This location and etymology of Tārib is of potential significance in the present context. From Ebla, Atārib is in the direction where we are seeking to locate Armi. A meaning "entrance" could also appropriately refer to the location of Tārib near the interface between two worlds, between the Idlib plane proper – the realm of Ebla – and another type of landscape, proper instead to Cilicia and the Hatay and, in Palace G times, likely the state of Armi (alternatively, or perhaps concomitantly, the meaning "entrance"

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[539] Understanding DU as a noun, the most literal rendition, reflecting the original Eblaite syntax, would be "(clothing) for men of Tarib (for) a journey, with men from Armi, of (i.e., to) Nagar."

[540] As attested in the offering list [A7, 150] rev iii 2′-iv 2: dingir-dingir-dingir / en-en / al$_6$-tuš / *in* / *Da-ri$_2$-ib* "(offerings for) the spirits of (deceased) rulers, resting in Tarib." On this cult and related funerary practices see Archi 2012; Archi 1988.

[541] Published in Matthiae 1980.

could be of mythological relevance, concerning to the site's function as a locus for the royal ancestral cult). Northwest of Tārib, the landscape already starts to become more hilly and rugged before the modern Turkish border is crossed. Tārib is thus located on the northwestern margin of the flat plane of Western `syria, which characterizes the territory controlled by Ebla.

No further information on the background of this trip can be gleaned from this brief entry. If the starting point of the journey was Tārib itself – as could suggested by the atypical participation on the trip of anonymous men from Tārib – then this would be a logical departure point for men from Armi travelling to the Habur region, for them to avoid making an unnecessary southerly detour to Ebla itself. The proximity of Tārib to Armi and Anatolia in general, and the fact that it was a place of special significance for the Ebla royal family, could be seen as an indication of the economic importance of the Ebla-Anatolia connection.

4.2.4 A Man of Nagar visits Armi

The following example shows that Ebla also brokered trips in the opposite direction. Namely, they facilitated the travel of a man originating from Nagar to Armi, apparently on the opposite side of the Eblaite territory with respect to Nagar.

[A15, 18; month 8]
(12) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$-sa$_6$ / *I*-šar* / lu$_2$ [*Ha**]-*ba-ra*-[*ar**] / DU / [*Ar*]-*mi*^{ki}
(19) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / DU/ *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(20) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *I-ti-*^{d}*Ra-sa-ap* / *ma-za-um* / DU / *as$_2$-ti* / *I-sar* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

(12) 1 cloak, 1 thin garment, 1 colorful sash for Išar, subordinate of Habra-Ar, who went to Armi.
(19) 1 cloak, 1 thin garment, 1 colorful sash for (an anonymous man from) Nagar who went to Armi.
(20) 1 cloak, 1 heavy garment, 1 colorful sash for Iddin-Rašap, the (Eblaite) guardian who went with Išar (of Ebla) (and an anonymous man from) Armi (to Armi).[542]

On the one hand, entries (12) and (19-20) offer a solid demonstration that entries related to the same journey do not necessarily have to be listed in direct proximity to one another; Išar is seperated by several entries from his *ma-za-lum*. On the other, this entry once again makes unlikely that Armi could have been located in the middle between Ebla and Nagar. Were that the case, the man from Nagar would have had no reason to rely on Ebla in order to reach Armi.

4.2.5 A Journey to Nagar, and a Major Meeting at Ebla

The following example features a trip by Armi, via Ebla, to Nagar and to two additional settlements known to have been located in the same general direction.

[A15, 17; month 6]
(29) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / DU / *Na-gar$_3$*$^{!}$(ŠA)^{ki} / *Ga-ga-ba-an*^{ki} / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki}
(30) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *ma-za-um* / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

(29) 3 cloaks, 3 NI.NI for (3) men of Armi who went to Nagar, Kakkaban, and Šanapzukum.
(30) 3 cloaks, 2 thin cloths,[543] for (3) guardians who went with the men from Armi.

[542] Another translation possibility could be "(clothes) for Iddin-Rašap, the guardian who went with Išar (of Ebla) to Armi."
[543] The missing sal-tug$_2$ could be the one issued to *Ki-bir$_5$-ki-su* in (38); see below.

Here an emendation *Na-gar$_3$*$^{\text{l}}$(ŠA)$^{\text{ki}}$ seems necessary, because a place "Naša" is otherwise unknown. Moreover, the rest of the geographical context speaks unambiguously of the Habur region. Philologically, this solution is not at all far fetched, since the signs ŠA and GAR$_3$ both begin with a series of four horizontal wedges.

Ga-ga-ba-an$^{\text{ki}}$ or Kakkaban represents a form of the toponym Kawkab,[544] a well-known volcano located in the vicinity of the modern provincial capital of Hassake, in the Habur region of Eastern Syria. An Ebla account of outgoing metals, roughly contemporary with the present text, i.e. reign of Irkab-Damu and vizier ArruLUM, lists Kakkaban among various settlements associated with Nagar, among which Nabada (Tell Beydar)[545] also occurs.[546] Kakkaban seems therefore have been part of the kingdom of Nagar. Importantly as far as the present context is concerned, Kakkaban is attested, according to a tablet close in date to the present one, to have had a "market," from which Ebla purchased 127 pieces of clothing.[547]

As for *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*$^{\text{ki}}$, its precise location is unknown, but it certainly lay in the zone to the northeast of Ebla, which was characterized by the presence of a *badalum*-official. Most likely it is to be sought somewhere in the vicinity of Harran,[548] thus already east beyond the Euphrates with respect to Ebla. *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*$^{\text{ki}}$ was not, however, part of the kingdom of Nagar, but instead a small independent center of middle-rank.

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[544] Catagnoti/Bonechi 1992; Fronzaroli 1984-1986: 142; Bonechi 1993: 141; Archi et al. 1993**:** 227

[545] For this identification see Sallaberger 1998.

[546] TM.75.G.1872+, despite being quoted several times in the literature, remains unpublished. The relevant excerpt can be found in Archi 1998: 5.

[547] A7, 13 (11): [...] / [nig$_2$-sa$_{10}$] / 1 *mi-at* tug$_2$-tug$_2$ / ki:lam$_7$ / ˹*Ga*ˀ-˹*ga*ˀ-[*ba-an*]$^{\text{ki}}$ / *Ru$_{12}$-ˀa$_3$-da-mu* ur$_4$ / lu$_2$ *Šu-M*[*a*]-*l*[*ik*].

[548] Cf. Archi et al. 1993: 421 and Bonechi 1993: 290.

It seems likely that the three toponyms are actually listed following a typical Eblaite practice of beginning a list with the most recent or latest event and moving backwards in time.[549] They are listed apparently in reverse with respect to the order in which the travellers from Ebla and Armi reached them. The caravan travelling east from Ebla thus crossed the Euphrates and went east arriving first at Šanapzukum, followed by Kakkaban, and then finally reaching the capital Nagar itself.

The monthly account, on which this particular journey is attested [A15, 17] is otherwise characterized by a high level of activity related to Armi. Over 20 individual entries on the tablet relate to Armi, and numerous important men from Armi are listed by name and issued rich gifts, including luxurious textiles and quantities of precious metals. The anonymous ruler (EN) of Armi is explicitly referred to in (8), and it seems the mentions of a simple "EN" in (6), (26), and (35) all likewise refer to the EN of Armi, not the one of Ebla (see further on these entries below). The focus of the text is found in entries (30) and (31), which lists an unusually high quantity of textiles – hundreds of pieces – classified in relation to a term usually understood as referring to messengers or couriers (kas$_4$-kas$_4$). The textiles are defined as nig$_2$-ba en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} with Armi written in a separate case from nig$_2$-ba en "gift of the ruler." Given the overall context, it seems like this should be seen as conceived as a grandiose gift from the ruler of Ebla to the ruler of Armi, along with his many officials. It seems possible that the ruler of Armi may have visited Ebla on this occasion (see further below §4.2.5.4).

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[549]See for example the lists of royal ancestors A7, 150 and TM.74.G.120 (Archi et al 1988: 212–214), which begins with the most recently diseased Ebla ruler and proceeds back in time to the earliest one. See also the sheep account M7, 39, which begins with a notation mu 27 and moves backwards in time to mu 1.

It is not so immediately clear which of the many entries on the tablet, attesting intense diplomatic affairs relating to Armi, are specifically connected with the eastward trans-Euphratean journey of the men from Armi to Nagar listed in (29). But one can note that the major entries, listing hundreds of textiles, appear in suspiciously close proximity to the mention of the trip to Nagar.

[A15, 17; month 6]

(29) (textiles) / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / DU / *Na-gar*$_3^!$(ŠA)^{ki} / *Ga-ga-ba-an*^{ki} / *Ša-nap-zu-gum*$_2^{ki}$
(30) (textiles) / *ma-za-um* / DU / *aš*$_2$*-ti* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(31a) 1 *mi-at gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ / 4 *mi-at* gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 2 *mi-at* tug$_2$-NI.NI / 3 *mi-at* aktum-tug$_2$ ti-tug$_2$
(31b) 10 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ / 10 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U*$_3^*$*-ra* / 10 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$
(31c) nig$_2$-ba en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}/ *in* ud / kas$_4$-kas$_4$
(32a) 4 *gu-zi-tum* 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$
(32b) 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 4 ku$_3$-sal 2 nig$_2$-anše-ak GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / *Hu-ur*$_2$*-sa-na*
(32c) 17 sal-tug$_2$ maškim-*SU*$_3$
(32d) *in* ud / i$_3$-ti / *in* / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš*$_2$*-ti* / en

(31a) 100 *g.*, 400 cloaks, 200 NI.NI, 300 heavy garments of "TI-TUG$_2$" classification;
(31b) 10 *g.*, 10 gowns and 2 colorful garments (in the fashion of) Ura,[550] 10 fine colorful sashes:
(31c) Gift of the ruler (of Ebla, to the ruler and court) of Armi, on the occasion of the *diplomatic visit*[551] (to Ebla).
(32a) 4 *g.*, 2 gowns, 2 heavy garments, 2 fine colorful sashes;
(32b) 1 decorative plaque weighing one mina of gold; 4 trappings and 2 bridles weighing one mina of silver for Huršana (of Armi)[552];
(32c) 17 thin cloths for his (17) agents:
(32d) On the occasion when they returned[553] (back home to Armi) from the *diplomatic visit* (to Ebla) together with the ruler (of Armi).

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[550] On the reading of what was formerly interpreted as libir-ra "old" instead as *U*$_3$*-ra*$^{(ki)}$ – a settlement known also in later times and which can be located on the Cilician coast – see Pasquali 2015, and below, §4.2.5.2.
[551] On the translation of kas$_4$-kas$_4$ as "diplomatic visit" see below §4.2.5.3.
[552] For the belonging of *Hu-ur*$_2$*-sa-na* belonging to Armi
[553] One could equally translate "on the occasion when they departed (back home to Armi) from the diplomatic visit." On the translation of i$_3$-ti see above §4.2.2.3 and below §4.2.5.1.

It is does not seem likely that this enormous expenditure had to do directly with the trip by Armi to Nagar via Ebla. More likely, the gifts were given out at Ebla, on the occasion of a grandiose visit by Armi. The juxtaposition of entries (29-30) and (31-32) could imply, however, that the momentous diplomatic occasion itself served as a starting point, by which a select few of those men from Armi, who were already visiting Ebla, could decide to undergo a trip, under Ebla auspices, further east to Nagar. Such a journey would have been a further bolster to the close relations that were being fostered between Ebla and Armi. The trip itself could even be seen as yet another gift from Ebla to Armi. Indeed, there could be a clue from this same text that the men from Armi were interested in a special type of equid known to have been supplied by Nagar and the region of Upper Mesopotamia east of the Euphrates.

4.2.5.1 Armi (and Kakmium) and Their Interest in Eastern Equids

[A15, 17; month 6]
(5) 2 *gu-zi-tum* 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *I-ti-um* / ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(5b) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI 3 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / maškim-*SU$_3$*
(11) 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / BAR.AN

(5) 2 *g.*, 2 gowns, 2 fine colorful sashes for Itium (and) the equid-team commander of Armi;
(5b) 3 cloaks, 3 NI.NI, 3 colorful sashes for their (3) agents.
(11) 3 NI.NI for (3) men of Šanapzukum, for a (future) conveyance of equids.

We see here that 3 men of Šanapzukum – one of the eastern trans-Euphratean locations visited by the men from Armi – were rewarded for a "conveyance of equids" (hi-mu-DU

BAR.AN).[554] This seems unlikely to be a mere coincidence, considering that Šanapzukum is not a place that is mentioned in this period with particularly great frequency. Potentially this "conveyance" was in fact directly connected with the trip undertaken by the men of Armi to the land in question.

The interest of Armi in equids is underscored on the one hand by the trappings for a wagon, which formed part of the rich gift for Huršana in (32b), and furthermore by the appearance of a "captain of equid-teams of Armi" (ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN *Ar-mi*^{ki}) in (5). The mention of such an official in direct connection with Armi is, once again, conspicuous for its rarity. Most likely, *I-ti-um* was not the name of this official. Instead the entry attests two men, one of whom is anonymous but receives the same type of textile. We can deduce this not only because *I-ti-um* appears to be a Semitic name which would be rare or unexpected for a man from Armi, but also because *I-ti-um* reappears in the same text,[555] where he is instead identified as a man belonging to the important western kingdom of Kakmium (probably located roughly between Ebla and Armi).[556] Note furthermore that in (5b) the anonymous agents (maškim-*SU$_3$*) of *I-ti-um* and the equid commander match the

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[554] On hi-mu-DU at Ebla see D'Agostino 1990: 36–39; Tonietti 1998: 87; Fronzaroli 2003: 33; Sallaberger 2008: 99. It has been generally recognized that hi-mu-DU has the same basic meaning as šu-mu-tak$_4$, "to bring, to deliver," only it is used when the grammatical object is capable of self-locomotion, i.e. with people or animals. What remains unclear, is if a "future" sense is also inherent to the verb (cf. Pomponio 2013: 428 with the rendering "(futuro) accompagnamento"). It would seem that hi-mu-DU, like šu-mu-taka$_4$, can be used in reference either to a delivery that has already been fulfilled, or to one that is yet to be completed; it can refer to Ebla as the final destination, or to someplace else. Only a contextual analysis can help to decide between these possibilities.

[555] *I-ti-um* is a rather rare name, and so a case of homonymy, with two different men sharing the same name and coincidentally appearing in the same text, can be safely ruled out.

[556] See below, §6.0.

anonymous travellers of Armi to Nagar of (29), both in their number (3 of them) and type of gifts received (cloaks and NI.NI-garments). In fact, the second mention of *I-ti-um* comes immediately before the listing of the trip to Nagar:

[A15, 17; month 6]
(27) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *I-ti-um* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(28) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *U$_3$-la-ma* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(29) (trip of men of Armi to Šanapzukum, Kakkaban, and Nagar)

Notably, this second appearance of *I-ti-um* is, once again, alongside a man from Armi named *U$_3$-la-ma*; both of them receive a "thin cloth." Since these entries are listed directly adjacent to the eastward trip to the Habur region, this could be a clue that Kakmium was, like Armi, also interested in obtaining equids from the east, beyond the Euphrates. Kakmium's representative *I-ti-um*,[557] mentioned in (5) and (27) thus possibly participated in the same journey as the men of Armi in (29). *U$_3$-la-ma* of (28) could have been the name of the anonymous ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN *Ar-mi*^{ki} in (5), or perhaps more likely, he was someone else directly connected with him. The same *U$_3$-la-ma* appears twice more in the same text, once under the same spelling, and later under the variant spelling *U$_3$-mu* – a variant perhaps related to the Eblaite l-Reduction. Further variants of the same name, attested in other texts, may be *U$_3$-lu-ma-u$_2$* and *U$_3$-lu-ma-u$_9$*, the latter of which is identified as a "physician" (a-zu).[558] In the present text, there occurs in (26), just

[557] Possibly the same *I-ti-um* is attested as a merchant (lu$_2$-kar) in the fragment A3, 90, in apparent connection with a delivery of wine for the Ebla ruler and the his mother: obv.? ii′ 1′f: 2 dug geštin / en / *wa* / ama-gal-*SU$_3$* / 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *I-ti-um* / lu$_2$-[k]ar / [*Kak*]-*mi*-[*um*^{ki}] / [...].
[558] *U$_3$-lu-ma-u$_2$* attested in A15, 27 (126), and *U$_3$-lu-ma-u$_9$* the physician (a-zu) in A15, 20 (62). For the GN Ulama (var. Walama, Uwalma) in Anatolia with at least three

before *U$_3$-la-ma* of (28) and *I-ti-um* of (27), an anonymous "wife of the physician of the ruler." This unspecified "ruler" was thus apparently the one of Armi – in the preceding entry (25), *A-dar-NE-a* is the name of a high-ranking general of Armi.[559] *U$_3$-la-ma* was thus a physician in the employ of the ruler of Armi, present at Ebla also with his wife.

[A15, 17; month 6]
(35) 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / *A-bu$_{14}$-NE* / ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN / en / <*Ar-mi*^{ki}>
(36) 1 sal-tug$_2$ du$_{11}$ / nidba$_2$ / ^{d}BAD *U$_9$-gu$_2$-a-aš$_2$*^{ki}
(37) 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *U$_3$-mu* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(38) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ki-bir$_5$-ki-su* / *ma-za-lum* / (blank case)

Once again *U$_3$-mu* (aka *U$_3$-la-ma*) appears in close proximity to an equid team commander, this time designated as "of the ruler" instead of "of Armi." To judge from the names and overall context, this "ruler" is almost certainly to be understood as the one of Armi, not of Ebla – as are probably all the references in this particular text to a simple "ruler" (en) of an unspecified place. The unusual names *A-bu$_{14}$-NE*[560] *and Ki-bir$_5$-ki-su* are likely to be non-Semitic, while for *U$_3$-mu* the affiliation with Armi is explicit. *A-bu$_{14}$-NE* could thus be the same person as the anonymous equid team commander who appeared with *I-ti-um* in (5). The presence of a *ma-za-lum* official connotes travel, strengthening the possibility that these various characters– the commander of equid teams, *I-ti-um*, and *U$_3$-la-ma*/*U$_3$-mu* – all had something to do with the trip to the region of Nagar. Recall that *U$_3$-la-ma* was mentioned, along with *I-ti-um*, in (28), immediately before the section recording the trip to the Habur region, (29). In (30), note that the

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homonymous settlements, cf. Barjamovic 2011: 338. For the seemingly related Armi PN *U$_3$-la-ma-du* at Ebla, cf. Kroonen et al. 2018: 6.
[559]A15, 17 (25): 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / *A-dar-NE-a* / (26) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / dam / a-zu / en (27-28: *I-ti-um* and *U$_3$-la-ma*).
[560] To *A-bu$_{14}$-NE* can be compared A15, 10 (77): *A-bu$_3$-lu Ar-mi*^{ki} and A15, 36 (2): *A-bu$_3$-ri$_2$ Ar-mi*^{ki}. The sign *bu$_{14}$*(KA) possibly represents a defective writing of proper *bu$_3$*(KA×ŠE$_3$).

anonymous *ma-za-(l)um* officials, of whom it is said that "they went with the men of Armi (to the Habur region)" (DU *aš$_2$-ti Ar-mi*^{ki}), received 3 cloaks, but only 2 thin garments. The third *ma-za-lum* who went to the Habur could thus have been *Ki-bir$_5$-ki-su*, who receives 1 thin garment in (38). A rather strong case can thus be made that the party who departed Ebla for the Habur consisted of at least one, if not two equid team commanders in the service of the ruler of Armi (one of whom was named *A-bu$_3$*$^{!}$*-NE*), the Armi physician named *U$_3$-la-ma*, and a man from the western kingdom of Kakmium, named *I-ti-um*.

Probably in some way related to these travel events is (36), recording an offering of a single thin textile for "The Lord of **Yukuwaš*." The exact significance is however uncertain. This shrine could have been located on the way from Ebla to the Habur region, probably somewhere near where the Euphrates was crossed. This is implied by the toponym's co-occurrence, in a later period text, with ma$_2$-NE^{ki}, that is to say the "port, dock" located near Emar on the Euphrates (i.e., the same place where Iplus-Il received Ebla's gift, cf. §3.1.2), when the Ebla queen mother made an offering to the Ishara-goddess(es) of those locations.[561] The male deity referred to here could thus be Rašap, Ishara's husband.

4.2.5.2 Garments of Armi and Ura

[561] M10, 20 rev. viii 17f: 6 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / 3 *zi-bar* / nig$_2$-ba / ama-gal / en / ^{d}*Iš*$_x$ŠARA$_2$ / ma$_2$-NE^{ki} / *wa* / *U$_9$-gu$_2$-wa-aš$_2$*^{ki} / *wa* / *Zu-ra-mu*^{ki} "6 D.-shekels of silver for 3 small cups, gift of the queen mother for Ishara-of-the-Port (near Emar), of Yukuwaš, and of Zuramu." On *zi-bar*, a small cup or drinking vessel, see Waetzoldt 2001: 365f and Mander 1990: 87.

Returning to the initial mention of *I-ti-um* and the equid-team commander of Armi in (5), we see that the immediate context lists several deliveries in connection with Armi, one of which is made by our same *U$_3$-la-ma*. This context actually extends all the way to the mention of the conveyance of equids of Šanapzukum in (11).

[A15, 17; month 6]
(5) (clothes for *Itium* of Kakmium and anonymous equid team commander of Armi)
(6) 2 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$-sa$_6$ / ur$_4$ /šu-mu-tak$_4$ / tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / en <*Ar-mi*^{ki}>
(7) 1 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na*
(8) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *U$_3$-la-ma* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / giš*-UD / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(9) 2 sal-tug$_2$ *Hal-šum*^{ki}
(10) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_2$ / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / GIŠ-dug-DU / *Ar-ru-LUM*
(11) 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / BAR.AN

(6) 2 *ʾa.*, 2 gowns, 2 fine colorful sashes for (2$^?$) *executors* for sending colorful garments (on behalf of) the ruler (of Armi).
(7) 1 *ʾa.*, 1 heavy garment, 1 fine colorful sash for Huršana (of Armi).
(8) 1 cloak for *U$_3$-la-ma* for sending *oak* (on the behalf of) the ruler of Armi.
(9) 2 thin cloths (for 2 men of) Halšum.[562]
(10) 1 cloak, 2$^!$ NI.NI, 1 colorful sash for (a man of) Armi, who ... (on the behalf of) ArruLUM.
(11) 3 NI.NI for (3) men of Šanapzukum, for a conveyance of equids.

The use of šu-mu-tak$_4$ at Ebla is notoriously ambiguous and difficult, but the context suggests than in both (6) and (8) the origin of the goods in question was Armi (rather than Armi representing the destination of the delivery).

In (6), the term "colorful garment" (tug$_2$-gun$_3$) is not at all a typical description of a textile produced and given out by the Ebla palace. In fact, almost all the occurrences of

[562] The rarely mentioned *Hal-šum*^{ki}/*Hal-sum*^{ki} was in some way related to Armi, cf. the occurrence in the complicated chancery text A13, 9 (47): [DU.DU] / *si-in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Hal-sum*^{ki} / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *Lam-mi*^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti.

this term refer specifically to a garment said to be "(in the fashion of) Armi,"[563] while in several instances of an unspecified tug$_2$-gun$_3$, the situation is otherwise connoted by Armi.[564] We can thus safely conclude that the "colorful garment" (tug$_2$-gun$_3$) was a characteristic product of Armi. The unspecified EN of (6) is thus the one of Armi, parallel with entry (8).

Furthermore, the same text states that 2 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra*$^{(ki)}$ were among the large quantity of textiles given by Ebla to the ruler of Armi, above in (31b), and these are included in the sum total of expenditures at the end of the text (45). This, along with other instances where high-ranking men from Armi are gifted by Ebla with tug$_3$-gun$_3$, probably reflects a practice whereby esteemed palace guests were gifted with garments in the fashion of their own homeland.[565] The further specification of these prestigious gifts by Ebla to Armi as "(in the fashion) of Ura" is of potential cultural and geographical relevance.[566]

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[563]Specific tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *Ar-mi-*(*um*)$^{(ki)}$ are attested in A15, 9 (16), (74); 15 (5), (44-46); 36 (28).

[564] A15, 30 (51) [...] tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / [GN?] / [... D]U / (52) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *ma-za-um* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}. In A15, 5 (16) a tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *gar$_3$-ti-tum* is given along with other rich gifts to *Ha-ra-na-u$_3$* of Armi; in A15, 8 (9) a tug$_2$-gun$_3$ is part of the rich gifts for *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na* of Armi.

[565] Compare the case of the high-ranking merchant Ikun-Ilum of Mari, who in A15, 19 (58) was gifted an ib$_2$-iii-babbar *Ma-ri$_2$*$^{ki.}$ There does not seem to be any way to determine whether, in such cases, the foreign-style garments were produced at Ebla (as "imitations"), or authentic articles that had been previously imported.

[566] Occurrences of tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra* (lacking a KI determinative) have previously been read as libir-ra "old." However, as pointed out by Pasquali 2015: 148, LIBIR (REC 249 ~ IGI.ŠE$_3$) and U$_3$ (REC 247–248 ~ IGI.DIB) are clearly differentiated at Ebla, with the term qualifying tug$_2$-gun$_3$ consistently showing the latter form. Moreover, authentic occurrences of libir are provided at Ebla with the phonetic complement -ra$_2$ (DU), not -ra. Of decisive importance are then the examples occurring with geographic determinative KI, alongside other garments in the fashion of Mari (Ibid.: 149; e.g. M7, 38 obv. x, 3f: 40

It has been convincingly argued that *U3-ra*(ki) in the palace G texts is to be identified with the city of Ura attested in texts from Ugarit and Hattuša dated to the Late Bronze Age, and located on the Cilician Mediterranean coast near Silifke.[567] Owing to that city's important seaport, merchants from Ura were among the most important foreign merchants attested Ugarit; there is preserved a treaty between Hattušili III of Hatti and Niqmepaʿ of Egypt which concerned the merchants of Ura.[568] It would seem, therefore, that Ura could have in the third millennium been part of the Cilician kingdom of Armi. Ura was renowned as the source of a particularly fine variant of the Armi "colorful garment" (tug2-gun3).[569]

Returning to (6), are there any additional clues that might shed some light on why a delivery of Armi-style colorful garments would be mentioned in this very context, connoted by officials who seem connected with the eastward journey to the Habur region? We can point to one instance where a tug2-gun3 *U3-ra*(ki) was delivered to the ruler of Nagar, by an Ebla official named Irʾam-Gamal, whom we also know to have visited Armi on other occasions.[570] In another case, a tug3-gun3 *Ar-mi*ki was issued to the

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la2-1 tug2-gun3 *U3-ra*ki 5 ib2-iii-tug2 babbar *Ma-ri2*ki). In general at Ebla, when toponyms are used to qualify textiles, the use of the KI determinative is optional.

[567] Pasquali 2015: 148 and fn. 22, with references; Pasquali 2009.

[568] (RS 17.130), see Ibid.: 148, fn. 23 and 24, with reference to Liverani 1962: 63, according to whom the merchants of Ura did not act their own accord, but were rather commercial agents of the king of Hatti ("i mercanti di Ura di cui si parla nell'accordo Hattušili - Niqmepaʿ non agiscono in proprio, ma sono agenti del re di Hatti.").

[569] Given the geographical context, perhaps Armi and Ura's "colorful" garments employed snails as a source of dye, like the later famous Tyrian or Phoenician purple. For possible evidence for such dying methods from Hittite texts of the Late Bronze Age, see Singer 2008.

[570] Irʾam-Gamal's journey to Armi is attested in A15, 56 (month 6) (6-7): 1 gu-dul3-tug2 1 sal-tug2 1 ib2-iii-gun3-tug2 / *Ir3-am6-ga-ma-al6* / *in* ud / DU / *Ar-mi-um*ki "1 cloak, one thin

agent of a "chief of the caravan" who travelled to Nagar.[571] These instances demonstrate that there was indeed during this period a movement, via Ebla, of Armi-style colorful garments to Nagar, where they apparently constituted a valuable and prestigious enough commodity to be fit for a king. This obliges us to take quite seriously the possibility that the "delivery" (šu-mu-tak$_4$) of Armi textiles in (6), like the delivery of equids of Šanapzukum in (11), refers to a conveyance which was not yet complete at the time the monthly account was drafted and the textiles issued. There seems little reason why a conveyance of Armi textiles to Ebla would be listed in this exact context, especially considering two very similar such garments were being gifted in the opposite direction, from the ruler Ebla to the ruler of Armi (nig$_2$-ba en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}), in the same month. A more appropriate possibility is that the tug$_3$-gun$_3$ of (6), in an unspecified quantity, were instead ultimately destined for one or more of those trans-Euphratean centers listed in (29). The importance of this delivery is underscored by the fact that it is made by two men with the title of ur$_4$, which at Ebla denotes a high ranking and important official.[572]

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cloth, one colorful sash for Irʾam-Gamal, on the occasion when he went to Armi." His delivery of a colorful Ura-garment to the ruler of Nagar is recorded in A15, 36 (month broken) (38) 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra* 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$-gi / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / *NI-zi-ma-il* / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ "1 colorful garment (in the fashion of) Ura garment and 1 golden m.-dagger for the ruler of Nagar, *NI-zi-ma-il* and Irʾam-Gamal delivered (to Nagar)."

[571] A15, 9 (16): 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *Ar-mi*^{ki} / maškim *I-ri$_2$-ig* / lu$_2$ kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / DU / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} "One colorful garment of Armi (issued to) the agent of Irik, the one in charge of messengers, who went to Nagar." The rarity and high-value of the colorful garment of Armi could suggest that this was not a gift for the low-ranking anonymous agent of Irik, but rather that this one was charged with the duty of delivering the garment to Nagar.

[572] Traditionally the title of ur$_x$/ur$_4$ has been translated as "collector" on the basis of later equations of Sumerian ur$_4$ with Akkadian *baqāmu* "to pluck (sheep)" *eṣēdu* "to reap, to harvest" *hamāmu* "to pluck and gather." I propose the rendering of ur$_4$ as *executor* on the basis that they seem to be very high-level agents, in charge of executing or carrying out or executing business on the behalf of high officials or rulers.

4.2.5.2 Oak of Armi

Regarding the delivery made by *U₃-la-ma* on the behalf of the ruler of Armi in (8), the object which I read giš[!]-UD was previously read as GANA₂[?]-UD by Pomponio, with the passage translated as "...la consegna di campi vuoti (?) per il re di [Armi]." This, however, makes no sense. Moreover, a commodity called gana₂-UD is otherwise unattested at Ebla. The sign in question[573] has nire the appearance of GIŠ, only that the lower horizontal wedge has been inscribed a little bit further to the left than usual so that it protrudes, superficially giving the appearance of GANA₂ (even though the many small intersecting vertical wedges that would make it a GANA₂ are missing). Albeit rarely, giš-UD is otherwise attested, once in a late-phase Ebla administrative text where an unspecified quantity of it is purchased for 31 shekels of silver for "a new (or: the renewing of the) royal residence."[574] It is also attested in the lexical entry VE 496, giš-UD = *NI-la-nu-um*, *NI-a-la-nu*, interpretable as /ʾ*aylānum*/ "oak" (compare Akkadian *alānu,* "oak/acorn," Hebrew ʾ*lwn*).[575] Thus understanding that (8) records the delivery of "oak" (giš-UD) is a more meaningful and contextually appropriate solution than the alternative "GANA₂[?]-UD."

As already pointed out, the deliverer in of this oak, *U₃-la-ma* of Armi, is mentioned again in (28), alongside Itium of Kakmium (27), both of them just one entry prior to the trip to the Habur region in (29). *U₃-la-ma* shows up probably again as *U₃-mu*

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[573] According to the published photo in Pomponio 2013: plate XXXIII.
[574] M5, 14 (57) (= A8, 534 = TM.76.G.534 rev. xix 24-30): tar-1 (gin₂) ku₃:bar₆ / nig₂-sa₁₀ giš-UD giš-UD / *in* / *Du-ru₁₂*[ki] / e₂ / en / gibil x / [...] On this passage, its context, and the place *Du-ru₁₂*[ki] (a small fortified center located close to Ebla), see now Bonechi 2017: 193–194.
[575] See Hajouz 2013: 89f for full discussion and bibliography.

in (37), alongside an Armi equid team commander (35) and a travelling bodyguard *ma-za-lum* (38). All this makes it seem very likely that the ultimate destination of the oak, which he "delivered on the behalf of the ruler of Armi" (šu-mu-tak$_4$ / giš$^!$-UD / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}), was in fact one or more of the eastern destinations before which he was listed in (28-29): Nagar, Kakkaban, and/or Šanapzukum. As noted, a later administrative text informs us that oak was used in the construction of an Eblaite royal residence.[576] In the present context, it could have served a similar purpose for the king of Nagar. Regarding the ultimately Anatolian provenience of this oak, one can point out that the memory of a specifically Anatolian variety of oak known as "Kanishite Oak" (*allānkāniš*) survived into the times of the early Neo-Assyrian kings, where it is attested in lexical lists and in royal inscriptions.[577] This Armi oak could have been an early forerunner.

It can be no coincidence that *U$_3$-la-ma,* who delivered the oak (giš-UD) in (8), also appeared alongside Itium from Kakmium in (27–28). Kakmium and Armi are in fact together the only foreign locations attested as the source of another, more commonly attested type of timber, namely giš-taskarin, on which see above §3.1.3.3.2 and below §6.2.1. [578] This fits well with Armi and Kakmium's most likely locations to the west/northwest of Ebla, towards the forested mountains renowned for their timber.

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[576] Since M5, 14 (57) only records 31 shekels of silver as expended to purchase the oak (giš-UD), perhaps only a relatively small quantity of the wood was involved.
[577] See CAD A/1: 324, sub voce *allānkāniš.*
[578] For Kakmium and Armi as sources of giš-taškarin see also Catagnoti 2013: 33–36; 47–48.

Above it was already noted that the man of Armi who delivered the "oak," *U₃-la-ma* is elsewhere attested to have been a "physician" (a-zu)[579]. It may seem somewhat odd that a "physician" is connected with a delivery of timber. However, we may note at least one other instance at Ebla, where a physician was issued certain tools, some of which also occur among those issued to carpeners, including "thin hammers/chisels" (DUB.NAGAR sal), saws (šum), and "*blades*" UŠ×KID₂.[580] While it is of course possible that these tools were also employed in surgery, the connection between a physician and carpentry tools is interesting, because it matches the present occurence. It cannot be entirely excluded that physicians of the Ebla era also worked with small amounts of wood or tree bark, or with acorns or other tree parts. In particular, oak bark is known to have medicinal quaities, and it was likely used as such since ancient times. Oak bark contains tannins, which have strong antibacterial properties. It is used externally, applied to wounds or rashes, for oral and gum health, and taken internally as a decoction such as for ulcers or other digestive complaints. Thus, while it is by no means certain, the fact that it delivered by a "physician" renders it possible that in this particular case we are here dealing with small quantities of oak with an intended medical use, rather than to imagine huge logs of timber intended for building purposes.

Thus behind the travel events attested in [A15, 17] can be detected on the one hand a westward movement of timber, from Armi to the Habur region, and on the other hand an eastward movement of equids, from the Habur region (at least Šanapzukum, but

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[579] A15, 20 (62): 1 ib₂-iii-gun₃ *U₃-lu-ma-u₉* a-zu.
[580] M12, 37 (50), ...3 šum / 3 DUB.NAGAR sal / 3 *ma-da-gu* / 6 UŠ×KID₂ / 4 UŠ×KID₂ tur / *En-gi-iš-ar* / a:zu₅ / *wa* / maškim-*SU₃*. Cf. the citation of this source (TM.75.G.2508) in Archi 1995: 10, with the remark "Certain terms recur also in the list of carpenter's tools."

possibly also Nagar and Kakkaban as well) to Armi and Ebla. This mirrors exactly the diplomatic exchange attested in the roughly contemporary Hamazi letter, where Irkab-Damu provided his Hamazian counterpart with taškarin wood in exchange for equids provided by the latter.[581]

4.2.5.3 The term kas$_4$-kas$_4$

As for the term kas$_4$-kas$_4$, the original editor translated the passage (32d) as follows: "in occasione della presenza tra i messageri presso il re."[582] This rendering seems somewhat awkward, and at the same time hampered by a faulty reading of the signs I$_3$-TI as i$_3$-til$_3$ "presence."[583] In line with this understanding, the editor saw behind the Sumerian logogram kas$_4$-kas$_4$ a Semitic active participle, describing a profession or class of individuals – "messengers." Reading however instead i$_3$-ti.g as a verb of motion equivalent to later Akkadian *ṭehû*, it clearly becomes preferable to see behind kas$_4$-kas$_4$ not a class of individuals, but a reference to the event itself which formed the occasion of Armi's visit. A Semitic verbal noun is one way to interpret the logogram kas$_4$-kas$_4$ that could provide such an adequate meaning.

Further suggesting that kas$_4$-kas$_4$ refers here to an event rather than to people, is the fact that, syntactically with regard to i$_3$-ti, kas$_4$-kas$_4$ occurs in an identical position to the similar term nig$_2$-kas$_4$[584] as attested in several excerptsquoted by Archi and Biga.[585] In

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[581] On this Ebla-Hamazi letter see now most recently the important new discussion of Bonechi 2016d.
[582] Pomponio 2008: 169.
[583] See above, §4.2.2.3.
[584] For both terms the characteristic element is kas$_4$, which logographically combines the ideas DU (depicting a human foot = the concept "to go") and KASKAL (depicting a crossroads = the concept "road, path, voyage, journey").

those occurrences, i$_3$-ti is paired with the preposition *in*, and the contexts support an interpretation that *in* functioned with separative meaning "to come (back to Ebla) from an expedition (nig$_2$-kas$_4$)." One occurrence substitutes *in* with *mi-nu*,[586] with apparently identical meaning, while two examples of i$_3$-ti + direct object (without preposition) seem to refer instead to the initial departure.[587] Elsewhere, i$_3$-ti can be paired with *si-in*, with apparently identical meaning to i$_3$-ti + direct object.[588]

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[585]TM.75.G.1240 obv. iii 2′-12′: (a dagger in precious metal) *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir* lu$_2$ i$_3$-ti *in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (Archi/Biga 2003: 18) and TM.75.G.2426 iv 3-9: (precious metal gifts and accessories) *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir* lu$_2$ i$_3$-ti *in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (Ibid.: 21) "…for Ibbi-Zikir, who came back (to Ebla) from an expedition to Mari (my translation)." (translated instead in Ibid.: 18 as "*...(for) Ibbi-Zikir, which (is the gift) for having taken part in the expedition (against) Mari.*" TM.75.G. 2426 obv. viii 4-16: (silver in exchange for gold) nar Kiš^{ki} / lu$_2$ i$_3$-ti / *in* / nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *in* / SA.ZA^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti (Ibid.: 44) "...a singer from Kish, who came back (to Ebla) from an expedition to Mari, he received (the gifts) in the (Ebla) territory (my translation)." All of these occurrences were understood, in my view correctly, by Archi/Biga, to refer to gifts given out at Ebla only after the recipients had returned from Mari. Those authors, however, read and understood instead i$_3$-til$_3$ "to be present, to take part in," which seems to me a contexutally-based understanding that cannot be supported through examples of the later semantic equivalents of til$_3$ (*wašābu, balaṭu*). Note the alternate position of *in* in TM.75.G.2278 obv. viii 10-ix 2: (garments) *I$_3$-lum* pa$_4$:šeš ^{d}BAD *Du-du-lu*^{ki} lu$_2$ i$_3$-ti nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *in Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (Ibid: 21).

[586] TM.75.G.2250 obv. iii 6-13: PN$_1$ PN$_2$ maškim *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir* i$_3$-ti *mi-nu* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (Archi/Biga 2003: "(gifts for PNs) who returned (to Ebla) from an expedition to Mari." Since *mi-nu* indisputably means "from," Archi/Biga for this occurrence abandoned their rendering elsewhere of putative i$_3$-til$_3$ as "to be present, to take part in," translating instead "returning from the military expedition of Mari" (Ibid.). This meaning however is far more compatible instead with i$_3$-ti.ğ. Although it has not been widely recognized, *mi-nu* and *in* can have essentially equivalent meanings at Ebla (possibly the former is an authentic Eblaite pronoun, while the latter is a usage that reflects Mesopotamian influence). Archi 2010b: 16 *et passim* opted instead for an ad-hoc translation of i$_3$-ti *mi-*nu as "when he presented himself from (i.e. returned) from…"

[587] TM.75.G.12450 obv. iii 10-12: i$_3$-ti [/$^{?}$] nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} [/$^{?}$] lu$_2$ nidba i$_3$-giš "(who) departed on an expedition to Mari (which consisted) of an offering (and) an oil ceremony (c.f. Archi/Biga 2003: 14); A12, 568 i′ 1′ – ii′ 1′: i$_3$-ti / nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Du-du-lu*^{ki} / [(break of unknown length)] / aga$_3$-še$_3$ "(who) departed on an expedition of Mari with (a man/multiple men from) Tuttul. (...) slaughtered (livestock)." A reading and understanding of i$_3$-ti as instead i$_3$-til$_3$ (=*balāṭu, wašābu*) "to take part, to participate (in)"

Understanding thus the preposition *in* of (32d) with an ablative, separative meaning, it seems most likely that the passage refers to Armi's departure from Ebla and return to their hometown, which formed the conclusion and climax of their visit, and which was when their greatest gifts were given out, as a departure present. From their own perspective the men of Armi were "returning from" (i$_3$-ti *in)* Ebla, but the semantics of ti.ğ also allow one to translate "depart from," from the perspective of Ebla.

Regarding the specific meaning of kas$_4$-kas$_4$, a lexical equation could provide some insight. It is appropriate to quote the entire lexical passage for context:

VE

971-973			(terms for types of wool)
975-976			(technical terms related to textile production)
977	ga'eš$_x$ (^{GA}KASKAL)		"long distance trade(r)"
978	KASKAL.ERIM$_2$	*a-ti-mu ba-ti-na-tim* /hādim[589] padnātim/	"hostile ones of the paths" (i.e., brigands, highwaymen)
979	kas$_4$ (DU.KASKAL)	*wa-ba-lu* /*wabbālum*/	"carrier (of news, goods)" (i.e., a messenger)
980	kas$_4$-kas$_4$	*du-da-zi-lu-um*	"going/sending back and forth"

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is to be ruled out, even if it produces an essentially correct contextual meaning. C.f. A7, 11 (24): ...*in* ud / i$_3$-ti / en / e$_2$ / ^{d}*A$_3$-da* "On the occasion when the king (of Ebla) approached the temple of Adad," rather than a nonsensical "... when the king was present (+direct object!) temple of Adad."

[588] E.g., A9, 27 (6) ...e$_3$ 5 iti / 3 mu / i$_3$-ti / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *si-in* / SA.ZA$_X^{ki}$ "Expenditures over 5 months, the third year, when Armi came to the (Ebla) territory." This example comes from the subarchive L.2712 and thus reflects different scribal practices (perhaps closer to the authentic Ebla language).

[589] Probably from the Semitic root **hdm* "to destroy," attested in Arabic (Hajouz 2013: 264–265). This meaning fits well with the Sumerian erim$_2$ "to be hostile."

		/tuʾtazzilum/	(i.e., the mutual exchange of messengers, diplomatic relations).
981	kaskal		"road, journey, expedition, caravan"
982	al$_6$-gid$_2$	*a-ti-gu-um* /ʿatiqum/	"proceeding, crossing over, transit"
983	al$_6$-tuš		"sitting down, dwelling"
984	al$_6$-DU	*ʾa$_3$-a-gu-um* */halākum/*	"travelling"

This lexical section concerns various terms having to do with life on the road and the sign KASKAL. Note that two different Semitic roots are used to express on the one hand the single logographic spelling kas$_4$ and the reduplicated one kas$_4$-kas$_4$. In Mesopotamia, the sign KAS$_4$ was associated with fast-moving messengers or "runners" (later Akkadian: *lāsimu*). This kind of "messenger" was apparently referred to at Ebla by means of a different Semitic root. It refers, instead of to his means of locomotion, to his activity as a "carrier" (**wabbālum*), [590] above all of news and messages, but possibly some commodities as well.

Following a pattern seen elsewhere in the bilingual lists, the singly written term kas$_4$ probably describes a professional title or a *nomen agentis*, while the subsequent reduplicated form is a *nomen actionis*. The reduplication signifies an abstract term,[591]

[590] For the interpretation as a participle referring to a professional title, see Bonechi 2006: 87.

[591] For additional examples of the practice of expressing an abstract by reduplication at Ebla, c.f. the pairs VE 1088: nam-en = *ma-li-gu$_2$-um* and VE 1089: nam-nam-en = *du-da-li-gu$_2$-um*, /*tumtallikum*/, the latter a Dt *tuptarris* from **mlk*, "the exercise of kingship" (Hajouz 2013: 427 with literature). The former entry is most likely to be interpreted simply as /*mal(i)kum*/ "king" (Krebernik 1984: 144 fn. 34), in spite of the Sumerian abstracting element NAM-, which, along with NIG$_2$-, can occur freely at Ebla in a frozen usage. The abstract term is instead expressed by reduplication (nam-nam-en-<en>) in the

designating the area of activity covered by the preceding professional title. Thus the explanation kas$_4$-kas$_4$ = *du-da-zi-lum* could be interpreted as */tuʾtazzilum/*, a nominal formation from a Dt stem (pattern *tuptarris*) of the root *ʾzl* "to go forth."[592] In Akkadian, nouns formed with a *ta-* prefix most often indicate a *nomen actionis*.[593] The -t- infix could indicate reciprocity while the D stem could provide the root with a factitive meaning (thus "to send" instead of "to go").[594]

Thus the area of activity covered by the profession of kas$_4$ "carrier (of messages)" is described with a term that could mean something like "the mutual sending back and forth (of messengers)."[595] With kas$_4$-kas$_4$ = **tuʾtazzilum* we may be encountering no less than the native Eblaic term for "diplomatic relations," which were characterized above all by the ongoing exchange of messengers between royal courts. Above all else, the Semitic word used to render kas$_4$-kas$_4$ would appear to be a reciprocal term. The famous visit of a representative of Ebla to the court of Hamazi could thus, for example, have been considered in native terms a kas$_4$-kas$_4$. The grandiose visit by Armi to Ebla during the reign of Irkab-Damu was likewise considered a kas$_4$-kas$_4$, according to the notation in A15, 17 (30-31).

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following entry. See also the Abarsal treaty, A13, 5 (39), where šeš-šeš means "brotherhood" (rather than "brothers").

[592] Attested in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic (Hajouz 2013: 94). This same root **ʾzl* is possibly attested as an equivalent Sumerian ti.ĝ/te.ĝ. VE 1024: te = *ʾa$_5$-za-lu-um* (for this interpretation see Krebernik 1984: 200 fn. 35).

[593] Von Soden 1995 (=GAG): 82.

[594] One could compare the Akkadian verb *akāšum*, which in the G stem means "to go forth" and in the D "to drive off" (CAD/A1, s.v.).

[595] Fales 1984: 24 understood the term as "esercizio della professione di messaggero," for him from a root **mzl* known from Ugarit with the meaning "to run."

Messengers and diplomatic relations are thus listed in VE in an interesting and meaningful contextual position. In the preceding section, terms 971-973 concerned different types and qualities of wool, followed by some technical terms related to the production of textiles. The matter of textile production apparently led the ancient lexicographer to think of long distance trade and traders ga'eš$_x$(GA.KASKAL), perhaps since textiles were among the most characteristic commodities in which they dealt. Although the term ga'eš$_x$ "long-distance trader" is rarely used at Ebla, individuals and activity fitting such a description were certainly ubiquitous. The following sign combination KASKAL.ERIM$_2$ apparently describes hostile individuals who could be encountered by traders on the paths, threatening to forcibly rob them of the goods they carried. Although such bandits are not directly mentioned by such a term in the administrative texts, they too could have been at times a rather ubiquitous presence, albeit on the margins of the world directly covered by our textual evidence. Against such threats, the protection of a *ma-za-lum*/**maṣṣarum* would have been necessary for any traveller.

The immediate subsequent mention, after "traders" and "brigands," of messengers and diplomatic relations, can hardly be coincidental. One of the main reasons why the major powers established relations with one another was to ensure the safe and consistent flow of goods between them, and this included the mutual policing of paths and highways frequented by traders and messengers alike.[596]

[596] See e.g. Barjamovic 2011: §1.5 and Barjamovic 2018.

In a later period, under the minister Ibbi-Zikir, Armi and Ebla participated together in a joint policing operation in an area called Tarhatum most likely located somewhere in the vicinity of Armi itself (see below §4.6.0).[597] Those on the receiving end of Ebla and Armi's combined military efforts were possibly not members of a large palatial state comparable to Ebla or Armi itself, but were marginal groups of KASKAL.ERIM$_2$, seminomadic bandits or highway robbers who posed a mutual threat to Armi and Ebla's trade relations.

"Messengers" and then, more generally, "diplomatic relations" are listed immediately following the words for "traders" and "highway bandits" – as if international diplomacy were the solution to the problem posed to traders by bandits. Thus in this one small lexical section could be perceived a hint of what, we argue, was the basic dynamic behind international relations in the Ebla palace G period. The big players sought to keep one another at arms length, but guarantee through ongoing high-level interpalatial relations, the continued flow of trade traffic between them, guarding above all against chaotic threats posed by more marginal forces.

4.2.5.4 The King of Armi at Ebla

Below I present the full balance of entries from [A15, 17] that can be readily related to Armi. Entries not yet discussed above are highlighted in bold.

[A15, 17; month 6]
(1) 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *A-la-li-a* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}
(2) 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *A-mi-a* (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(3) 4 sal-tug$_2$ / *Hu-ti-mu*^{ki} / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / giš-PEŠ$_3$×EŠ$_2$
(4) 3 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 3 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-da-mu* / lu$_2$ *I-ri$_2$-Gu$_2$-nu* / in-na-sum / *Da-/sa*$^{\?}$*-wu* / *Ša-ti-um*^{ki}

[597] On this episode see also Bonechi 2016b: 2–5.

(5) 2 *gu-zi-tum* 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *I-ti-um* / ugula sur$_x$ BAR.AN / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(5b) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 3 tug$_2$-ni.ni 3 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / maškim-*SU$_3$*
(6) 2 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$-sa$_6$ / ur$_x$ /šu-mu-tak$_4$ / tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / en (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(7) 1 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na* (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(8) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *U$_3$-la-ma* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / giš-UD / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(9) 2 sal-tug$_2$ *Hal-šum*^{ki}
(10) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_2$ / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / giš-dug-DU / *Ar-ru$_{12}$-LUM*
(11) 3 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / BAR.AN
(12) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Si-da-ri$_2$-in*^{ki}
(13) 1 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ / KA.DU
(14) 1 gada-tug$_2$ / *Ma-a-LUM* (*Ar-mi*^{ki}) / kaskal / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / in-na-sum
(15a) 2 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 2 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ / 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ / 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / *Ha-maš-dar* (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(15b) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / 1 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šeš-*SU$_3$*
(15c) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / maškim-*SU$_3$* / tuš / giš-šudun
(15d) 26 sal-tug$_2$ / maškim-maškim-*SU$_3$*
(15e) 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI 2 dam
(16) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / BAD-*su*-^{d}Utu / maškim / *Ar-ru$_{12}$-LUM*
(17-24) (entries concerning various medium or small foreign locations)[598]
(25) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / *A-dar-NE-a* (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(26) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / dam / a-zu / en (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(27) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *I-ti-um* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(28) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *U$_3$-la-ma* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(29) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 3 tug$_2$-NI-NI / *Ar-mi*^{ki} /
(29b) DU / Na-gar$_3$$^{!}$(ŠA)^{ki} / *Ga-ga-ba-an*^{ki} / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki}
(30) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *ma-za-um* / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(31b) 10 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ / 10 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$***-ra* / 10 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$
(31c) nig$_2$-ba en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}/ *in* ud / kas$_4$-kas$_4$
(32a) 4 *gu-zi-tum* 2 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$
(32b) 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 4 ku$_3$-sal 2 nig$_2$-anše-ak GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / *Hu-ur-sa-na*
(32c) 17 sal-tug$_2$ maškim-*SU$_3$*
(32d) *in* ud / i$_3$-ti / *in* / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / en (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(33) (a funeral gift for a man of Raʿaq, delivered by *Ipṭur-Išar* the judge)
(34) 4 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ / 4 aktum-tug$_2$ / 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 50 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$-gi / *Da-wa-du* / 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 sal-tug$_2$ / maškim-*SU$_3$* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / TIL / *A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki}
(35) 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / *A-bu$_{14}$-NE* / ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN / en (*Ar-mi*^{ki})
(36) 1 sal-tug$_2$ du$_{11}$ / nidba$_2$ / ^{d}BAD *U$_9$-gu$_2$-a-aš$_2$*^{ki}
(37) 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *U$_3$-mu* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(38) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ki-bir$_5$-ki-su* / *ma-za-lum* / (blank)

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[598] Mentioned are *Ba-li*^{ki}, *Ir$_3$-PEŠ$_2$*^{ki}, *Ra-ʾa$_3$-ak*^{ki}, *Ab-šu*^{ki} , *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki}, *Du-ub*^{ki}.

To recapitulate the information extracted from [A15, 17]: during this month 6, the ruler of Armi along with a quite sizable contingent came to visit Ebla for a kas$_4$-kas$_4$ or diplomatic exchange. This included, most strikingly, an entry recording over 1,000 pieces of various sorts in (31a). These 1,000 pieces were probably for the court of Armi as a whole, headed by its king. A second set of what were probably the most luxurious items of all were recorded in (31b), in the ratio 10-10-2-10. These could have been for the closest members of the Armi royal family. The most highly valued of these, the above-discussed 2 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra*$^{(ki)}$, were among the finest types of garments attested at Ebla, having been, on another occasion, gifted to the ruler of Nagar. Because they are given as a pair, they possibly represented the personal gift for the ruler of Armi himself, and his consort.

Finally (31c) defined the occasion as nig$_2$-ba en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}/ *in* ud / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ "gift of the ruler (of Ebla, to the ruler and court) of Armi, on the occasion of the *diplomatic visit* (of Armi to Ebla)." Normally, "gift for (lit: of) the ruler of Armi" would be written in three seperate cases: "nig$_2$-ba / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}." It has pointed out that the present occurrence, with its unusual division into cases, should therefore refer to a gift by (lit: of) the ruler (of Ebla) to Armi.[599]At the same time, it seems that *Ar-mi*^{ki} stands for the royal court of Armi, headed by its ruler. One could understand (31) as: nig2-ba en (*Ib-la*^{ki}) / (en) *Ar-mi*^{ki}, with the term "en" essentially serving double duty. The gift of 1,096 textiles was conceptualized as from the kingdom of Ebla, represented above all by its ruler, to the

[599] Pomponio 2008: 171 stated that passage (31c) should be rendered "sulla base della divisione in linee, come 'dono del re (di Ebla) ad Armi.'"

kingdom of Armi, likewise embodied by its ruler. [600] The full context implies a locus of exchange at Ebla itself.[601] There is no mention of the phrase šu-mu-tak$_4$ "sent, conveyed" towards Armi in this context, nor any other mention of the movement of Eblaites towards Armi. Instead, the mention in (29–30) of travellers from Armi receiving textiles to depart for the Habur, necessitates their presence at Ebla, and so too for all the other individuals of Armi mentioned by the text.

The exceptional mention of the ruler of Armi in (8) – strongly implied also for (5), (6), (26) and (35) – suggest that the ruler of Armi himself was indeed present at Ebla on this occasion, along with his many officials. Another important clue in this direction comes from entry (15c), mentioning a type of vehicle called giš-šudun along with an agent of a man of Armi, *Ha-maš-dar*. Preperations for this giš-šudun are mentioned in a text dating to just one month before the present one, where it is specified that it is for the ruler of Armi.[602] The ruler of Armi thus seems to have used this vehicle on the occasion of his grandiose visit – see further below on the possible identity of the giš-šudun as a palanquin or ceremonial cart.

A further set of gifts were given in the next entry (32) to Huršana, who was probably a high-ranking general of Armi, equivalent to one of the Eblaite lugal-lugal or perhaps someone even approaching status of Ebla's untitled "vizier." Here his gifts included: garments for himself and possibly some close associates of his (in the ratio 4; 2;

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[600] For Archi 2011: 8, this large gift of textiles was a "gift for the king of A[rmi]."
[601] On this issue in general, above §2.1.7.
[602] A15, 5; month 5 (36) 1 KIN siki-sa$_6$ / SU / giš-šudun / en / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} "1 K.-measure of fine wool, for the *upholstery* of the ceremonial cart of the king of Armi." On this text see below §4.3.0.

2; 2), 1 "decorative plaque" (dib) weighing 1 mina of gold, and a set of chariot equipment weighing one mina of silver. In an earlier entry in the same text (7) text Huršana had received another three-piece set of garments; in another, probably earlier tablet, he had already received 4 sets of garments, another 1 mina golden plaque, and an entire chariot, complete with equipment.[603] The entry closes with an issuance of 17 thin cloths, for 17 Huršana's anonymous "agents" (maškim), and a phrase specifying the occasion of their gifts "on the occasion when they returned (to Armi) from the diplomatic visit (to Ebla) together with the ruler (of Armi) *in* ud / i$_3$-ti / *in* / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / en (*Ar-mi*^{ki}). The king and court of Armi thus took their gifts back home with them. There does not seem to be any reason to suppose, instead, that this passage implies some movement on the part of the Ebla king.

Apparently not all of the men from Armi, who were present at Ebla for this major event, returned to Armi with the ruler. Some instead set out in the opposite direction, towards Šanapzukum, Kakkaban, and Nagar. The diplomatic event (kas$_4$-kas$_4$) could have thus served as the starting point by which this eastward trip could be undertaken, under Ebla auspices. Only one set of entries (27-30) mentions this trip directly. They could be grouped in the following way:

(a) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *I-ti-um* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}

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[603] A15, 8 (month 12) (3): 3 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ 3 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-u$_2$-hab$_2$ / 1 dib GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 4 ku$_3$-sal 2 nig$_2$-anše-ak / GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / 1 giš-gigir-ii giš-erin$_2$ TAR ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 gada-tug$_2$ IGI-nita / *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na* "3 robes, 1 colorful garment (in Armi fashion), 3 gowns, 1 heavy garment, 3 colorful sashes, 1 red sash; 1 plaque weighing 1 mina of gold; 4 trappings and 2 bridles weighing 1 minas of silver; 1 two-wheeled chariot with a yoke (containing) 30 shekels of silver; 1 linen cloth for an ass; for Huršana."

(b) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *U$_3$-la-ma* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(c) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 3 tug$_2$-NI-NI / *Ar-mi*^{ki} /
(d) DU / *Na-gar$_3$*$^{!}$(ŠA)^{ki} / *Ga-ga-ba-an*^{ki} / *Ša-nap-zu-gum$_2$*^{ki}
(e) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ / *ma-za-um* /
DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

The verb DU of the edition's (29) can thus apply also to Itium of Kakmium and Ulama of Armi in (27-28). Ulama was also mentioned in (8) as delivering "oak" on behalf of the ruler of Armi (šu-mu-tak$_4$ giš-UD en *Ar-mi*^{ki}), which was therefore most likely connected with his trip to the Habur region. Likewise on the behalf of the ruler (of Armi), and mentioned in the same context, is also a delivery made in (6) by two anonymous high-ranking officials (ur$_4$), of what is known to have been a special type of Armi garment (tug$_2$-gun$_3$). This too was thus likely to have been connected with the trip to the Habur. Also connected seems the mention in (11) of a conveyance of equids by three men from Šanapzukum, one of the locations visited on the way to Nagar. Further connecting the trip with equids–a characteristic product of the Habur region and Upper Mesopotamia–is the appearance, in (5), of Itium of Kakmium alongside an anonymous "equid team captain of Armi." Also his travel partner *U$_3$-la-mu* (under a variant spelling *U$_3$-mu*) appears (35, 37) with such an official.

Entry (10), occurring within the context of the above-discussed deliveries, potentially connects Ebla's high-ranking "vizier" with these affairs, although the exact nature of the connection is unclear. It rewards an anonymous man of Armi for apparently performing the action "giš-dug-DU" on the behalf of the vizier ArruLUM. It is difficult to define exactly what giš-dug-DU signifies,[604] other than to note that it is mentioned in

[604] Cf. the discussion in Waetzoldt 2001: 194.

association with individuals and situations suggestive of high rank. The term occurs with the highest-ranking Eblaites, including above all the vizier, with representatives of the most important foreign neighbors, and with deities.

Entry (9) could be connected with Armi. The rarely mentioned *Hal-šum*^{ki}/*Hal-sum*^{ki} seems to have been in some way related to Armi. Perhaps it was a specific place within the wider land of Armi, or someplace located close by, or perhaps the connection was of a different nature altogether. Some link is suggested by the co-occurrence of Armi and Halsum in a complicated chancery text, A13, 9, probably roughly contemporary with A15, 27.[605] Also mentioned in that chancery text, is another settlement listed in the present context, namely, *Si-da-ri*$_2$*-in*^{ki} of (12).[606] The relevance of these occurrences in A15, 17 to the events narrated in A13, 9 must remain an open question for now. As for the following entry (13), recording a single textile for a man named KA.DU, it could be connected with either entry (12), or with the following context beginning with (14).[607]

With entries (1) and (2) the text already begins with textile issuances for two somewhat similarly named individuals from Armi, *A-la-li-a*, and *A-mi-a*, receiving 3 and 2 NI.NI-garments respectively. This may imply that they were each grouped with 2 and 1 additional unnamed individuals (unless their high rank entitled them to receive more than one garment). No further information is provided as to their identity, but it can be noted

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[605] A13, 9 (47): [DU.DU] / *si-in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Hal-sum*^{ki} / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *Lam-mi*^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti.

[606] A13, 9 (1) 4 *mi-at* udu-udu 40 gu$_4$-gu$_4$ / [n] *mi-at* la-ha i$_3$-giš / še / ziz$_2$ / gig-gun$_3$ / *a-ʾa$_3$-wa* / 3 *li-im gu$_2$-bar* / lu$_2$ en / *Si-da-ri$_2$-in* / lu$_2$ / *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki} / il$_2$ / *si-in* / bad$_3$^{ki}-bad$_3$^{ki} / *Du-bi$_2$* "400 sheep, 40 cattle, [x] hundred jars of olive oil, barley, emmer, and speckled wheat totaling 300 *gubar*, (former property) of the ruler of Sidarin, which 'Ama is providing for the fortresses of Ṭubī.

[607] In A15, 38 (29), KA.DU is referred to as the "brother of Ṭubi-Šum, the *executor*" (šeš *Du-bi$_2$-šum* ur$_4$).

that neither name reoccurs in another text. This underscores the uniqueness of the situation attested by this tablet. It is possible that the unique names *A-la-li-a* and *A-mi-a* represent feminine personal names of Armi - in (15d) of the same text, "two women" (2 dam) receive the same type of textile allotment, consisting solely of NI.NI-garments.

Entry (3) features a conveyance of "apples" (giš-PEŠ$_3$×EŠ$_2$) by 4 men from *Hu-ti-mu*^{ki}. The location of this middle-rank kingdom is uncertain,[608] but a roughly contemporary entry reveals a connection with the western kingdom of Kakmium.[609]

Entry (4) features a set of gifts, received by Ir$_3$-am-Damu, marked as "to be given" (in-na-sum) to someone with the unusual name of *Da-sa-wu*, said to be from *Ša-ti-um*^{ki}. A place and a man with such a name seem to be only attested once more, on a small fragment, which could possibly be part of an account of metals, where the same transaction is recorded.[610] The context, the form of the personal name, and the rarity of the toponym, could all suggest that *Ša-ti-um*^{ki} was a specific place located within the wider region of Armi or nearby.

Entry (14) reads as follows: 1 gada-tug$_2$ / *Ma-a-LUM* / kaskal / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / in-na-sum "1 linen cloth for *Ma-a-LUM* (of Armi): it will be given to him for the road (or: the caravan) of the diplomatic expedition." This entry can be explained through recourse to other entries recording a linen cloth specified as "for an ass/for asses" (gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita)

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[608] For Bonechi 1993: 182, Hutimu was "probabilmente situata a sud di Ebla."

[609] In A15, 45 (75), an agent of DU-si, himself a high-ranking official of Kakmium arrives at Ebla with the news that Hutimu has been arrived at (presumably by DU-si): (textiles) nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN maškim DU-si *Hu-ti-mu*^{ki} TIL.

[610] A3, 163 i′ 1′f: [1 ma-na$^{?}$ ku$_3$]-gi /1 dib / *Da-sa-wu-u$_3$* / [*Š*]*a-ti-um*^{ki} (collated from the photo published online under CDLI P242355). For a possible join involving this fragment and three others (A3, 145+163+358+440?) see Bonechi 1990c: 20f.

often in the context of journeys.[611] This has been understood as a type of saddlecloth or wrapping.[612] Such a cloth could also be part of the equipment issued to go along with a chariot or wagon.[613] The scribe thus apparently wished to note that this cloth would be given (in-na-sum, possibly to be interpreted as a present-future form)[614] to *Ma-a-LUM* (certainly an Armi personal name) in order to serve a practical purpose, to be used "on the road/caravan of the diplomatic expedition." The only remaining question then is: what does the "diplomatic expedition" (kas$_4$-kas$_4$) refer to? Most likely, it is the same kas$_4$-kas$_4$ as (31) and (32) – i.e., the major visit by the king of Armi to Ebla, where he and his court received a gift of over 1,000 textiles. This would imply that the journey mentioned was the one back to Armi, taken at the conclusion of the visit.[615] On the other hand, the journey to the Habur, mentioned in (29) and (30), could also have been considered a "diplomatic expedition" (kas$_4$-kas$_4$), in which case the linen cloth could have been issued for the "road" (kaskal) from Ebla to Nagar, Kakkaban, and Šanapzukum – but this seems like a less likely possibility.

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[611] E.g. A15, 5 (22): (22) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI-NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$/ *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / e$_{11}$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (23) 1 gada-tug$_2$ / igi-nita / *Ar-ru$_{12}$*-LUM (on which, see below §4.3.0) On the gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita see further Conti 1997: 28f.

[612] Pomponio 2011: 419 "gualdrappa di lino per asino." It may seem odd that valuable and rare linen (gada) was used for saddlecloth or wrapping, but there seems to be little other explanation for the identity of gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita$_2$. Perhaps this was a frozen usage, like the English expression "bed linen," the gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita$_2$ were not actually made of linen at all.

[613] A15, 8 (3) ...4 ku$_3$-sal 2 nig$_2$-anše-ak / GA$_2$×LA$_2$ 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / 1 giš-gigir-ii giš-erin$_2$ tar ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 1 gada-tug$_2$ igi-nita / *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na*.

[614] For the possibility that, in the Hamazi letter (A13, 3), i$_3$-na-sum conceals a past tense form while in-na-sum stands for a present-future, cf. Bonechi 2016d: 10–11.

[615] As referenced in A15, 17 (32d) *in* ud / i$_3$-ti / *in* / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / en "when they returned (to Armi) from the diplomatic visit (to Ebla) together with the king (of Armi)."

The following entry (15) could be directly related. It is headed by *Ha-maš-dar* (aka *Ha-mar-aš$_2$-da*),[616] another high-ranking official of Armi, probably of equal rank to *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na* of (7) and (32). Like his counterpart *Hu-ur$_2$-sa-na*, *Ha-maš-dar* receives a plaque of one mina of gold, and some chariot equipment, along with two sets of textiles. There then follows a set of textiles for one of his anonymous agents, of whom it is said: tuš / giš-šudun "he was stationed (on duty related to) the ceremonial cart." Since, in at least one other instance, a giš-šudun appears in direct connection with a "journey of the king,"[617] it is quite likely that this "cart" was precisely the one for which *Ma-a-LUM* received a linen cloth in the preceding entry (14), itself said to be for a "journey of the diplomatic expedition" (kaskal / kas$_4$-kas$_4$).

The identity of the object designated by the logogram giš-šudun[618] has been subject to various interpretations,[619] and it may well refer to different things in different contexts.[620] In the present one, it is most likely to be understood as a type of "ceremonial

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[616] On *Ha-maš-dar* and *Ha-mar-aš$_2$-da* as two variants of the same name, see Pomponio 2008: 50–51.

[617] A3, 185 ii 1′f: [x] gin$_2$-DILMUN [ku$_3$-g]i / *ni-zi-mu* / šir-za 2 giš-šudun / lu$_2$ kaskal-kaskal / en

[618] Reading of the sign as ŠUDUN following Civil 2008: 107, who notes "It is often transliterated as UŠTIL because of ESL 73: šudun = *uš-ti*-LUM /*ušdinum*/."

[619] Pomponio 2013: 424 ("carro"); Lahlouh/Catagnoti 2006: 541 ("seggio, throno"); Waetzoldt 2001: 156, 160 ("Joche[?]"); Pettinato 1996: 291 ("stendardo"); Krebernik 1992: 145 ("yoke" ... "associated with oxen and chariots"); Fronzaroli 1993: 151 ("seggio, trono"); Waetzoldt 1990, 31f: "[k]einen Wagen, da m.W. dafür keine Räder hergestellt werden.... doch paß 'banner', Standarte, Feldzeichen oder ähnliches...."; Mander 1990: 108 "a kind of stele;" Lambert 1988: 254f ("weapon", with unconvincing arguments to read the sign differently); Pomponio 1983 ("chariot, wagon").

[620] Civil 2008: 107 "It is likely that it is a form of a word that meant 'implement in general,' 'tool,' and appears in a variety of spellings: šudul/šudun (with several paleographic variants), (a$_2$-šita$_4$, and even a$_2$-šu-du$_7$-(l). The proof is a complicated one

cart (with a seat)" or perhaps even a "palanquin,"[621] in any case related to the visit by the king of Armi to Ebla. At Ebla the giš-šudun is encountered in association with individuals of very high status, such as the king or vizier, and they could be quite richly decorated with silver and gold,[622] although the same or similar type of implement is also attested in an apparent utilitarian context.[623] It is therefore unlikely that the lowly anonymous maškim was literally "seated" (tuš) on this position of high honor. Rather, tuš means that he was assigned to some duty related to it, perhaps as the driver or handler.[624] Whatever exactly he did, the involvement of a low-ranking official implies that giš-šudun was here something mobile,[625] rather than a stationary chair or throne (otherwise it is hard to imagine what the worker's role might be). A giš-šudun could apparently be used

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and will be presented elsewhere, suffice it to say that it is applied to the yoke as the implement par excellence, but also to a chair, to a throne, and even to the loom."

[621] Possibly, the main difference between vehicles of the giš-šudun and the giš-gigir variety was that the giš-šudun was outfitted with a type of yoke (depicted from a top-down view by the sign itself) that made it suitable to being pulled by oxen, but not by equids (cf. Civil 2009: 115). At Ebla, a yoke for equids was instead described apparently by the term giš-erin$_2$. An association between oxen and giš-šudun is shown in the fragment A3, 378 (see the quotation in the note below).

[622] A giš-šudun could contain as much as 7 minas of gold. See eg. M10, 23 obv i 3f.

[623] Eg. A3, 378 ii′ 2′: [...] 61 la-ha i$_3$-giš / 8 *li-im* še *gu$_2$-bar* / 30 gu$_4$ / 73 [x] giš-šudun / […].

[624] In later occurrences tuš is written more fully as al$_6$-tuš, in various contexts where it seems to mean "assigned to duty": A3, 96 i 1′f: 10 e$_2$-duru$_5^{ki}$ / *ir$_3$-a-num$_2$* / *wa* / 14 *NA-SE$_{11}$* / AB×AŠ$_2$ AB×AŠ$_2$ / al$_6$-tuš / giš-šudun / *ir$_3$-a-num$_2$* (agricultural context?); MEE 12, 37 (21e): [1] ma-na [k]u$_3$:bar$_6$ / 6 guruš 10 (gin$_2$) / al$_6$-tuš / giš-šudun / 1 ma-na ŠA.PI gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / 20 guruš 5 (gin$_2$) / ŠE$_3$ / hi-mu-DU / nar / *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$* (diplomatic context?). For the ArruLUM period see also the occurrences in A15, 26 (15); A15, 36 (53); A15, 37 (26), all of which feature an agent (maškim) who is "stationed at the *cart*" (tuš giš-šudun) and all of which are connoted by affairs involving Armi.

[625] Note the occurrence of giš-šudun alongside a four-wheeled wagon, in an apparent agricultural context, A2, 22 obv. i 1f: [x *mi*-]-*at* [še] *gu$_2$-bar* / 2 peš$_2$-ab$_2$ … / 5 giš-nu$_2$ / 6 giš-šudun / 3 giš-gigir-iv.

for "images" (an-dul$_3$)[626] – perhaps in the context of a ceremonial procession[627] – and could be used by very high status officials for their "journeys" (kaskal).[628] However, as has been pointed out,[629] there never seem to be any wheels (giš-GAM.GAM) mentioned in connection with the giš-šudun, in contrast to what is the case with wagons (giš-gigir).[630] Therfore it seems possible that the giš-šudun was either a type of palanquin, which was carried by humans, or perhaps a sledge of some sort, which was pulled along the ground by animals, at either rate outfitted also with a seat, for high status individuals. In this case, it was probably the king of Armi himself who sat upon the giš-šudun. Another text, discussed below §4.3.0 is probably exactly one month younger than this one, and quite likely mentions preparations made for the very same "ceremonial cart (with a seat)," A15, 5 (36): 1 KIN siki-sa$_6$ / SU / giš-šudun / en / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} – "one K.-measure of fine wool, for the *upholstery* of the ceremonial *cart* of the king of Armi." The present text A15, 17's

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[626] M7, 2, obv. i 8– ii 2: 10 ma-na 40 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / [nu$_{11}$-za giš-šudun an-dul$_3$] / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (restored from rev. xi 5: 4 nu$_{11}$-za 1 giš-šudun an-dul$_3$ *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}]. "10 minas 40 shekels of gold for sheets (to decorate) one *cart* for an image of Mari." For a different interpretation, see Archi 2005: 89, "...one throne of a statue of Mari." A mobile status for giš-šudun in this context is, however, implied by the fact that giš-šudun is immediately preceeded by items known to form part of a wagon's equipment, M7, 2 obv i 1–7: …4 KA.SI…2 nig$_2$-anše-ak… 4 *zi-kir-ra-tum* (For KA.SI, Conti 1997: 50; nig$_2$-anše-ak, Ibid.: 45; *zi-kir-ra-tum*: Ibid.: 51). The interpretation of an-dul$_3$ instead as a part of the giš-šudun (i.e., a canopy?) seems less likely.

[627] Cf. the interpretation of the above passage by Waetzoldt 1990: 82, "Ein Joch, das jemand auf Nacken und Schultern legte, kommt für den Transport von einem Bildis (Statue?) kaum in Frage, eher schon eine Art Bahre, die zwei Träger auf den Schultern oder zwischen sich an Stangen oder mit Hilfe von Gurten tragen."

[628] A3, 185 ii 3'–5': 2 giš-šudun / lu$_2$ kaskal-kaskal /en.

[629] Waetzoldt 1990: 32.

[630] Eg. A2, 2 (11): 5-NI ku$_3$-gi / *al$_6$* / *Bu$_{14}$-du* / *i*[*n*] / kin$_5$-ak / 4 giš-GAM.GAM / 2 giš-gigir-ii / lu$_2$ nig$_2$-ba." "1/5 shekel of gold credited to Budu for manufacturing 4 wheels for 2 two-wheeled chariots."

entry (15) closes with 26 thin garments for 26 anonymous agents, and 2 NI.NI-garments for two "women" (dam).

Immediately after this group, there is listed a single cloak for a man named BAD-*su*-^{d}Utu, said to be functioning as an agent (maškim) of the Ebla vizier ArruLUM. This unusual name, which means "His Lord is the Sun," (featuring the unusual use of syllabic -*su* instead of the more common logographic -*SU*$_3$) never seems to reoccur elsewhere, and it is unlikely that it could have been belonged to a man from the Ebla area. At Ebla the sun was considered female; Eblaite individuals with the element ^{d}Utu as part of their name are usually females, and their names contain feminine verbal forms. This name instead points towards Mesopotamia, above all to Mari.[631] The nature of this man's role and his relation to the diplomatic events alluded to on this tablet are uncertain; but recall that in (10) an anonymous man of Armi was rewarded for performing giš-dug-DU (whatever exactly that may mean) similarly on the behalf of ArruLUM.

4.2.5.5 Armi and Abarsal

The last entry remaining to be discussed is (34), where a man with the unique name of *Da-wa-du* is rewarded with textiles (in the unusual ratio 4; 4; 2) and a 50 shekel golden plaque, along with 2 lesser textiles for an anonymous agent. The name *Da-wa-du*, which never occurs again, probably belongs to the onomasticon of Armi. The reward was for having brought to Ebla an item of news: nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN TIL / *A-bar-sal*$_4^{ki}$ "Abarsal has been arrived at."

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[631] Compare the names studied in M12, 25 above 3.1.3

In the present context, it seems unlikely that this was news of military relevance. By this point, Abarsal had already been vanquished (several years ago under Iplus-Il, see above §3.1.1.4) and was no longer a seat of independent power. Instead, this news item is probably to be connected with the eastward journey of men from Armi and Ebla to the Habur region, with which, as it has been demonstrated, a great number of entries on this tablet are concerned. Abarsal was probably mentioned because it was the point at which the caravan crossed the Euphrates, and was thus an important halfway point or milestone on the way to Šanapzukum, Kakkaban, and Nagar. The men of Armi and Ebla who remained behind would have wanted to know of the safe arrival and crossing of the Euphrates by the rest of their comrades. And so *Da-wa-du* was handsomely rewarded for performing the important duty of leaving behind the Habur-bound travel party at their midway point, turning around and doubling back to Ebla at a swift pace, in order to provide an update on their status. The meaning of the news item could thus be, "Abarsal has been arrived at (by the expedition of Ebla and Armi on its way to Nagar)."[632] Note, in this connection, the very important statement of Adelheid Otto regarding Tell Bazi-Banat (for which the present study proposes an identification with Abarsal, above §3.2.1.1): "[Bazi-Banat] is situated at the most direct route from Ebla towards the Habur triangle, where an easy crossing of the Euphrates was possible."[633]

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[632] On the meaning of TIL see below §5.5 For a similar entry attesting Abarsal as a halfway point of a greater journey, cf. the following occurrence: A15, 24 (51): (gifts) / DU-si / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / *in* ud / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *ʾa$_5$-na* / *Mu-ur*^{ki} / TIL / *A-bar-sal*^{ki} "(Gifts) for DU-si of Kakmium, on the occasion when the diplomatic expedition, together with (men from) Ebla, on the way to Mur, arrived at Abarsal."

[633] Otto/Biga 2010: 490.

Further supporting the idea that this news item of (34) is related to the trip to the Habur, is its direct adjacency to entries (35–38), mentioning *U₃-mu* (aka *U₃-la-ma*), the guardian *Ki-bir₅-ki-su*, and equid team captain *A-bu₁₄-NE*. The probable relevance of these entries to the journey to the Habur has already been discussed. Recall furthermore, that an offering to the Lord-of-*Yukuwaš was mentioned in this context, in (36). As has already been pointed out, *Yukuwaš was located somewhere in the vicinity of the "port" (ma₂-NE) near Emar.[634] This matches the proposed location of Abarsal, somewhere in between Emar and Charchemish and controlling an important crossing of the Euphrates (see above §3.2.1). It is compatible with the present interpretation of the meaning of TIL / *A-bar-sal₄*[ki], as related to the crossing of the Euphrates by the caravan travelling from Ebla to Nagar.

Potentially, this could mean that the men listed in entries (35–38), similar to *Da-wa-du*, only travelled halfway, turning around and coming back to Ebla after reaching the crossing point, Abarsal on the Euphrates. This would explain why *U₃-mu* aka *U₃-la-ma* was mentioned again, in that very position.[635]

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[634] See above §4.2.5.2 concerning the occurrence in M10, 20 rev. viii 17f, of offerings for the Ishara-godesses of ma₂-NE[ki] and of *U₉-gu₂-wa-aš₂*[ki].

[635] This need not contradict the fact that *U₃-la-ma* was said in (8) to have been responsible for conveying oak/acorn on the behalf of the ruler of Armi. If some of the commodity was destined for the Habur region, other agents of his could have brought it the rest of the way there. Perhaps, when *U₃-la-ma* returned to Ebla some weeks after his initial departure, a different scribe was working, writing the daily small tablets which were later used to compile the monthly accounts and then discarded. This latter scribe could have had more difficulty with the phonetic portrayal of the foreign name, leading to the more defective writing *U₃-mu* in the later occurrence, which was then mechanically copied into the final compiled record.

The purpose of this detailed discussion was to provide as full a contextual picture as possible of Armi's relations at this moment in time with Nagar,[636] which were mediated through Ebla. Even if some of the specific details of this reconstruction are open to question, there can be no doubt that Ebla here acted as the middleman between Armi and Nagar. This role of a "middleman" for Ebla between the two countries had, in the first place, a geographic background – Ebla was simply located in the middle between Armi and Nagar. Politically, it arose above all as a result of Ebla's intense relations with Armi itself, exemplified above all by the gift of over 1,000 textiles for Armi's king. To be sure, Ebla had relations with Nagar during this period as well, but they were nowhere near as intense as those it had with Armi. Ebla's close connection with Armi was basis of this exchange.

4.3.0 Armi and Mari

Ebla also acted during this period as a geopolitical intermediary between Armi and Mari. In the following example, Ebla brokered a visit to Armi by one or more anonymous men from Mari.

[A15, 5; month 5]
(22) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$/ *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / e$_{11}$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}
(23) 1 gada-tug$_2$ / igi-nita / *Ar-ru$_{12}$*-LUM /
(24) 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$:bar$_6$ maš-maš ku$_3$-gi / *En-na-NI* / *ma-za-um* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(25) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu* / lu$_2$ BAD.E$_2$

(22) 1 cloak, 1 NI.NI, 1 colorful sash for (a man of) Armi, who went up with (a man of) Mari (to Armi).
(23) 1 linen cloth for an ass (belonging to) ArruLUM (used on the trip to Armi).
(24) 1 silver M.-dagger with 'stripes' of gold for Enna-NI, (an Eblaite who acted as) guardian of Armi (on the trip to Armi).
(25) 1 cloak for *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu*, (subordinate/son) of BAD.E$_2$.

[636] Cf. the succint treatment of this text in Archi 2011: 8.

The guardian Enna-NI, mentioned here in (4), we have already encountered above in A15, 50 (5), where he was responsible for accompanying some men from Armi on a trip to Nagar. The present occurrence of "*En-na-NI* / *ma-za-um* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}" has been interpreted as an indication that Enna-NI was a man from Armi, but this is quite unlikely in light of the linguistic affiliation of his name.[637] Instead, the genitive "of Armi" describes here the scope of his activity.[638]

The author of the *editio princeps* understood (22) differently, taking *aš$_2$-ti* as a preposition of separative meaning, and understanding *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} as referring to the toponym itself (rather than to an anonymous person or group of people), translating "Tesilli (per (l'uomo di) [Armi], che sale da [Mari]."[639] Thus, he understood the passage as referring to the return to Ebla, from Mari, of a man from Armi.[640] This is however, unlikely for several reasons.

The examples analyzed throughout this study show that the phrase "DU *aš$_2$-ti*" is always followed either by a PN, or a GN, in contexts where GN should be understood as

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[637] Archi, 2011: 22 listed the present *En-na-NI* as a man from Armi, but for Pomponio 2008: 41, he was "un funzionario di Ebla in rapporto con il centro di Armium." Most or all of the Semitic PNs, which have been listed as belonging to men from Armi in Archi op. cit.: 21f, are probably in reality Ebla men who acted in some role related to Armi. A genitival relationship "PN / (title) / GN" or even simply "PN / GN" need not always indicate PN's ultimate country of origin.

[638] This is demonstrated above all in A15, 13 (4): *En-na-NI* /*ma-za-um* / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki} "Enna-NI, the guardian (responsible for) going to Armi." The present occurrence in A15, 5 (24) could thus be seen as an abbreviation: *ma-za-um* <DU> *Ar-mi*^{ki}.

[639] Pomponio 2008: 36.

[640] So also Archi 2011: 7, no. 4: "someone from A[rmi] who came up from... Mari."

referring to a person.[641] The preposition *aš2-ti* thus means "(together) with" rather than "from."[642] Especially relevant here is an attestation "DU / *aš2-ti* / guruš / *Ma-ri2*^{ki},"[643] of which the present occurrence is essentially an abbreviation. Furthermore, the Ebla guardian *En-na-NI* traveled on numerous other occasions to Armi, but not to Mari. As has been seen so far, disbursals of this nature were generally made at the outset of a journey, rather than after its completion. If one takes seriously the rare verb e$_{11}$ "to go up, to ascend" (equated in later times with Akkadian *elû*), then the journey in question should have constituted an increase in elevation. Thus the most likely interpretation is that the men from Armi were "ascending" from Ebla to their homeland, bringing along one or more special visitors from Mari, who were already at Ebla (but who did not, apparently, receive allotments in this context). The importance of this trip is underscored by the fact that Enna-NI receives an allotment of unusually high value. Objects in precious metal were not typically given out to guardians in such contexts.

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[641] E.g. in contexts involving a *ma-za-*(*l*)*um* "guardian": A15, 17 (29):

[642] Tonietti 2013: 65 listed the meanings of *aš2-ti* as 1) "presso," and questioningly, 2) "da (valore locativo)?." In reality the "locative" value of *aš2-ti* probably does not exist, and all the occurrences of "*aš2-ti* GN^{ki}" are to be understood as journeys undertook "with" persons from GN^{ki}. Most likely, *aš2-ti* is the equivalent of latter Akkadian *itti* "with." At least in administrative texts, *aš2-ti* "with" is probably to be kept separate from *aš2-du* "from," which is instead the equivalent of later Akkadian *ištu* "from." For *aš2-du* see e.g. the famous lexical colophon, M3, 47 rev ii 1f: *in* / ud / dumu-nita-dumu-nita / dub-sar / e$_{11}$ / *aš2-du* / *Ma-ri2*^{ki} "when the scribes came up from Mari"; M10, 20 rev xxiii 28f: 2 ma-na / ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN bar$_6$:ku$_3$ / nig$_2$-sa$_{10}$ / 10 la$_2$-3 ma-na ŠU$_2$.ŠA KUR.KUR/ *aš2-du* / *Ma-ri2*^{ki} "2 minas 40 shekels of silver for 7 minas 40 shekels of lapis, purchased from (someone from) Mari." Less clear is the status of the spelling *aš2-da*; possibly it could stand for either *aš2-ti* or *aš2-du*. In general, the translation of the various chancery texts cited by Tonietti 2013: 57–65 (for *aš2-du*, *as2-da*, and *as2-ti*) seem still open to debate. For Catagnoti 2012: 94 *aš2-ti* is a variant of *aš2-da*.

[643] A4, 17 (61).

The "linen cloth for an ass of ArruLUM" in (23) is included not as a gift, but as an incidental expenditure. It emphasizes Ebla's role as the facilitator of this journey, but it need not imply that ArruLUM himself participated in the journey, only that he provided a means of transportation (a donkey) apparently from his own assets.

The participation of *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu* in this journey is implied by his syntactic position, and also by the fact that he is attested to have went to Armi on other occasions.[644] Here, BAD.E$_2$ is not a title, but a personal name, possibly *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu*'s father.[645]

Looking at the greater context, there appear to be additional entries connected with the same journey:

[A15, 5; month 5]

(19) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *I-šar* / DU / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *Da-ti-um*^{ki}
(20) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *A-dar-NE-lu* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}
(21) 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki}
(22) ... *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / e$_{11}$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} (etc.)

(19) 1 cloak for Yišar, who went (to Armi with with) (some men from) Mari (and) Datium.
(20) 1 robe, 1 heavy garment, 1 fine colorful sash for *A-dar-NE-lu* of Armi.
(21) 1 thin garment, 1 colorful sash for a man of Munutium.
(22) (garments for) (a man of) Armi, who went up with (a man of) Mari (to Datium).

At first glance, (19) might seem to state that Yišar went to Mari and to another place called *Da-ti-um*^{ki}.[646] However, a deeper investigation reveals that Yišar is attested several

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[644] A15, 11 (36): 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / 1 n[ig$_2$-l]a$_2$-gaba 1 ga[da]-tug$_2$ / *Iš$_{11}$-da-m*[*u*] / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki} (note here the inclusion of a linen cloth (gada-tug$_2$), which was again probably for a journey); A15, 31 (99): 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu* / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki}.
[645] On BAD.E$_2$ as a personal name in this and other texts, cf. Bonechi 2016b: 16–17 with fn. 80. On BAD e$_2$ (en) as a title "(royal) majordomo," Ibid.: 9f. with literature.
[646] So, hesitatingly, Pomponio 2008: 36 "...per [Yišar] che va (?) a [Mari] (e) [Datium]."

more times as travelling to Armi, but not to Mari.[647] This, and the overall context, suggest that (19) belongs to the same set of events as in (22). *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} again stands not for the place itself but for one or more men from that place, possibly the same ones as in (19), where the scribe apparently omitted the preposition *aš$_2$-ti* "with." Examples where DU is combined directly with a PN demonstrate that, in some instances, the preposition *aš$_2$-ti* must be supplied.[648]

Thus *I-šar* did not travel to Mari, but rather he travelled with one or more Mari men to Armi, joined also by men from *Da-ti-um*^{ki}. This place is to be sought in the Habur region, and likely belonged to the kingdom of Nagar. It occurs in the same list of toponyms of Nagar (mentioned above in §4.2.5), alongside Kakkaban and Nabada.[649] Thus, one or more men from the Habur region went along with the man of Mari on the trip to Armi. This foreshadows the events of the above-discussed A15, 17, where a group of men from Armi departed for the Habur region.

Furthermore, there are numerous other connections between A15, 5 and A15, 17. Notably, A15, 5 is dated to a month 5, while A15, 17 is dated to a month 6. Several of the same individuals from Armi occur in both texts, including *A-dar-NE-lu*,[650] *Ha-ra-na-u$_3$*, and *Ma-a-lum*. The present context also includes a man from *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki}[651], which could be significant because the ruler of this place was among the few minor foreigners

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[647] A15, 9 (40): *I-šar* / DU / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}; A15, 18 (12) *I-šar* / lu$_2$ [*Ha*]-*ba-ra*-[*ar*] / [D]U / [*Ar*]-*mi*^{ki} (20) *I-ti*-^{d}*Ra-sa-ap* / *ma-za-um* / DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *I-šar* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}.
[648] Eg. A15, 23 (14): *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / DU / <*aš$_2$-ti*> *Ar-ru-LUM;* A15, 37 (12): lu$_2$-kar / DU / <*aš$_2$-ti*> *A-mu-ra*;
[649] For this unpublished list see Archi 1998: 5.
[650] In A15, 17 (25) under the variant *A-dar-NE-a.*
[651] Likely identical with the kingdom of Manuwat located between Ebla and Mari, see above §3.3.0.

mentioned in A15, 17. Most importantly, A15, 5 mentions a wool expenditure for a "ceremonial *cart* of the ruler of Armi."

[A15, 5; month 5]
(36) 1 KIN siki-sa$_6$ / SU / giš-šudun / en / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}
(36) 1 K.-measure of fine wool, for the *upholstery*[652] of the ceremonial cart of the king of Armi."

Given that the ruler of Armi is mentioned so rarely, this giš-šudun is quite likely the same one mentioned in A15, 17 (15), a text characterized by, it has been argued above, a visit to Ebla by Armi's king. This wool expenditure from month 5, could thus have been in anticipation of his arrival at Ebla one month later in A15, 17, month 6.

This situates the visit to Armi by an individual from Mari, via Ebla, in an interesting overall context. It was occurring at around the same time as a major diplomatic interaction between Ebla and Armi. In A15, 17 (16) there was an individual whose name suggested an affiliation with Mari (BAD-*su*-^{d}utu), listed as an "agent of ArruLUM," but with unclear role. This man could have had some connection with the anonymous Mari man (or men) listed one month earlier in A15, 5, or maybe he was identical with them. No further information is given on the nature of these Mari individuals' dealings with Armi, but it seems inherently likely that there could have had a commercial background. The Mari men, and the men from the Haburian center of Datium, could have been interested in products available in Armi, which they were glad to be able to access via Ebla. Ebla's role as a middleman between Armi and the western states seems thus to have operated in both directions. The situation at Ebla seems,

[652] On SU as a component of vehicles at Ebla see Conti 1997: 47–48. The translation *upholstery* is suggested by the context.

however, to have characterized above all by the diplomatic presence of Armi, rather than of Mari or Nagar. Note that A15, 5 only mentions the anonymous Mari individual(s) incidentally, because of their relation to other textile recipients; they themselves do not actually receive any textiles from Ebla. These Mari individuals do not necessarily need to be seen as representatives of the Mari king or the Mari state more generally. They could also have been present at Ebla on their own accord, in a private capacity. Mentions of Mari in the ArruLUM texts seem to be characterized by individuals or groups of individuals who are few in number. When information is given explaining their presence, it often alludes to a commercial background. They are either themselves designated as lu_2-kar "merchant" or are mentioned in association with such.

4.4.0 Armi and Subartu

Ebla also facilitated the travel of men from Armi to lands even further east beyond Nagar. Namely, they helped men from Armi travel to the land of Subartu[653] along the upper Tigris, an area corresponding to what would in the future become the heartland of the Assyrian Empire, and the modern Iraqi provinces of Ninua and Kurdistan.

[A4, 17; month 9]
(47) [2 g]u-dul_3-tug_2 2 sal-tug_2 2 ib_2-iii-dar-tug_2 / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / DU / *Da-ga-na-am*^{ki} / *Ša-bar-tum*^{ki}

(47) 2 cloaks, 2 thin garments, 2 colorful sashes for (two men) of Armi who went to Daganam of[?] (or: and[?]) Subartu.

[653] On the land of Subartu see in detail Steinkeller 1998: 76–90.

To my knowledge, the toponym "Daganam" occurs only here. It is hard to decide whether we should understand Daganam and Subartum in a genitival relationship to one another, or to see in them two separate destinations. Potentially Daganam could have been a specific settlement within the wider land of Subartu. The syllabic use of the *am* sign is atypical for Ebla,[654] and so it quite possibly reflects the influence of a foreign syllabary.[655]

If we try to locate Armi on the Euphrates, at either Samsat or Bazi, this would leave us at a loss to explain why the men from Armi first went west to Ebla, receiving clothes there, then turned around and went back east, crossing the Euphrates a second time, in order to go to the Tigridian region. A more plausible scenario is one that locates Armi to the west of Ebla, such that the trip from Armi to Subartu would consist solely of an eastward motion and a single crossing of the Euphrates.

[A15, 27; month 8]
(10) 2 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI-NI 3 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-[sa$_6$]-gun$_3$ / *Ša-bar-ti$_{(-)}$NI-LU-tu*[*m*]
(11a) [1 gu-dul$_3$ 1 aktum/sal-tug$_2$] 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_2$-tug$_2$ / guruš / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / DU / *Ša-bar-ti$_{(-)}$NI-LU-tum*
(11b) 2 sal-tug$_2$ / 2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / maškim-*SU$_3$*
(12) 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 nig$_2$-la$_2$-sag / BAHAR-*il* / *ma-za-lum*

(10) 2 cloaks, 2 heavy garments, 1 NI.NI, and 3 fine colorful sashes for 3 Subarteans.
(11) [1 cloak, 1 heavy/thin garment,] 1 colorful sash for a man of Armi who went to the Subareans (or: to upper Subartu).
(12) 1 thin cloth, 1 turban for Puhur$^{?}$-Il, the travelling guardian.

[654] Catagnoti 2012a: 37.
[655] On the element -AM in personal names of the Nagar region, see Catagnoti 1998: 61.

The spelling "*Ša-bar-ti(-)NI-LU-tum*" is unusual, but it almost certainly refers to the region of Subartu. The lack of the determinative KI makes it seem possible that it represents an attempt at spelling a gentilic, "Subartean." Occasionally and especially in older Ebla texts, byforms of toponyms will crop up that look very much like gentilic forms.[656] Another possibility would be to interpret *Ša-bar-ti i3-lu-tum* "upper Subartu" (from *ʿly, Akkadian *elû*).

Apparently, during this month some Subarteans had already been present at Ebla. Other passages of the same text also reveal that many men from Armi were also present. It seems that one of the Armi men, whose name is not given, joined the Subarteans on their journey back to their homeland. The group was led by the travelling guardian with an unusually spelt name, *BAHAR-il*, with the BAHAR sign apparently used syllabically, in order to express a form of the same Semitic root as later Akkadian *pahārum* "to gather, assemble" (a reading of the name instead as EDEN-*il* seems to be ruled out on paleographic grounds). The equivalent Eblaite name is usually spelled instead *Ip-hur-il*. If *BAHAR-Il* was not an Eblaite but rather a foreigner, from the east, the spelling of his name could possibly reflect the influence of foreign scribal practices. He occurs, it seems, in just one other text A15, 45 (59). Possibly, he was in that month responsible for accompanying Irʾam-Gamal, who in (21) delivered a gift to the ruler of Nagar.

Other entries on this same tablet could imply that the Armi men who were travelling to Subartu were interested in obtaining equids:

[A15, 27; month 8]

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[656] Also resembling a gentilic is the spelling in A15, 34 (150): Ša-bar-ti(-)A-A^{ki}, unless A-A is to be understood as "Subartu of the waters."

(1a) [...] / [...]-gun$_3$ / [... *BU*$^?$]-*DI*$^?$ [...] ku$_3$-gi / [x-] LI [x]-bar /
(1b) [x]+2 sal-tug$_2$ [x] tug$_2$-NI.NI [x]+2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$ / [ma]škim-*SU$_3$* /
(1c) DU / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Iš$_{11}$-Da-mu* / hi-mu-DU / 4 sur$_x$-BAR.AN / 2$^?$ giš-gigir-ii-1
(2) 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Iš$_{11}$-da-mu*

(161) 2 KIN siki / *Du-bi$_2$* / šu-ba$_4$-ti / *hu-lu* / 2 sur$_x$ BAR.AN / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(164) 3 KIN siki / giš-gigir-ii-1 / šeš-ii-ib / sur$_x$ BAR.AN / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

(1a) (clothes, broken), 1 gold [fibu]la$^?$, (broken) for (PN, broken),
(1b) 2+x thin clothes, 2+x NI.NI, 2 colorful sashes for his (2+x) agents,
(1c) who went with *Iš$_{11}$*-Damu *in order to obtain* 4 teams of equids for 2$^?$ chariots.
(2) 1 heavy garment, 1 colorful belt for *Iš$_{11}$*-Damu.

(161) 2 K. of wool for Ṭubi, received (in order to make) yoke collars[657] for 2 teams of equids, 'going' to Armi.
(164) 3 K.-measures of wool (for outfitting) a chariot of the "brotherhood"-priests of the equid team of the king of Armi.

4.5.0 Armi and Hamazi

An additional collection of passages reveals that Armi was interested in establishing diplomatic relations with the faraway state of Hamazi, and did so through Ebla, though apparently without actually traveling to Hamazi. Hamazi was either a part of the greater region of Subartu, or was directly adjacent to it.[658] The diplomatic encounter between Ebla and Hamazi is famously attested in the so-called "Hamazi letter," so striking to Near Eastern scholars because of its close echo of international elite gift-giving practices known from much later in history, especially as attested in the texts of the Amarna age. The actual long-term impact of these interactions with Hamazi however seems to have been rather minimal. Hamazi was too far from Ebla for them to develop meaningful, long-lasting contacts, and above all, their territories and spheres of influence

[657] On *hu-lu* as a piece of chariot or wagon equipment see Conti 1997: 40f.
[658] On Hamazi and Subartu in the third millennium B.C.E., see Steinkeller 1998.

did not border upon one another. The major power of Nagar was located in the middle between them.

The dossier dealing with the interaction between Armi and Hamazi by way of Ebla centers around an Eblaite official named Išmah-Qardu, identified in one text as the special envoy of the king of Ebla (maškim e-gi$_4$ en *Ib-la*^{ki}). Išmah-Qardu was apparently constantly travelling back and forth between Ebla and Armi during the reign of Irkab-Damu. At one point he received, in Armi, a quantity of silver, which was destined to form a gift for the king of Hamazi. He carried the gift from Armi to Ebla, where it was recorded as an "income" (mu-DU). Possibly, but not certainly, Išmah-Qardu himself then brought the silver some time later to Hamazi. Later, he made another delivery to Armi, consisting of 2 minas and 40 shekels of tin, which possibly represented the reciprocal gift from the ruler of Hamazi to the ruler of Armi.

The dossier includes three passages from monthly accounts of the usual type. The earliest one is probably the one dated to month 7 [A15, 32], followed 7 months later by A15, 46, dated to month 2, and finally after another 7-month span, A15, 54, dated to month 9. The undated sources consist of a small tablet A7, 22, and of a passage from a still unpublished multi-month income (mu-DU) account A14, 54. The small tablet could have been redacted in between A15, 46 and A15, 54, with the multi-month account redacted shortly thereafter, perhaps at the end of the calendar year.

[A15, 32; month 7]
(52) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ 1 nig$_2$-la$_2$-du / 1 nig$_2$-la-sag / *Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(92a) 1 <gu>-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 nig$_2$-la$_2$-sag 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 2 šu-kešda / *In-da-mu* / DU / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}
(92b) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / ugula sur$_x$-BAR.AN-*SU$_3$*

(52) 1 robe, 1 heavy garment, 1 colorful sash, 1 breastband, 1 turban for Išmah-Qardu, who went to Armi.
(92a) 1 cloak, 1 ʾ*a*, 1 heavy garment, 1 turban, 1 fine colorful sash, 1 hand-wrap for Indamu, who went to Armi.
(92b) 1 cloak, (1 ʾ*a*, 1 heavy garment, 1 hand-wrap)[659], 1 colorful sash, for *their* equid team commander.

The trips undertaken by Išmah-Qardu in (52) and by In-Damu in (92) were probably part of one and the same affair.[660] Interestingly, in the slot where we from other texts might expect the *ma-za-(l)um* official, there occurs instead an official designated as "*their* equid team commander" (ugula sur_x-BAR.AN-*SU_3*).

[A15, 46; month 2]
(35) 1 ʾ*a_3-da-um*-tug_2 1 aktum-tug_2 1 ib_2-iii-sa_6-gun_3 / *Iš-ma_2-gar_3-du* / i_3*-ti*[661] / *Ar-mi*[ki]
(35) 1 ʾ*a.*, 1 heavy garment, 1 fine colorful sash, for Išmah-Qardu who departed for Armi."

The above passage furnishes little more information other than that Išmah-Qardu made another trip to Armi during this month 2, thus perhaps 7 months after the initial one.

It was probably during this trip in [A15, 46] (or alternatively, during the aforementioned one in [A15, 32]) that Išmah-Qardu received a mina of silver from the ruler of Armi, which was destined to be delivered to Hamazi. The monthly accounts,

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[659] The extra ʾ*a_3-da-um*-tug_2 and aktum-tug_2 of 92a, which are recorded as if they were for Indamu, must instead belong to the equid team commander of 92b.
[660] Additional trips by *In-da-mu* to Armi are attested in A4, 16 (52): 1 ib_2-iii-gun_3-tug_2 / *En-na-NI* (cf. the metals account M10, 23 rev. xi 1f: 1 ma-na ku_3:bar_6 / nig_2-kaskal / *Gar_3-da-um* / *In-da-mu*) and A15, 53 (67): 1 *gu-zi-tum*-<tug_2> / *Du-du-ra-u_3* / *Ar-mi-um*[ki] / *in* ud / *In-da-mu* / DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi-um*[ki]. In A15, 57 (20), it is perhaps the Indamu who is the subject of a laconic piece of "news:" 1 gu-dul_3-tug_2 / 1 ib_2-iii-gun_3-tug_2 / nig_2-AN.AN.AN.AN / lu_2 *In-da-mu*. Perhaps this "news" was related to his travels north/northwest of Ebla; other news items on the same tablet (17), (18) concern Kakmium and Hassuwan.
[661] Read from the published photo, against the editor's "nagar / *Ar-mi*[ki]" (Pomponio 2013: 90).

however, were primarily concerned with recording the disbursals or payments made by the Ebla palace, and so they do not contain detailed information about the nature of Išmah-Qardu's trip to Armi or the business he conducted there. This information is instead found on the following small memorandum.

[A7, 22; no date] (small tablet)
(1a) 1 ma-na ku$_3$:babbar / en / *Ḫu-ma-ʿzu$_2$*^{ki} /
(1b) en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / [š]u-mu-taka4 /
(1c) *wa* / i$_3$-na-sum / *Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* /
(1d) *wa* / mu-DU / en

(1a) 1 mina of silver (is the future property) of the king of Hamazi,
(1b) (which) the ruler of Armi is sending.
(1c) Additional information: he (the ruler of Armi) gave it to Išmah-Qardu (in Armi),
(1d) Additional information: he (Išmah-Qardu) brought it before the king (of Ebla).

Although the text is silent on the matter, this mina of silver could have been in the form of a prestigious object, rather than simply in raw silver. Even though, in light of other quantities attested at Ebla, one mina of silver may not seem like much, the importance of this transaction is underscored by the fact that an entire small tablet was devoted to recording it. Without doubt, the same transaction appears again on a multi-month income (mu-DU) account, slightly reformulated. The silver was thus recorded as having been brought into the Ebla treasury, even though it was only temporarily there, being ultimately destined for the ruler of Hamazi.

[A14, 54 (unpublished)][662]

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[662] Quoted in Archi 2011: 12 with the following translation "470 g. of silver of the king of Armi which the king of Hamazi has handed over and is his giving (as) a gift to [Išmah-Qardu], the representative-messenger (for) the king of Ebla." He further comments, "Armi, therefore, was capable of maintaining political relations with Hamazi, an important state east of the Tigris. According to [this] passage, which is admittedly difficult to interpret, a messenger from Armi was given the task of bringing a gift to Ebla

(31a) 1 ma-na ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / lu$_2$ / en / *Ha-ma-za-a* / šu-mu-tak$_4$
(31b) *wa* / i$_3$-na-sum-*SU$_3$* / nig$_2$-ba / *Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* / maškim-e-gi$_4$ / en / *Ib-la*^{ki}

(31a) 1 mina of silver (is the former property) of the ruler of Armi (now recorded as an income at Ebla), which is being sent to the ruler of Hamazi.
(31b) Additional information: the one who is giving him[663] (the ruler of Hamazi) the gift is Išmah-Qardu, special envoy of the king of Ebla.

While the monthly accounts make it clear that Išmah-Qardu made several trips to Armi, there is no such preserved attestation that says he also went to Hamazi. Such a possibility is not so far fetched, however, if we remember that another Eblaite official, Irʾam-Gamal, who made several trips to Armi,[664] also on two different occasions delivered a gift to Nagar,[665], one of which was a garment in characteristic Armi-style and thus possibly

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from the king of Hamazi." This interpretation seems unlikely. In Archi's view, Išmah-Qardu was a "messenger from Armi," and the silver was a gift from Hamazi to Ebla, with Armi acting as middleman. But this disagrees with what the text actually says (*Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* maškim-e-gi$_4$ en *Ib-la*^{ki}). To make Išmah-Qardu a man of Armi requires severe grammatical twisting – it seems unlikely that the "ruler of Ebla" could stand here as a dative, as per Archi's translation. The other sources related to this affair seem to suggest that Išmah-Qardu was an Ebla man, rewarded several times by the Ebla palace for his frequent trips to Armi. The linguistic affiliation of his name is also telling. A more straightforward interpretation of this event is thus the one that sees Ebla as the middleman between Armi and Hamazi – a situation, which contradicts Archi's placement of Armi on the Euphrates at Samsat. Even if it may be, owing to the ambiguous semantics of šu-mu-tak$_4$, technically possible to interpret these passages such that the silver was being sent in the opposite direction, from Hamazi to Armi, the result would be much the same for the purpose of historical geography.
[663] Literally: "His (the king of Hamazi's) giver of the gift."
[664] A15, 56 (month 6) (6-7): 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / *in* ud / DU / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} "1 cloak, one thin cloth, one colorful sash for Iram-Gamal, on the occasion when he went to Armi." Cf. also A15, 50.
[665] A15, 45 (21): 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ "1 gown, 1 fine colorful sash for the ruler of Nagar, Iram-Gamal conveyed (to Nagar); A15, 36 (38) 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *U$_3$-ra* 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$-gi / en / *Na-gar$_3$*^{ki} / *NI-zi-ma-il* / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ga-ma-al$_6$* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ "1 'colorful garment (in the fashion of) Ura, and 1 golden m.-dagger for the ruler of Nagar, *NI-zi-ma-il* and Iram-Gamal delivered (to Nagar)."

represented a gift from that ruler. Since Irʾam-Gamal's travels ranged all the way from Armi to Nagar, it seems possible that Ismah-Qardu likewise made it all the way from Armi to Hamazi.

The latest text in our dossier is likely the following one, probably 7 months later than A15, 46:

[A15, 56; month 9]
(62) 2 gu-<dul$_3$-tug$_2$> 2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-dur-Il* / *Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / 2 ma-na ša-pi nagga$_x$(AN) / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki}
(63) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *A-sa-al$_6$*^{ki}
(64) 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-du-ru$_{12}$* / *ma-za-um* / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

(62) 2 cloaks, 2 colorful sashes, for Ipṭur-Il and for Išmah-Qardu, who conveyed 2 minas and 40 shekels of tin *to* Armi.
(63) 1 thin garment for a man of Asal.
(64) 1 colorful garment for Ipṭuru (hypocoristic of Ipṭur-Il?)

The mention of tin (AN, here a shortened spelling for AN.NA = nagga) in such a context is rare and noteworthy. The ambiguity posed by šu-mu-tak$_4$ in (62), regarding whether *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} describes the destination or the origin of the tin, can be resolved by the adjacent entry (64), clearly recounting the motion of a guardian (*ma-za-*(*l*)*um*) towards Armi. This guardian was probably responsible for the protection of the conveyers of the tin, Ipṭur-Il and Išmah-Qardu. Thus it is most likely that the ancient scribe meant to indicate that they were carrying the tin to Armi (rather than to indicate a delivery of tin to Ebla, with the source being Armi).

The fact that the same man who was singled out in the small tablet [A7, 22] and in the annual account [A14, 54 (unpublished)] as responsible for conveying the silver gift

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Unfortunately, the month is broken away from both of these texts so they cannot be put into a clear chronological relation.

from Armi to Hamazi, now, a few months later in [A15, 56] (62) delivered tin to Armi, raises an important possibility. Although it is far from certain, the involvement of Išmah-Qardu – an official who is otherwise only sparsely attested – raises the possibility that the tin, which he brought to Armi, could have been obtained from Hamazi. Armi gave Hamazi a gift of silver, and the rule of reciprocity demands that Hamazi would have given something in return. This delivery of tin seems to be the only candidate for such a return gift from Hamazi to Armi preserved in the Ebla archives. There must have been some specific reason why this particular 2.66 minas of tin ended up being recorded in (62). On the other hand, it constitutes just one clue that yet further quantities of this important metal could have been flowing through Ebla on to other locations.

In all likelihood, much of the tin that is attested in the Ebla archives had its ultimate origin in Central Asia, and made its way from east to west in a long chain-link process whose full details will remain lost to us.[666] If some tin had been obtained by Ebla from the direction of Hamazi, or from Hamazi itself, some of which was then ultimately passed on to its Anatolian ally Armi, then the path followed by this tin would be a comparable, early forerunner of the Old Assyrian trade. Hamazi was certainly located somewhere in the future greater Assyria and thus not a great distance from the city of Assur itself. Hamazi could have obtained tin from the east, employing channels that were the early forerunners of those same ones employed by Assur in the early second

[666] On these interlocking trade networks see Barjamovic 2018. Note that, on the one hand, recent evidence could suggest that Anatolia was a major producer of tin in the Early Bronze Age (see Yener et al. 2015), and, on the other, there is as yet no solid evidence from texts or archaeology that Central Asia was involved in tin production prior to about 2100–2000 BC.

millennium. Although this scenario, unfortunately, must remain but a possibility, the implications are significant enough that it be seriously noted.

4.6.0 Military Affairs of Ebla and Armi

Emphasizing their close relationship, Armi and Ebla are attested to have participated in a number of military episodes together. A full study and analysis of all of these is beyond the scope of the present study, especially because many of the key passages come from still unpublished or only partially published tablets.

It seems that, on several occasions, Ebla soldiers went to Armi, where they fought alongside Armi, against Armi's enemies, who were located somewhere adjacent to Armi itself, and so probably somewhere in Anatolia. On the other hand, it seems that, very close to the end of the Ebla archives, a great number of Armi soldiers came to the area of Ebla, perhaps in anticipation of a looming conflict – the one which was ultimately to put an end to the Palace G archives.

One must be careful when analyzing the movements of people to and from Ebla, Armi, and other places. It appears that the term nig_2-kas_4 refers to the movement of a large group of individuals, but this can belong to various kinds of contexts (see below §7.1), not all of them involving a situation of active violence. Sometimes, occurrences of nig_2-kas_4 belong to a wider set of passages that allow us to attempt to more deeply reconstruct the context. A situation of violent conflict is unambiguously referred to by me_3, "battle," a rare term, but one which can sometimes co-occur with nig_2-kas_4 (see below for an example). But even in such cases we must exercise caution, because a toponym that occurs after me_3 (or nig_2-kas_4) does not necessarily have to refer to the enemy against whom the battle was fought. It is inherently possible that it can refer

merely to the area where the battle was fought, and/or, at the same time, an ally alongside whom the battle was fought. It is highly characteristic that those enemies who are seem like they really are on the receiving end of Ebla's military efforts, are otherwise only very rarely mentioned, if ever at all. This is as one would expect. On the other hand, it is less unlikely that Ebla ever battled against those states who occur very frequently in the archives, such as Armi, Mari, and Nagar. Among the dozens and dozens of attestations of these places, no cessation in ongoing peaceful relations can be detected. It is unlikely that a hostile situation could have ever arisen and then been resolved so quickly, with immediate resumption of often, intense diplomatic and mercantile relations, as if nothing ever happened.

A telling example is the apparent war which Ebla and Armi fought against a rarely mentioned place called *Ba-ga-ra*^{ki}, apparently located somewhere near Armi, and most likely in Anatolia. Unfortunately one can only indirectly study this event, because the relevant attestations come from still-unpublished sources. According to one scholar, "large sections" of the unpublished metals account TM.75.G.10088+ concern "the war against Bagara, a town that is otherwise very rarely mentioned."[667] He interprets the situation as follows: "It would appear, therefore, that this war was directed by Ebla against a peripheral region."[668] It is not made clear what vocabulary this text uses, whether there are any references to soldiers or weapons, and whether me$_3$ or nig$_2$-kas$_4$ occurs.

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[667] Archi 2011: 14, who dates TM.75.G.10088+ to "Ibbi-Zikir 3."
[668] Ibid.

We are also informed that TM.75.G.10088+ registers tin and copper to produce axes (gin$_2$/AGA$_3$) for carpenters (nagar) of Armi, a situation probably connected with the timber industry.[669] The text also mentions the travel of some Eblaite messengers to Armi, whose gifts, which they received there, turn up registered in the unpublished income (mu-DU) text A14, 80.[670] Finally, we are referred to the unpublished monthly textile account TM.75.G.2435, which contains two separate entries referring to the minister Ibbi-Zikir's return from this conflict involving Bagara, where he apparently acted as a military commander. One instance is formulated: (rev. v 3–8) *in* ud i$_3$-ti *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir mi-nu* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ba-ga-ra*, "when Ibbi-Zikir returned from the campaign of Bagara," while a second one, listed shortly thereafter, reads: (rev. vi 8–12) *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir mi-nu* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ar-mi*^{ki}, "Ibbi-Zikir returned from the campaign of Armi."[671] These almost certainly refer to the same event; Archi's instinct, that a battle with Armi would be "unexpected"[672] is probably correct. A campaign in the area of Armi, alongside Armi, against a common enemy called Bagara, could apparently be referred to either as "the Armi campaign" or "the Bagara campaign." This would be perfectly logical.

This interpretation seems to be confirmed by an occurrence on a published fragment, likely closely contemporary with the aforementioned unpublished texts. It records garments given by Ebla to *Ga-du-um*, agent of *Bar-za-ma-u$_3$* (the latter most

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[669] For a similar situation involving Mari, see above situation with reminds of the one seen with Mari above in §3.1.3.3.2.
[670] Archi op. cit.
[671] Ibid.
[672] Ibid., "Associated with the war against Bagara is the (unexpected) war against Armi."

likely the non-Semitic name of a man from Armi),[673] who is said to be "residing" in *Ba-ga-ra*^{ki}.[674] This shows that, whatever Armi and Ebla were doing in Bagara, they were doing it together. *Ga-du-um* could be identical with a man otherwise referred to as *Gu$_4$-ti*[675], who, we are informed, was attested in the aforementioned unpublished metals account TM.75.G.10088+ as travelling to Armi (*Gu$_4$-ti* DU.DU *si-in Ar-mi*^{ki}).[676]

Shortly after this encounter with *Ba-ga-ra*^{ki}, there apparently occurred yet another conflict, with Armi and Ebla going to battle against a place called Tarhatum (*Dar-ha-tum*^{ki} or *Dar-ha-ti*^{ki}, on which see further below). This is mentioned in another unpublished metals account, TM.75.G.10201, which has been interpreted as belonging to the year following TM.75.G.10088+ (above). Early in the text we once again encounter *Gu$_4$-ti,* going again back to Armi, this time accompanied by a man of Armi named *Mi-mi-a-du,* who received a gold plaque at Ebla.[677] Shortly afterwards the text (as paraphrased) records that *Mi-mi-a-du* "returned to Ebla," accompanied by "ENamu"[678] (an Eblaite?),

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[673] In light of the second element *-ma-u$_3$,* it seems unlikely that *Bar-za* is to be connected with Semitic **prs*. Names ending in *-u$_3$* are particularly characteristic for men from Armi. For a discussion of the village Barsema in the Kayseri plain and its nearby Early Bronze Age cemetary, cf. Barjamovic 2011: §4.1.0.

[674] A12, 34, obv. ix 7f: 1 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 1 aktum-tug$_2$-i 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$/ *Ga-du-um* / *maškim* / *Bar-za-ma-u$_3$* / al$_6$-tuš / *Ba-ga-ra*^{ki}. This fragment also records some funerary gifts (E$_2$×PAP) of Ibrium (obv. xi 12), suggesting a date quite close to the start of Ibbi-Zikir's tenure as "vizier." This is potentially compatible with the attribution of TM.75.G.10088+ to "Ibbi-Zikir 3" – an attribution which, however, cannot be confirmed due to the document's unpublished status.

[675] The alternation *Ga-du-um*/*Gu$_4$-ti* would roughly correspond to the one proposed for the royal son of Hassuwan attested as *A-du-um* and *A-ti* (likely also *A-tum*) for which see below §5.4.0 and cf. Pomponio 2013 (=A15-2): 18.

[676] Archi 2011: 14 (TM.75.G.10088+ rev. xv 7–10).

[677] Ibid. (TM.75.G.10201 obv. iv 4–21). For the possible Anatolian background of this name cf. Kroonen et al. 2018.

[678] Archi op. cit. (TM.75.G.10201 vi 25–31).

whereupon Mimiadu, along with *Ba-mi-a-du*, participated in an offering of olive oil, in the context of an oath in the temple of Kura, Ebla's patron deity (ŠE$_3$ DU.DU nidba$_2$ i$_3$-giš 1 gin$_2$ ku$_3$:bar nam-tar-*SU$_3$* e$_2$ ^{d}KU-*ra*). For this honor, both men were given a plate of gold.[679] Clearly, this was not a "peace agreement" in the sense of a reconciliation in the aftermath of a violent conflict. It was instead a reinforcement of preexisting, already close diplomatic ties. After this (obv. xxvii 5–9), *Gu$_4$-ti* is listed as going to Armi yet again. Another unpublished text, A14, 81 (52) and (55), informs us (as paraphrased) that Guti received a gold object "in connection" with a nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ar-mi*^{ki} "at Hardagum," and another one "at A[rmi" (i.e., *in Ar-mi*^{ki} šu-ba$_4$-ti?).[680] Although this nig$_2$-kas$_4$ was interpreted by Archi as "the expedition (against) A[rmi]," [681] this seems virtually impossible in light of the entire background situation, both as attested on the same tablet, and throughout the Ebla archives in general. If this particular "expedition" (nig$_2$-kas$_4$) was a military one, it had to be *with* Armi, not against it.

Finally, we are informed that a later section of TM.75.G.10201 records "Išbudu messenger of messenger of Mimiadu; further, NImirna, Aliluwada, and Baba$_ʾ$u, on their way back from an expedition (nig$_2$-kas$_4$) of A[rmi] against Darhadu [scil. Tarhatum],"[682] though it is not made clear exactly how this is written on the tablet, nor is it clear if they received any allotments or gifts at Ebla.

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[679] Ibid. (TM.75.G.10201 obv. viii 1-17).
[680] Ibid.
[681] Ibid.
[682] Ibid. (TM.75.G.10201 rev. iv 16–33). For these names, see again Kroonen et al. 2018.

Fortunately, several published texts also contain information bearing on these events,[683] allowing for a deeper characterization. The following passages make it completely clear that Armi and Ebla fought on the same side against Tarhatum:

[A1, 16; month 2]
(1) 4 ʾ*a*$_3$-*da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 4 aktum-tug$_2$ 4 ib$_2$-ii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *U*$_3$-*mi*-NIN.UŠ^{mušen} / *Ba-mi-a-du* / *Mi-mi-a-du* / *A-la-lu*
(2) 1 ʾ*a*$_3$-*da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-v-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 *gu*$_2$-*li-lum* ku$_3$:bar$_6$ <ku$_3$>-gi ŠA.PI-2 / *Iš*$_{11}$-*gi-bu*$_3$-*du* / *ma-za-lum*
(3) 1 ʾ*a*$_3$-*da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 2 ʾ*a*$_3$-*da-um*-tug$_2$-i 3 aktum-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iv-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 *gu*$_2$-*li-lum* ku$_3$:bar$_6$ tar-2 / *NI-mi-ir-na* / *A-la-lu-wa-du* / *Ba-ba-u*$_3$ / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / i$_3$-ti / *mi-nu* / me$_3$ / *Dar-ha-ti*^{ki}
(4) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 2 ʾ*a*$_3$-*da-*<*um*>-i / 3 aktum-tug$_2$ / 3 ib$_2$-v-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *En-na-ba-al*$_6$ / *A-wa-la-šu* / *Kun*$_3$-*a-bi*$_2$ / maškim-maškim / *Ha-ra-NI* / i$_3$-ti / *mi-nu* / nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Dar-ha-ti*^{ki}
(5) 1 gu-mug-tug$_2$ / 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / *I*$_3$-*ša-tum* / simug / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / šu-bala-ak / ku$_3$-gi

(1) 4 ʾ*a.*, 4 heavy garments, 4 fine colorful sashes, for Umi-NIN.UŠ^{mušen} [684], Bamiadu, Mimiadu, and Alalu.
(2) 1 ʾ*a.*, 1 heavy garment, one fine colorful sash, 1 bracelet of silver and gold weighing 42 shekels for Išgi-Budu, the (Eblaite) traveling bodyguard (for the men of Armi).
(3) 3 ʾ*a.*, 3 heavy garments, 3 multicolored sashes, and 1 bracelet of silver of 32 shekels for NImirna, Alaluwadu, and Baba'u, returning from the battle of Tarhatum.
(4) 1 cloak (and) 2 ʾ*a.*, 3 heavy garments, 3 colorful sashes for Enna-Baʾal, Awalašu, and Kun-Abi, the agents of Hara-NI (of Ebla), who came back from the campaign of Tarhatum.
(5) 1 cloak, 1 heavy garment, 1 sash, for Išatum, the smith, who went to Armi to exchange (silver for?) gold.

The juxtaposition of these entries makes it clear that Armi and Ebla fought on the same side against Tarhatum. At the same time, the Ebla scribe seems to have distinguished the Armi men, with their foreign names, from the Eblaites, into separate groups. Yet the

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[683] For a list and discussion of relevant passages see Bonechi 2016b: 2–5.
[684] It is interesting that an element of the non-Semitic name of a man of Armi could be represented by a logogram at Ebla. This suggests some level of understanding on the part of Ebla scribes of this man's name, or at least a shared vocabulary as far as the name of this kind of bird. For the identity, and the symbolic and ideological role of the NIN.UŠ^{mušen} at Ebla, see Bonechi 2000: 268-273.

group of men from Armi in (1) were accompanied by an Eblaite *ma-za-lum* or bodyguard in (2), which mirrors the earlier situation seen above (§4.3.0) with the *ma-za-lum* of Ebla for Armi, Enna-NI. The men of Armi in (3) – NImirna, Alaluwadu, and Baba'u – are the same ones registered in the above-quoted unpublished metals text, TM.75.G.10201 (rev. iv 16–33), where they were likewise stated to have returned from the battle of Tarhatum. That text also registered the Eblaite *ma-za-lum* Iš(gi)-Budu of (2), and his belonging to Mimiadu. We note furthermore, that the same men of Armi in (1), *Mi-mi-a-du* and *Ba-mi-a-du*, were, according to the chronological sequence of the multi-month text TM.75.G.10201, present at Ebla for the swearing of an oath *before* the battle of Tarhatum, and then they came back to Ebla after this battle was over. Finally, we can see that, just as these hostile events were unfolding, relations of an economic nature between Armi and Ebla remained ongoing, with an Eblaite (?) smith named Išatum ("fire") travelling to Armi in order to "exchange gold," whatever that precisely may have meant (did he carry gold with him, or did he hope to obtain gold in Armi?).

Although, as stated, the men in (2) and (3) occur also in TM.75.G.10201, the men in (1) occur instead in a different multi month account, where it is likewise stated that they returned from the battle of Tarhatum. A1, 16 suggests however, that these receipts took place in the same month. Unless the same exact men came back to Ebla from a battle of Tarhatum on two separate occasions, it would appear we are dealing with a situation where two different "annual" metals accounts contain information actually relating to one and the same year. This exposes the inherent danger of assuming that each metals account testifies a distinct calendar year, a fundamental presumption behind the conventional Ebla relative chronology.

[M10, 29]
obv. v 17f: 10 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / 2 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* 3 giš-pa / nig$_2$-ba / en / *Ar-mi*^{ki} /
obv. v 24f: 1 ma-na ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / *U$_3$-mi*-NIN.UŠ^{mušen} /
obv. v 29f: 4 ma-na 10 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / 50 gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / [*Ba*]-*mi-a-du*
obv. vi 2f: 3 ma-na ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / ŠA.PI gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / *Mi-mi-a-du*
obv. vi 9f: TAR ku$_3$-gi / *A-ra-lu* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

obv. v 17f: 10 minas of silver, exchanged for 2 minas of gold: 1 bracelet (and?) three scepters[?], gift of the ruler of Armi.
obv. v 24f: 1 mina of gold for one plaque for Umi-NIN.UŠ^{mušen}.
obv. v 29f: 4 minas 10 shekels of silver, exchanged for 50 shekels of gold: 1 plaque for [Ba]miadu.
obv. vi 2f: 3 minas 20 shekels of silver, exchanged for 40 shekels of gold: 1 plaque for Mimiadu (and)
obv. vi 9f: 30 shekels of gold (for one plaque) for Aralu – (all four men) of Armi…

obv. ix 12[685]: 3 ma-na ŠU$_2$.ŠA gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / ŠA.PI gin$_2$-DILMUN ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / *Mi-mi-a-du*/ *Ar-mi*^{ki} / i$_3$-ti / me$_3$ / *Dar-ha-tum*^{ki}
obv. ix 22: 50 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$-bar / *Dur*-BAD / *A-ru$_{12}$-gu$_2$* / *En-na-NI* / *A-wa-šum* / *En-na-Ba-al$_6$* / maškim / *Ha-ra-NI* / *a-de$_3$* / nig$_2$-ba-*SU$_3$* / lu$_2$ šu-ba$_4$-ti / *in* / *Ar-mi* / i$_3$-ti / *aš-da* / [*M*]*i-mi-a-du* maškim /

obv. ix 12: 3 minas 20 shekels of silver, exchanged for 40 shekels of gold: 1 plaque for Mimiadu of Armi, when he returned from the battle of Darhatum.
obv. ix 22: 50 shekels of silver (each) for Dur-Baʾal, Arruku, Enna-NI, Awašum, Enna-Baʾal, agents of Hara-NI (of Ebla), in exchange for their gifts which they received in Armi, when they went (to battle) with Mimiadu, the *officer*.

Thus, it is explicitly stated that these Eblaite men, attested also in A1, 16 (4), participated in the battle alongside a high military official (here called simply maškim, but clearly in a special usage, perhaps an abbreviation of maškim-e-gi$_4$) of Armi.

It has been possible to link other monthly accounts to their parallel passages in M10, 29.[686] One of these accounts with parallel passages is A4, 4, dated to month 1, thus

[685] Does this section represent a superfluous dittography of the section obv. vi 2f? Or did Mimiadu receive the same gift twice?

just one month before A1, 16 (month 2), where the return from the battle of Tarhatum is attested. Significantly, in A4, 4 (17), the man of Armi *A-la-lu* is attested (called *A-ra-lu* in M10, obv. vi 9f), along with two others called *A-ša-NE-ra* and *Im-mar-nu*, who are all designated as maškim-e-gi$_4$ of Armi.[687] This shows that the same man was present at Ebla both before and after the conclusion of the battle of Tarhatum. Another text that belongs here is the monthly account A4, 6, dated to month 3. There, the transaction from M10, 29 obv. ix 12ff is duplicated,[688] with *Mi-mi-a-du* receiving a 40 shekel golden plaque, and the Eblaite agents of *Ha-ra-NI* who travelled with him exchanging their gifts that they received (from Armi while abroad) with the Ebla palace for silver. This probably should not imply that these men came back from Tarhatum yet another time after A1, 16 (month 2), only that this latter transaction was saved for the tablet of the next month. It could mean that they came back to Ebla late in month 2, and so the whole process, of traveling from Ebla to Tarhatum, fighting there, and coming back to Ebla, should have lasted about two calendar months.

It seems likely that this place (spelled *Dar-ha-tum*^{ki} or *Dar-ha-ti*^{ki}) should be identified with the place called Talhatum (attested in the genitival form *Tal-ha-tim*^{ki}),

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[686] See Bonechi 2016b:

[687] 3 *a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-i 3 aktum-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-ii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* ku$_3$:bar$_6$ tar 2 / 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* ku$_3$:bar$_6$ šu$_2$.ša 2 / 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* ku$_3$:bar$_6$ 11 / *A-la-lu* / *A-ša-NE-ra* / *Im-mar-nu* / maškim-e-gi$_4$ / *Ar-mi*^{ki}.

[688] A4, 6 (7): 1 *a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 dib ŠA.PI / *Mi-mi-a-du* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} (8) 1 *gu$_2$-li* ŠA.PI 2 ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Iš-bu$_3$-du* / *ma-za-lum-SU$_3$* (9) 5 *a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 5 aktum-tug$_2$ 5 ib$_2$-ii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / 50 ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Dur*-bad / *A-ru$_{12}$-gu$_2$* / *En-na-NI* / *A-wa-šum* / *En-na-Ba-al$_6$* / 5 maškim / *ha-ra-NI* / i$_3$-ti / *as$_2$-da* / *Mi-mi-a-du* / *a-de$_3$* / nig$_2$-ba-*SU$_3$* / šu-ba$_4$-ti

mentioned in an inscription of Naram-Sin.[689] This r/l alteration also occurs with Naram-Sin's *U-li-si-im*, clearly corresponding to Ursa'um/Uršum. Naram-Sin only claims to have "gone" (*i-li$_2$-ku*) to Talhatim, but he emphasizes that it was a very distant place, "a journey upon which no king among (all) the kings had ever travelled before."[690] Significantly, Naram-Sin's journey to Talhatim takes place immediately after his boast over controlling "the land of Subartu, (extending) up until the cedar forest." This roughly corresponds with his claim in another inscription of having imposed a corvée "from the banks of the Euphrates up until Ulišum (i.e. Uršum)," after which he, once again, mentions fetching cedar from the Amanus.[691]Clearly therefore, Talhatum/Tarhatum was west of Northern Mesopotamia, beyond the Euphrates, towards Anatolia and in the direction of the mountainous forested region, possibly somewhere not too far from the Amanus. Significantly, a place called Talʾat is also attested in an Old Assyrian record

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[689] See Edzard 1977 (=RGTC 1): 156.

[690] Frayne 1993: 129– 131 (Naram-Sin 25); Gelb/Kienast 1990: 249–251 (Naram-Sin C3), obv. ii 1. The relevant section seems to provide a clear description of the east–west extension of Naram-Sin's empire, obv. i 1–ii 10: *Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU / lugal / *A-ga-de$_3$*^{ki} / *ša-bi-ir* / KIŠ.MI.X / kalam / NIM^{ki} / *ka$_3$-li$_2$-sa-ma* / *a-ti-ma* / *Ba-ra-ah-sum*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / kalam / SUBUR.*su-bar-tim*^{ki} / *a-ti-ma* / giš-tir / giš-eren / *u$_3$* / *i$_3$-nu* / *a-na* / *Tal-ha-tim*^{ki} / *i-li$_2$-ku* / KASKAL.KI / *su-a* / *šar in šar-ri$_2$* / *ma-na-ma* / *la i-li$_2$-ik* / *Na-ra-am*^{d}EN.ZU / lugal / *A-ga-de$_3$*^{ki} / *i-li$_2$-ik-ma* / ^{d}Inanna / *ma-hi-ra* / *la id-di$_3$-sum*, "Naram-Sin, the king of Akkad, the one who breaks the *weapons* of the land of Elam – all of it – as far as Marhashi; and of Subartu, as far as the cedar forest . And when he went to Talhatum – a journey upon which no king among all kings had ever travelled before, (but) where Naram-Sin king of Akkad indeed went – Ištar gave him no rival."

[691] Frayne 1993: 133 (Narām-Sîn 26), lines 2–28 = Gelb/Kienast 1990: 256 (Narāmsin C5), lines 2–28: ^{d}*Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU / *da-num*/ *Ar-ma-nam*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *en-ar* / *u$_3$* / *iš-tum-ma* / *pu-ti* / UD.KIB.NUN.ID$_2$ / *a-di-ma* / *U-li-si-im*^{ki} / *NI-SI$_{11}$* / *ša-at* / ^{d}*Da-gan* / gibil-*iš* / *i-qi$_2$-su-sum* / *u-ra-iš-ma* / giš-IL$_2$ / *Il$_3$-a-ba$_4$* / *i$_3$-li$_2$-su* / *na-si$_2$-<a>-nim* / *u$_3$* / *A-ma-nam* / *sa$_2$-tu* / giš-eren / *i-ig-mu-ur* . "Narum-Sin, the mighty one, defeated Armanu and Ebla. And from the banks of the Euphrates up until Uršum, he subjugated the peoples whom Dagan had gifted to him anew, and (now) they are carrying the corvée basket of Ilaba, his god. And then he completed (an expedition) to the Amanus, the cedar mountain."

from Kültepe-Kaneš,[692] which suggests a location near the Anatolian town of Mamma (modern Maraş) in the Taurus foothills.[693] This Anatolian location is probably to be held distinct from a similarly named placed called Talhayûm, attested in the OB Mari corpus, and which was probably instead located in Syria.[694]

Yet another battle that Ebla fought alongside Armi was the one against a place called *Na-bu$_3$*^{ki}.[695] A rich corpus attests this episode, too complicated to fully explore here. The dispute apparently concerned a "border" (ki-sur), and mention is made of "boundary stones."[696] The most relevant passage for the present purposes could help clarify why Ebla was fighting battles alongside Armi, apparently somewhere in the area of Armi itself, in the first place:

[M12, 35]
(37a) 4 ma-na 10 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / 50 gin$_2$-dilmun ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / *Sar-mi-lu*
(37b) 2 ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / šu-bala-ak / tar ku$_3$-gi / 1 dib / *Mu-ri$_2$-a* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / ŠE$_3$ / DU.DU / *si-in* / ki-sur / *Na-bu$_3$*^{ki}
(37c) ŠA.PI gin$_2$-dilmun / ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-kaskal / *Na-zu-mu* / *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu* / DU.DU / *si-in* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / di-ku$_5$ / *al$_6$* / uru^{ki}-uru^{ki} / *Ib-la*^{ki}

(37a) 4 minas 20 shekels of gold silver, exchanged for 50 shekels of gold: 1 plaque, for Sarmilu.
(37b) 2 minas of silver, in exchange for 30 shekels of gold: 1 plaque for Muria of Armi, the one who went to the border of Nabu.
(37c) 40 shekels of silver, travel provisions for Nazumu and Išmah-Damu, who went to Armi, in order to judge over the settlements of Ebla.

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[692] Barjamovic 2011: 210 with fn. 803.
[693] Ibid., fn. 802.
[694] For the Mari Talhayûm see Michel 2012.
[695] See Bonechi 2016a: 78–82.
[696] Ibid.: 78–79.

However exactly this "judgment" was related to the complicated matter of the "border of Nabu," this unique reference appears to prove that Ebla possessed "settlements" (uru^{ki}-uru^{ki}) within the land of Armi itself. These apparently became involved somehow in the matter of the "border of Nabu" – apparently, the border between Armi and Nabu. Ultimately, a military intervention was necessary, which resulted it the handing over (hi-mu-DU) of the king of Nabu, apparently to Armi.

These intimate ties could help explain why Ebla was militarily active in the region of Armi. On the other hand, it may be that many men of Armi came to the area of Ebla, in an attempt to help Ebla in its final hour (see below §8.3). It could be that a similar situation still obtained later, when Naram-Sin claimed the defeat of (the combined forces of?) "Ebla and Armanum."

5.0 Hassuwan

5.1.0 Introduciton and overview

The state of Hassuwan was situated in the Upper Euphrates region, north of Karkamiš within the borders of modern day Turkey. Whether or not the city itself was located directly by the river, Hassuwan seems to have played a key role in the political scene of the early phase of the Ebla archives – in the order that was emerging in the wake of the Enna-Dagan letter and the Abarsal Treaty – above all in the context of the Euphrates and the Euphratean trade. As already argued above (§3.1.1.4), the report of Iplus-Il's departure from the "*stone house*" of Hassuwan (*in* / e$_2$-na / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / e$_3$) coincided with the end of Mari's expansionist ambitions in the upper Euphrates region. Mari instead allowed Ebla to dominate this region, in exchange for the submissive posture adopted by

the latter. The Abarsal Treaty thus tacitly implies the consent and support of Mari for the new geopolitical situation (see above §3.2.2.1), while the Enna-Dagan letter, and related administrative texts suggest that both Ebla and Mari participated together in military actions against Abarsal and Emar.

The effects of Mari's withdrawal from Hassuwan thus seem clearly visible in the earliest monthly textile accounts from Ebla, dating to reign of Irkab-Damu and the ministry of ArruLUM. In this period, Hassuwan appears often in connection with commercial affairs. Namely, there are more lu_2-kar "merchants" from Hassuwan attested during this phase than from any other foreign settlement.

5.1.1 Hassuwan and Ursaʾum

Hassuwan was possibly singled out for mention in the Enna-Dagan letter because it represented a northernmost limit of Iplus-Il's campaign along the Euphrates. From the later historical perspective, a kind of sister city of Hassuwan (later known as Haššum) seems to have been Ursa'um (the later Uršum).[697] Gudea, the Neo-Sumerian ruler of Lagash, mentions "the city Uršu" in direct connection with a "mountain range of Ebla" as a place from which he obtained timber, which he joined to form rafts and float down the Euphrates.[698] Likewise, Naram-Sin, after having defeated the combined forces of Ebla and Armanum, states that Dagan granted to him the peoples "from the banks of the

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[697] For Uršum from the perspective of later historical sources – including those from Old Assyrian Kanesh, Old Babylonian Mari, and from Hattuša – see in detail Barjamovic 2011: 194–203.

[698] Gudea Statue B v 53–58 (see Edzard 1997: 34): uru ur-su^{ki} / hur-sağ Ib-la-ta / giš-za-ba-LUM / giš-u_3-suh_5-gal-gal / giš-tu-lu-bu-um giš-kur / ad-$še_3$ mu-ak-ak.

Euphrates until Ulišim," upon whom he imposes the corvee-basket of his god Ilaba, and after which he then completes an expedition to the Amanus to fetch cedar.[699] With little doubt, this "Ulišim" represents a form of Ursa'um/Uršum, and Naram-Sin's statement is intended to indicate control of the region from the "banks of the Euphrates" until "the foot of the mountains."[700]

From the perspective of Ebla, Ursa'um seems to have been more remotely located than Hassuwan.[701] Ursa'um is missing among the narrative ("chancery") texts dealing with the conflicts and affairs of the Euphratean region. Nor was Ursa'um a place from which lu$_2$-kar "merchants" came to Ebla. This general picture seems to fit the historical status of Ursa'um as a state most probably located in the hilly region around Gaziantep. In early texts, Ursa'um is only mentioned rarely. Ebla's relationship with Ursa'um seems to have been more of a political and diplomatic than a commercial one. Above all, Ebla's relations with Ursa'um became intense in the latest period, as part of a general

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[699] Frayne 1993: 133 (Narām-Sîn 26), lines 2–28 = Gelb/Kienast 1990: 256 (Narāmsin C5), lines 2–28: ^{d}*Na-ra-am-*^{d}EN.ZU / *da-num*/ *Ar-ma-nam*^{ki} / *u$_3$* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *en-ar* / *u$_3$* / *iš-tum-ma* / *pu-ti* / UD.KIB.NUN.ID$_2$ / *a-di-ma* / *U-li-si-im*^{ki} / *NI-SI$_{11}$* / *ša-at* / ^{d}*Da-gan* / gibil-*iš* / *i-qi$_2$-su-sum* / *u-ra-iš-ma* / giš-IL$_2$ / *Il$_3$-a-ba$_4$* / *i$_3$-li$_2$-su* / *na-si$_2$-<a>-nim* / *u$_3$* / *A-ma-nam* / *sa$_2$-tu* / giš-eren / *i-ig-mu-ur* .

[700] It would appear, therefore, that Naram-Sin only claimed the defeat of the forces of Armanum, but his territorial control did not extend into the territory of Armanum itself. If Armanum was the same as Armi and located in Cilicia, this would have been located further west beyond Uršum, and would certainly have been much harder for him to control. For a comparable situation from late Palace G times, involving the presence of large numbers of soldiers from Armi in the Ebla countryside, apparently assisting Ebla against a looming threat, see below §8.3.

[701] Cf. Archi 2008a: 88, "Urša'um is not mentioned in the chancery documents collected in ARET 13. We have to deduce, therefore, that the territory of Urša'um lay beyond the area reached by the kings of Mari in the valley of the Euphrates and not in the immediate sphere of Ebla."

intensification of Ebla's foreign relations in the period immediately prior to the final collapse.

Hassuwan, in contrast, seems to have played an important role in the context of the Euphrates trade, demonstrated by, on the one hand, the mention in the Enna-Dagan letter,[702] and on the other, by the great number of Hassuwan merchants who appear in texts of the ArruLUM period.

That both Hassuwan and Ursa'um lay in the zone west of the Euphrates where Anatolia proper interfaced with Syria is aptly demonstrated both by Old Assyrian caravan records,[703] and the fact that both cities were, centuries later, the targets of expansionistic activities by the first great Hittite king, Hattušili I.[704]

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[702] Cf. Archi 2008: 88, "From the Mari archives of the 18th century it can be seen that the territory of Ḫaššum/Ḫassuwan had access to the Euphrates. This is confirmed by a letter that Enna-Dagan…"

[703] For Haššum in the Old Assyrian texts and its location vis-à-vis Mamma in relation to the Mari evidence, cf. Barjamovic 2011: 201–202.

[704] See Miller 2001; Klengel 1992: 81–82: "After having campaigned in Anatolia, Hattushili went 'in the following year' (=year 2?) to Syria. The Hittite army marched to Urshu/Warshuwa, from there to Igakalish/Ikakali and Tishhiniya/Tashhiniya in the region of the upper Euphrates. On the return to Anatolia the land(!) of Urshu was devastated … It is still uncertain whether the literary composition narrating the siege of Urshu and pointing to a support given by Halab to the besieged city is to be connected with this campaign or not. The identification of Alalha as Alalakh is now generally accepted, though not made for certain. *If so, Hattushili had entered Syria from the Northwest, i.e., the Amanus region* (emphasis mine)… his next military controversy with Syrian states came about three years later. He destroyed Zarunti/Zaruna and marched to Hashuwa (Marash?) where he met with troops also from Halab. A battle took place in the region of Mount Adalur. Hattushili was, as it seems, victorious; he conquered Hashuwa and took a statue of the weather-god of Halab as booty. It is possible that this battle with troops from Hashu(wa) and Halab is reflected in some other fragments of texts pertaining to Syria, especially to Halab … Furthermore … *the 'men' of Hashu, Ebla and Emar appear in these fragmentary texts* (emphasis mine)…".

Therefore, we can be certain that the prominent commercial role of Hassuwan under Irkab-Damu is to be explained by its connection with Anatolian at the Euphratean interface. This Anatolian connection, however, was a different one than that which Ebla obtained via Armi. Strong proof for this lies in the cultural affiliation of Hassuwan. Its personal names are of the same Semitic Syrian type known for Ebla and the surrounding area. Men from Hassuwan, as will be shown below, also participated in religious life involving Syrian deities, such as Rašap and Išhara. Men from Armi, instead, had names that seem to find their closest analogues among the Indo-European Anatolian family of languages,[705] and they are not listed in the Ebla texts in connection with Syrian deities.

This ethnic discrepancy cannot be solved simply by placing Armi further upstream from Hassuwan at Samsat, above all because the Ebla attestations which involve both Hassuwan and Armi demonstrate that Ebla was a diplomatic and political middleman between the two powers, a state of affairs which would be difficult to explain if it were actually Hassuwan which was located in the middle between Armi and Ebla. How could Armi, moreover, have had such a special and particular relationship with Ebla, if it lay in precisely the same direction as Hassuwan, only further upstream?

As far as Anatolia is concerned, Hassuwan and Ursa'um both straddled, more or less, the same Upper Euphratean "entrance" into Anatolia as the one that the Old Assyrian merchants used when approaching from the Tigris to the east. The Assyrians perhaps crossed the Euphrates at Uršu an, further upstream, at Zalpa and Hahhum, the

[705] See Kroonen et al. 2018; Bonechi 1991a; Bonechi 1990a.

latter to be identified with the mound of Samsat,[706] (which is where Archi wishes to place Armi).[707]

A location of Armi to the northwest of Ebla connects it, instead, with a different route into Anatolia, one which, from the perspective of Ebla, avoids the Euphrates altogether, proceeding instead through the Amuq and across the Amanus mountain passes into Cilicia.[708] Ebla is in fact still mentioned in a few Old Assyrian records, in a context which seems to indicate that just such an alternate, Syrian trade route into Anatolia was still active and represented a source of competition for the Assyrians,[709] who themselves approached from the east and crossed the Euphrates in the vicinity of Uršum and Hahhum.[710]

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[706] On the identification of Hahhum with Samsat see in detail Barjamovic 2011: 102-105; 214-219; 403.
[707] Archi 2011: 29f.
[708] The narrow paths leading from the Amuq Valley through the Amanus mountains and into Cilicia were studied, in the context of the Middle Bronze Age, by Schild 2016, using geographic information system mapping technology (GIS) and least-cost path analysis. For a map showing such digitally modelled paths, see Ibid.: 34. These paths, or similar ones, were almost certainly already actively exploited during the 3rd millennium B.C.E.
[709] See Barjamovic 2018 and Barjamovic 2011: 8, "A comparable case may be detected in the absence of any Assyrian traders in the region of Cilicia. This was a wealthy area and an important crossroad, yet not a single city in the region is attested in relation to Assyrian trade activities… there reason to assume that Cilicia, like Syria, may have been located outside the Assyrian orbit of trade. City-states such as Ebla, Emar or Aleppo may have held concessions in the region. The letter *ATHE* 32 refers to the arrival of traders from the Syrian city of Ebla, who are said to have gone to the palace of an Anatolian city to procure copper: 'Many Eblaites have come here, a lot of copper has been paid out to them in the palace, which they converted at the rate of 2 1/3 minas of (copper) per (shekel) of checked silver. Within 10 days they will use up their copper. I will then buy silver and have it sent to you.' Although a single example prevents firm conclusions, this letter calls attention to the way our sources only portray the Assyrian part of a much larger commercial system."
[710] Barjamovic 2008.

Other foreign places with which Hassuwan is listed during the ArruLUM period at Ebla include: *NI-ra-ar*^{ki} (located very close to Ebla, see below §6.1.2); *I-bu$_{16}$-bu*^{ki} (probably located in the far north, as it apparently had access to substantial quantities of copper and silver),[711] *Ma-nu-wa-at*^{ki} (on the Euphrates between Ebla and Mari, see above §3.3.0) and *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki} (probably merely a variant spelling of *Ma-nu-wa-at*^{ki});[712] DAR.AB$_2$^{ki} (likely to the north of Ebla), and *A-bar-sal$_4$*^{ki} (which by this time probably was merely a minor city on the map, a place possessed of no political power). These locations seem to fit with Hassuwan's probable location near the Euphrates at the Syro-Anatolian interface. Also mentioned in association with Hassuwan is the important kingdom of *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}, which should be located to the west of Ebla, between Ebla and Armi (see below §6.0). The association of Hassuwan at Ebla with Armi has already been mentioned; finally and quite importantly, there are mentions of Hassuwan in connection with the great power of Mari to the south.

5.2.0 Merchants of Hassuwan

In this first simple example, an anonymous man of Hassuwan receives a garment at Ebla in order to travel to Armi. There occurs additionally an anonymous merchant of Hassuwan, and a named merchant, whom other texts reveal to have been from Hassuwan:

[A15, 38; month 12]
(11) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / DU / *Ar-mi*^{ki}
(17) 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(60) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / lu$_2$-kar

[711] Archi 2017: 167.
[712] See above §3.3.0.

(11) 1 cloak for (a man from) Hassuwan who is going to Armi.
(17) 1 colorful sash for a merchant of Hassuwan.
(60) 1 cloak for Rubu-Malik, merchant (of Hassuwan).

If Armi were on the Euphrates at Samsat then it would be hard to imagine why a man from Hassuwan would go all the way to Ebla, receive an allotment there, and then turn around and bypass the area around his own homeland on his way back upstream, in order to travel to Armi.

The mention of an anonymous merchant (lu$_2$-kar) of Hassuwan just a few entries later in (17) is conspicuous. As for the merchant *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* of (60) and his belonging to Hassuwan, see the discussion below of A15, 13. The anonymous traveller of Hassuwan in (11) could thus quite likely have been a lu$_2$-kar himself as well (even if the scribe did not indicate this), and he possibly likewise undertook his journey to Armi via Ebla likewise for reasons of a commercial nature.

Our texts are mostly silent about what sorts of goods these merchants were carrying, what it was they sought in return, how their trade was organized, and along what lines. We can in this instance deduce, however, that since it was Ebla who provided the Hassuwan man with an allotment on the occasion of his journey to Armi, Ebla must have, one way or the other, been able to profit from this arrangement, essentially in the role of a middleman – a commercial node through which traffic passed.

[A15, 11; month XI]
(45) [1$^?$ g]u-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ [x] x-[ ] / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} / DU / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}
(59) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *I-si-rum$_2$* / lu$_2$-kar

(45) 1$^?$ cloak and [...] for (1$^?$) merchant of Hassuwan who was going to Mari.
(59) (1 garment) for Yišrum, the merchant (of Hassuwan).

In this instance, there can be no doubt of the commercial nature of the journey, since the traveller from Hassuwan is explicitly identified as a merchant. While the city of Ebla

does, in a strictly geographical sense, indeed represent a detour away from the Euphrates for a traveller from Hassuwan to Mari, this journey seems to reflect the new political situation, post-Abarsal treaty (§3.2.0). Mari had already under Iplus-Il began to withdraw from the upper Euphrates region – represented in the Enna-Dagan letter by Hassuwan itself – and Ebla was now in control of the upper Euphrates around Karkamiš. A Hassuwan trader travelling downstream to Mari would thus have to pass through stretches of the river, which were under Eblaite control. A detour to Ebla is thus understandable in this context.

As for the merchant Yišrum[713] mentioned some sections later in (59), although his origin is not indicated here, since his name was not a common one at all, one can surmise with confidence that he was probably the same man identified in other texts of this period as being from Hassuwan (see below).

Whatever the exact reason the Hassuwan trader made his journey and received an allotment at Ebla before continuing on to Mari, this entry shows that Ebla at this time exercised influence over the traffic proceeding downstream from the Upper Euphrates to Mari.

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[713] This name, meaning something like "Righteous" (verbal adjective from the same root as Akkadian *ešērum*) is not only appropriate for a merchant, but carries some interesting cultural implications. Quite likely the name refers to the male sun god Šamaš, who was patron of travellers and merchants; c.f. the Mari personal name *I-ku-šar* (probably for Ikun-Išar) which forms a pair with the name *I-ku-*^{d}Utu. The male sun god was very much a Mesopotamian deity; at Ebla, the sun was female and personal names containing the element ^{d}Utu belong to females and contain feminine verbal forms. Thus we might see behind the name Yišrum the cultural influence of Mari among the mercantile class at Hassuwan.

Perhaps Yišrum made a detour away from the Euphrates also to obtain some goods at Ebla, which he could trade at Mari. Or perhaps he had some sort of financial, political, or social obligation he needed to fulfill at Ebla. The sense that Ebla was to some degree in control of the situation as far as the Euphrates trade traffic is concerned can likewise be gleaned from the Abarsal treaty.

The following passages demonstrate nicely on the one hand the quantity of Hassuwan traders that could be present at Ebla during a single month, and on the other, the link between traders and officials or affairs of a social or political nature:

[A15, 40; no month]
(12) 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / 1 nig$_2$-la$_2$-gaba / *Si-ig-da-mu* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(17) 1 gu-dul$_3^!$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Za-zu$_2$* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(18) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *I-si-rum$_2$* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(38) 1 tug$_2$-gun$_3$ *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *In-gar$_3$* / ne-di / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(39) 5 sal-tug$_2$ / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / nig$_2$-ba / ^{d}A.AMA-*ra* ^{d}*Ra-sa-ap*
(65) 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$ / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}/ kaskal / e$_3$ / ^{d}*'A$_3$-da*
(83)[1 xxx 1 i]b$_2$-iii-[g]un$_3$-tug$_2$ / *I$^?$-ba-zi-nu* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(12) 1 A. and one chestband for *Si-ig*-Damu of Hassuwan;
(17) 1 cloak and 1 colorful sash for Zazu of Hassuwan;
(18) 1 fine colorful sash for Yišrum of Hassuwan;
(38) 1 colorful garment (in the fashion) of Armi for Inkar, entertainer of Hassuwan;
(39) 5 thin garments for (5) merchants of Hassuwan (on the occasion when) they made a gift to Išhara (and?/of?) Rašap;
(65) 1 thin garment and 1 colorful sash for a merchant of Hassuwan (on the occasion when) he went forth on a pilgrimage to (the temple of) Haddad;
(83) [1 garment] and 1 colorful sash for *I$^?$-ba-zi-nu* of Hassuwan.

We see that the five anonymous traders of (39) were preceded by the ne-di "entertainer" Inkar of (38),[714] who was not a mere showman but probably also a relatively high-ranking diplomatic official in the service of the ruler of Hassuwan. The "entertainer" and

[714] On the ne-di "entertainers" at Ebla see Catagnoti 1989.

the five merchants all presented a "gift" (nig$_2$-ba) to the deities Išhara and Rašap (at Ebla itself?), an action of both religious and sociopolitical significance. One can likely see a positive diplomatic connotation behind the Hassuwan entertainer's reception of a prestigious "colorful garment (in the fashion) of Armi" at Ebla.[715] It certainly implies amicable relations between all three powers, if it was seen as appropriate and prestigious for a Hassuwan entertainer to receive such an Armi-style garment at Ebla on a religious occasion.

Comparably, another anonymous Hassuwan merchant in (65) receives a textile allotment on the occasion when he sets out on a journey (kaskal) to the temple of Haddad, probably located at Aleppo.[716] Certainly this was an act not only of religious, but also of social and economic significance, even if we do not know the full context. Ebla's controlling role, as provider of the textile, and thus to some degree as enabler/facilitator of the religious pilgrimage itself, is once again to be emphasized.

Apparently the starting point of the journey was Ebla itself, where the merchant received the garments before setting off, and quite possibly he even returned to Ebla after the journey was complete. It seems less likely that he only received his allotment from Ebla after all was said and done; his new clothes were probably precisely to be worn on the occasion of the visit to the temple. In any event, all this could imply, rather than a merely itinerant presence, a long-term or semi-permanent residence at Ebla on the part of the Hassuwan merchant.

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[715] On this type of garment see above §4.2.5.2.
[716] This cultural connection foreshadows the fact that, centuries later, Hattushili of Hatti was able to plunder an image of the stormgod of Aleppo (i.e., Hadda/Adad) from the later Haššuwa (see Miller 2001).

Centuries later, at Old Babylonian Ur under the dynasty of Larsa, we know that merchants, in addition to paying a tithe (zag-10), presented votive offerings (a-ru-a) to the goddess Ningal on the occasion of their return from a successful business trip to Tilmun.[717] Such offerings were in part conditioned by the socioeconomic position of the temple institution, and probably were also a genuine expression of gratitude for the goddess's protection on the dangerous seaborne journey. The context of the "gifts" (nig$_2$-ba) of (39) by foreign merchants at Ebla could have been quite comparable. This underscores not only the political role of Ebla, but also the religious and cultural prestige Ebla carried among neighboring kingdoms.

Since the *I-si-rum$_2$* of (18) is almost certainly the same merchant cited above in [A15, 11 (59)], it follows that the man Zazu mentioned immediately alongside him in (17) was likewise a merchant himself. Possibly therefore, the Hassuwan men without titles of (12) and (83), too were merchants. We observe that the Ebla scribes often felt it unnecessary to indicate the professional designations of men who were known to them by name, whereas the anonymous men of (39) had to be referred to by their professional title.

[A15, 13; month 2]
(5) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / maškim *A-ʾa$_3$-lu*
(12) 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *A-ti* / dumu-nita en / *I-si-rum$_2$* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(22) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / šaga$_x$(LU$_2$×EŠ$_2$) / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(56) 2 *gu-zi-tum* 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *En-a-mi-ir* / maškim-*SU$_3$* / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

(5) 1 robe and 1 colorful sash for ENbu-Malik of Hassuwan, the agent of Aʾalu.
(12) 2 fine colorful sashes (one each) for Ati, son of the ruler (of Hassuwan) (and for) Yišrum (merchant) of Hassuwan.
(22) 1 thin garment for a prisoner (who is from) Hassuwan.

[717] Oppenheim 1954: 7.

(56) 2 *g.* and 2 fine colorful sashes for Enamir and his agent, of Hassuwan.

In (12) we encounter the Hassuwan merchant Yišrum once again, this time in what appears to be a high-level political context, receiving a fine colorful sash alongside one of the sons of the ruler of Hassuwan, here called *A-ti*. This juxtaposition again demonstrates the important position occupied by merchants (and mercantile trade in general) in the context of international relations.

The name Rubu-Malik in (5) reappears from [A15, 38] where he was identified as a lu_2-kar, but without specified origin. Since the only other lu_2-kar of that text was an anonymous one of Hassuwan, and we have here in this text the same name Rubu-Malik as from Hassuwan (without professional title), it is quite likely that in both [A15, 38] and in [A15, 13] we are dealing with the same man, in both cases a merchant from Hassuwan. We see thus a consistent pattern by which a scribe usually uses only two out the three possible identifying elements for a foreign individual (name, geographic origin, or profession), only exceptionally providing all three.

In (56), Enamir and his anonymous agent are likely to be merchants as well, not only because they receive the same kind of textile allotments, but also because, in two other texts, Enamir and Rubu-Malik receive textiles together as part of the same group.[718]

As for the prisoner of Hassuwan who is assigned a thin cloth in (22), there is no reason to see behind his presence evidence of high-level political conflicts or "war" between Ebla and Hassuwan, especially when all other entries on the very same tablet indicate peaceful relations (merchants, presence of a royal son). If there was a jail at Ebla

[718] A15, 37 (21) and 47 (5).

then surely some native Eblaites could also have found themselves there. In all likelihood the single prisoner was a person of Hassuwan who got into trouble on his own behalf. He may very well have been, like many or most of the Hassuwan men appearing in the Ebla texts, a merchant, who was either caught cheating or breaking some codes of conduct. Or, perhaps he could have committed a crime somewhere near his own hometown of Hassuwan, but was captured after having tried to seeking refuge near Ebla, where he now awaited extradition. We cannot decide which of these many possibilities is most likely, but there remains no reason why a Hassuwan prisoner at Ebla necessarily implies a state of open political conflict with Hassuwan.

A Hassuwan prisoner at Ebla could potentially imply not conflict but cooperation between the two states. The rulers of Ebla, Hassuwan, and other various Early Syrian polities could not exercise absolute and constant control over all their many officials and dependents, especially when these were travelling abroad. To maintain power and control, it would have been in the best interest of the various rulers to cooperate with one another in policing each other's respective citizenry. Thus behind the presence of foreign prisoners at Ebla, we may see not interstate conflict at the highest level, but instead the efforts of the community of international elites to each maintain their high-status by controlling the movement and actions of their citizens. Our palace-centered documentation often gives the impression that individuals simply "belonged" to the palaces of their home cities, but in reality, the relationship between individuals and state institutions was clearly complex and multifaceted. These observations could prove

particularly relevant for understanding the texts describing alleged conflicts between Ebla and Mari involving merchants.[719]

5.2.1 Merchants and the ruler of Hassuwan

[A15, 31; month 6]
(18) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / E$_2$.NE / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(19) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / [*Za*$^{?}$]-*ar*^{ki}
(20) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / kid$_2$-sag / ka$_2$ / en / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(106) 3 sal-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$ / šaga$_x$(LU$_2$×EŠ$_5$) / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(18) 1 thin cloth for E$_2$.NE, merchant of Hassuwan.
(19) 1 thin cloth for a man of [Za]ar.
(20) 1 thin cloth for a gatekeeper of the "gate" of the ruler of Hassuwan.
(106) 3 thin cloths and 3 colorful sashes for (3) prisoners of Hassuwan.

Here we see in (20) striking evidence for the presence of a "gate of the ruler of Hassuwan" at Ebla. It seems inherently unlikely that a "gatekeeper" (kid$_2$-sag) would appear receiving a garment in a text written someplace far away from the "gate" itself for which he was responsible. A gatekeeper certainly does not rank among the various commonly encountered travelling officials (maškim, u$_5$, *ma-za-*(*l*)*um*, etc.), but is instead a stationary official. And since generally the other "gatekeepers" referred to in the Ebla texts are workers in the service of the Ebla king or the palace elite,[720] it may well be that the man in question was actually an Eblaite, charged by the Ebla administration with the duty of guarding the "gate of the ruler of Hassuwan." Either way, it is unlikely that this official would be located elsewhere than the gate itself, which he was responsible for guarding.

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[719] Eg. the text A13, 15, on which see Sallaberger 2008.
[720] See Bonechi 2012 on the gatekeepers at Ebla.

So why was there a gate of the ruler of Hassuwan at Ebla? It is hard to be sure, especially since the reference seems to be unique.[721] A "gate" in the ancient near east could generally be a reference to actual physical gate (of a city or of a major building such as a palace, temple, or private household), or it could *pars pro toto* refer to an entire "district" within a city connected to such a gate. Such a gate/district could also exist as a sort of administrative grouping, and need not necessarily be a physically separate and self-contained part of a city.

Thus it is very tempting along these lines to connect the gate/district of the ruler of Hassuwan with the strikingly high number of Hassuwan merchants present at Ebla at this same time. One could see here a reference to a settlement of Hassuwan merchants living at Ebla, much like the Old Assyrian ports in Anatolia.[722] That such a district was referred to as "the district of the ruler of Hassuwan" would then imply a close connection between the Hassuwan merchants and the regime of Hassuwan itself, as was already implied by the passage above where a merchant appears along with a royal son [A15, 13 (12)]. It can be no coincidence, then, that a Hassuwan merchant is mentioned (18) immediately alongside the gate (20). As for the man of [x]-*ar*^{ki} mentioned in (19), one could perhaps restore either *Za-ar*^{ki} or *Za-ʾa$_3$-ar*^{ki}, in either case a Euphratean location

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[721] The reference to the gate of the ruler of a foreign GN is to my knowledge unique. More commonly attested is, on the one had "the gate of PN" and on the other, "the gate of GN." For a list of such attestations see Waetzoldt 2004: 334-336. As far as the PNs attested in connection with gates, they seem mostly to belong to the Eblaite elite, while the larger part of the GNs refer to villages or towns that were directly a part of the Ebla kingdom. In such cases it is difficult to decide whether the gates or districts in question were located at Ebla itself or in its outskirts. The other mentions of a "gate of (foreign) GN" (including such as *NI-la-ar*^{ki}, *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}, or *Ma-nu-wa-at*^{ki}) must each be studied individually.

[722] For discussion of the port of the Assyrians at Kanesh and its gate, cf. Michel 2014.

listed in the Abarsal treaty as belonging to the ruler of Ebla.[723] And so if the restoration is correct, the man in question could have been someone who had some connection with the Euphratean trade.

5.2.3 Mercantile Diplomacy: Hassuwan and Mari

[A15, 19; month 1]
(34) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / e-gi$_4$-maškim / dumu-nita / en / *Ha-zu-wa-an* / e$_{11}$ / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki}
(58) 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-babbar *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *I-ku-Il*
(59) 1 gada-tug$_2$ / IGI.NITA / *Ar-ru$_{12}$-LUM*

(34) 1 robe and 1 colorful sash for the special envoy, the son of the ruler of Hassuwan, who was going up <with> (a man of) Mari (to Hassuwan).
(58) 1 A. and 1 white sash in the fashion of Mari for Ikun-Il (of Mari).
(59) 1 linen cloth for an ass (belonging to) ArruLUM (to be used on the trip to Hassuwan).

The e-gi$_4$ maškim "special envoys" are encountered at Ebla in association with high-level interstate relations. As is often the case, it is not entirely clear whether "e-gi$_4$-maskim (dumu-nita en Hassuwan)" represents a genitival relationship, or an apposition. In the latter case, the "special envoy" and the son of the ruler could be understood as one and the same man. This is a more appealing possibility, above all because several different royal sons of Hassuwan are recorded to have been at Ebla on more than one occasion. At any rate, this episode again emphasizes the power Ebla held at this point in time, especially over traffic along the Euphrates. The trip featured Ebla as the starting

[723] If the restoration is correct, this *Za-ar*^{ki} could be the same *Za-*$^{\circ}$*a$_3$-ar*^{ki} listed among the territories possessed by the Ebla king in the Abarsal treaty (for Bonechi 1993: 330, *Za-ar*^{ki} and *Za-*$^{\circ}$*a$_3$-ar*^{ki} were distinct places).

point, and it took place apparently under Eblaite auspices, with Ebla providing allotments to Hassuwan and Mari alike.

Thus we again see Ebla acting as a middleman between Mari and Hassuwan, this time in a diplomatic context. It is highly unlikely that this passage refers to a disbursal made on the occasion of a return to Ebla from Mari.[724] In (34), a preposition must be supplied between the verb e_{11} "to go up, to ascend" and *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$. On the basis of a close parallel passage,[725] the missing preposition is probably *as*$_2$*-ti* "together with," and so *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ refers here to one or more men from that place.

Strikingly, the aforementioned parallel passage is immediately followed[726] by the expenditure of a linen cloth for a donkey of ArruLUM – clearly used on the trip – which is exactly parallel to our present text's (59). Thus Ikun-Il of (58) was precisely the man (or one of the men) referred to by the "*Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$" of (34). On the basis of his personal name, Ikun-Il was certainly a man from Mari (with characteristic use of the KU sign), and another passage A15, 45 (31) explicitly defines him as such. He could have been the same *I-ku-il* attested in the Early Ebla–Mari dossier, where he is instead recorded as a "smith" (simug).[727] On this occasion, the donkey (IGI.NITA) was thus apparently meant for

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[724] As translated in Pomponio 2008 (=A15-1): 185, "Tessili (1; 1) per il commissario-e. del figlio del re di [Hassuwan], che sale da [Mari]."

[725] A15, 5 (22): 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI-NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / e_{11} / *aš*$_2$*-ti* / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ "(a set of garments) for (a man from) Armi, who was going up (to Armi) with (a man/some men from) Mari."

[726] A15, 5: (23) 1 gada$_2$-tug$_2$ / IGI.NITA / *Ar-ru*$_{12}$*-LUM* If the passages in question had referred to a return to Ebla rather than a departure, it would make no sense at all to include an expenditure for a cloth for a donkey.

[727] Archi 1981: Text 8 rev. viii 6; Text 9 rev i 3; rev ii 3.

Ikun-Il of Mari's use on the trip to Hassuwan given its occurrence immediately alongside him, in (59).

The totals in A15, 19 (100) confirm that we are not dealing with a situation where the scribe wrote *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki} in the wrong case; Ikun-Il of Mari indeed received, from the Ebla administration, a white sash in the style of his own home city, on the occasion when he was escorted by a special envoy of Hassuwan – possibly a royal son – "up" (e$_{11}$) to Hassuwan itself. Did the Eblaites have some interest in making sure that Ikun-Il would be able to properly portray himself as a representative of Mari on this visit to Hassuwan? And this garment was not just in the Mari fashion but was a white one – a quality conspicuous for its rarity.[728]

One more datum might help clarify the nature of this trip:

[A4, 17; month 9]
(51) 1 dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 nig$_2$-la$_2$-sag 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-babbar *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki} / *I-ku-i*$_3$*-lum* / *Ma-ri*$_2$^{ki} / lu$_2$-kar

(79) 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Na-ma-da-mu* / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(106) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Za-a-mi* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(51) 1 cloak, 1 A., 1 chestband, and 1 white sash in the fashion of Mari for Ikun-Ilum of Mari, the merchant.
(79) 1 thin cloth, 1 colorful sash for Nam-Damu, merchant of Hassuwan.
(106) 1 fine colorful sash for *Za-a-mi*, (royal son) of Hassuwan.

Almost certainly, the above name *I-ku-i*$_3$*-lum* represents merely a variant of *I-ku-il*, and in both cases we are dealing with one and the same man, here specified as a merchant. He even received in this text (likewise dating to the ArruLUM period) the same "white sash

[728] For another occurrence of ib$_2$-iii-babbar in the context of the olive oil trade between Ebla and Mari, see above §3.1.3.3.1 on A7, 11.

in the fashion of Mari" as when he travelled with the "special envoy, the son of the king of Hassuwan" to Hassuwan in [A15, 19]. Thus the background of that journey may indeed have been not only diplomatic (as implied by the presence of the e-gi$_4$-maškim official) but commercial as well.

In (106) we encounter *Za-a-mi*, designated here simply as "of Hassuwan." *Za-a-mi* was one of the sons of the king of Hassuwan.[729] Another named royal son, *A-ti*, we have already encountered above, alongside Yišrum the merchant, A15, 13 (12). Thus it is could be possible that this *Za-a-mi*[730] was the same anonymous "special envoy, son of the king of Hassuwan" who journeyed with Ikun-Ilum up to Hassuwan.

Also during this same month a merchant of Hassuwan named Naʾam-Damu received a textile allotment at Ebla, although our text does not say if he had any relation to the merchant of Mari. In another month, Naʾam-Damu received textiles together with our previously discussed merchant Rubu-malik, and another man named *Ru$_{12}$-zi-ma-lik*, himself likely a merchant as well.[731] The present text also features one more lu$_2$-kar, of *NI-ra-ar*^{ki,}, a very close neighbor of Ebla, in (116).

5.3.0 The Ruler of Hassuwan at Ebla

Quite possibly, the ruler of Hassuwan himself is also attested at Ebla, under the name *A-da-si-in*, though without his title ever being explicitly recorded. This seems to be

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[729] A15, 5 (6): *Za-a-mi* dumu-nita en *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}.

[730] An apparent variant of this name is written *Za-a-bi$_2$*. The interchange *b/m* could perhaps reflect an underlying labiodental fricative. Pomponio 2013: 365 read the variant of *Za-a-ne*, but an alternation n/m seems more difficult to explain.

[731] A15, 22 (16): 3 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 3 aktum-tug$_2$ 3 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$/ *Na-am$_6$-da-mu* / *EN-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *Ru$_{12}$-zi-da-mu*

the case because a man called *A-da-si-in*, said in one text to be from Hassuwan, is recorded several times as the father of *A-ti*, quite likely one and the same man as "*A-ti* dumu-nita en ... *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}" attested in (12) A15, 13. *A-da-si-in* occurs furthermore as the father of rather large groups of anonymous sons, in monthly accounts that are otherwise characterized by diplomatic affairs involving Hassuwan:

[A15, 18; month 7]
(11) 1 nig$_2$-la-sag / *A-ti* / lu$_2$ *A-da-si-in*
One turban for *A-ti*, (son)[732] of *A-da-si-in*.

[A15, 30; no month]
(32) 1 gu-dul$_3^!$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / *A-ti* / lu$_2$ *A-da-si-in*
(32) 1 cloak, one thin cloth, one colorful sash for *A-ti*, (son) of *A-da-si-in*.

[A15, 42; month 1, 2, 3, 4$^?$]
(94) 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Zi-ki-ra-a-bu$_3$* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(95) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / […]
(96) [1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$] / *Na-ma-Da-m*[*u*]
(97) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / (blank case) / lu$_2$ *A-da-si-in*
(141) 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$-bar$_6$ / dumu-nita / *A-da-si-in*

(94) 2 fine colorful sashes for Zikir-Abu of Hassuwan.
(95) 1 fine colorful sash for [… (of Hassuwan)].
(96) [1 fine colorful sash] for Na$^{\text{ʾ}}$am-Damu (merchant of Hassuwan).
(97) 1 fine colorful sash for (blank)[733] (son) of *A-da-si-in*.
(141) 1 straight dagger of silver for a son of *A-da-si-in*.

[A15, 23; month III]
(45) 7 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-sa$_6$ / dumu-nita / *A-da-si-in*
(45) 7 colorful sashes for (7) sons of *A-da-si-in*.

[A15, 43; month VI]
(57) 6 *gu-zi-tum* 4 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 2 sal-tug$_2$ 7 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / dumu-nita dumu-nita / *A-da-si-in*

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[732] At Ebla, lu$_2$ (standing for a Semitic pronoun equivalent to Akkadian *ša*) often (but not always) indicates filial affiliation. It is unlikely that a royal son (dumu-nita en) would be "subordinated" in this way to anyone other than his father the ruler.
[733] Apparently, the scribe intended to specify which son of *A-da-si-in* received the textile, but later either forgot, or was unable to do so.

(57) 6 *g.*, 4 NI.NI, 1 A., 2 thin cloths, 7 colorful sashes for (10?)[734] sons of *A-da-si-in*.

That so many anonymous sons of *A-da-si-in* received allotments certainly implies that *A-da-si-in* himself was a person of quite high status. Let us now revisit a tablet, already quoted from above, with some additional passages of relevance (only the material not already quoted before is translated):

[A15, 13; month 2]

(5) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / maškim *A-ʾa$_3$-lu*
(6) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Du-bi$_2$-ab* / lu$_2$ *A-da-si-in*
(12) 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *A-ti* / dumu-nita en / *I-si-rum$_2$* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(50) 6 *gu-zi-tum* / dumu-nita dumu-nita tur / en
(51) 1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ / *I-da-ni-ki-mu* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(56) 2 *gu-zi-tum* 2 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *En-a-mi-ir* / maškim-*SU$_3$* / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

(6) 1 cloak and 1 colorful sash for Tubi-Ab, (son) of *A-da-si-in.*
(50) 6 *g.* for 6 young sons of the ruler (of Hassuwan).
(51) 1 *g.* for *I-da-ni-ki-mu* of Hassuwan.

Thus, immediately after Rubu-malik of Hassuwan, whom we have identified as a merchant on the basis of A15, 38 (60), was listed a son (or less likely, a subordinate) of *A-da-si-in* named Tubi-Ab, while in (12), the "royal son" (dumu-nita en) named *A-ti* was the one who appeared alongside the merchant Yišrum, both from Hassuwan. And immediately before *I-da-ni-ki-mu*[735] of Hassuwan are listed, notably, six unnamed "young sons" of an unspecified ruler. Comparing the references above in A15, 23 and

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[734] Assuming the 6 *gu-zi-tum* plus 4 NI.NI form the first half of a two-part set of garments, with the 1 aktum, 2 thin cloths, and the 7 sashes comprising the second half: thus 10 recipients. This arrangement is however somewhat unusual.
[735] *I-da-ni-ki-mu* was a common name, one also borne by one of the sons of an Eblaite king (Archi et al. 1988: 223). The *I-da-ni-ki-mu* of Hassuwan is also attested in: A4, 16 (43); A15, 13 (51); 44 (30); 49 (101).

A15, 43 to the seven and ten[?] sons of *A-da-si-in*, it seems quite likely these are not six sons of the king of Ebla, but rather of the king of Hassuwan, namely, *A-da-si-in*. The *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} of (51) is thus probably meant also to qualify (50) – the syntax is comparable to that of (12), where *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} qualifies both *A-ti* and Yišrum. These passages thus all demonstrate the need to recognize that the Ebla scribes (especially those of the ArruLUM period) were often somewhat haphazard and inconsistent in the way they referred to different individuals.

Curiously, dumu-nita is only used in relation to *A-da-si-in* when the son or sons remain unnamed; when a name is given, the relationship is expressed simply with the genitive particle lu$_2$. But since *A-da-si-in* is attested as having seven and perhaps as many as ten anonymous dumu-nita, probably all the ones qualified simply as "of" him, are actually his sons. The names of these "(sons)" are *A-ti*, *Du-bi$_2$-ab*, *Du-bi$_2$-zi-kir*, *Ga-nu-um*, *Iš-mi* aka *Il$_2$-mi*, and *Za-gu$_2$-ru$_{12}$*[736], to which we can add *Za-a-mi*, identified as son of the king of Hassuwan. That, in other instances, *Za-a-mi* is identified simply as "of Hassuwan"[737] opens the possibility that other royal sons are similarly listed in our texts in such a generic manner, without our being able to identify them.

Of the three texts listed below where *A-da-si-in* himself appears as the direct recipient of a textile, A15, 41 is in particular characterized by a high presence of men from Hassuwan and of diplomatic affairs involving Hassuwan – a fitting situation for the possible presence of the ruler of Hassuwan himself at Ebla.

[A15, 41; month 8]

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[736] See Pomponio 2013: 284 s.v. *A-da-si-in*.
[737] A15, 44 (46); A15, 28 (18) (there written with the variant spelling *Za-a-bi$_2$*).

(39) 1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$ / *A-da-si-i*[*n*]
(39) One robe, 1 heavy garment, and one fine sash for *A-da-si-in*.

[A15, 33; month broken]
(45) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *A-da-si-in* / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(45) One cloak, one A.-garment, one fine colorful sash for *A-da-si-in* of Hassuwan.

[A15, 39; month 4$^{?}$]
(52′) 1 siki "KIN" sag / ib$_2$-iii-babbar / *A-da-si-in*
(52′) 1 KIN-measure of wool, (in order to produce) a white sash (on the behalf) of *A-da-si-in*.

The passage in A15, 39 is unusual; it is not a textile allotment but a wool expenditure, which the Ebla scribes placed in a separate section at the end of their monthly accounts. Certainly a different situation must be implied here than the normal type of garment disbursal, even though the end result was a garment – again, a white one as we saw above with the Mari merchant Ikūn-Ilum.

Wool assignments can sometimes represent a salary or compensation for workers,[738] and sometimes they are designated as for the purchase of another type of good.[739] But in some cases, like in A15, 39 (52′), the assignments represent raw materials for the manufacture of a product, with the quantity of wool corresponding to the amount of the finished product,[740] and sometimes including a verb.[741]

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[738] For an example of wool as a salary see A15, 9 (73): 3 *mi-at* siki na$_4$ / al$_6$-TAR / še-kin / SA.ZA$_x$^{ki} "300 n.-measures of wool for (300) reapers of the harvest of the (Ebla) realm."
[739] For an example of wool for a purchase see A15, 32 (95) 10 "KIN" siki / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ in "10 k.-measures of wool, in order to purchase straw."
[740] For examples of wool corresponding to the quantity of the item produced see A15, 16 (79) 40 "KIN" siki-gi$_6$ / 20 tug$_2$-du$_8$ / *Ba-ha-gu$_2$* / šu-ba$_4$-ti "40 k. measures of black wool (to produce) 20 felts, *Ba-ha-gu$_2$* received" and cf. A15, 23 (91) 4 "KIN" siki *ne-za-u$_3$* / 2 tug$_2$-du$_8$ / *Ar-ru$_{12}$-lum* / *En-na-NI* / šu-ba$_4$-ti "4 k. measures of n.-wool to produce two felts (on the behalf) of ArruLUM, Enna-I(l) received." Thus clearly two "KIN" of wool were required to produce one standard piece of felt; the wool in such cases cannot be seen

It is rare for a personal name to appear as the beneficiary or recipient of product produced from a wool allotment. Generally these are very high-ranking individuals including the Ebla king, the palace elite, and even gods. This all could very well support the contention that *A-da-si-in* was the ruler of Hassuwan, above all because there are additional texts which attest the presence of clothing manufacturers from Hassuwan at Ebla, receiving wool allotments to produce textiles. Thus, in [A15, 39], it would seem that the reason why the ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$ was recorded as a wool expenditure (and not as a normal textile allotment) is because the textile produced was not the usual product of the Ebla textile workshops, but one made by a Hassuwan man, in the Hassuwan fashion, for a special occasion.

[A4, 17; month 9]
(81) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-ki-da-mu* / gun$_3$ / ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(139) 1 siki "KIN" / *Ib-ki-da-mu* / gun$_3$ / ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$ / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(81) 1 cloak for *Ib-ki-da-mu*, dyer of colorful sashes of Hassuwan.
(139) 1 k.-measure of wool for *Ib-ki-da-mu*, (in order to) dye (i.e., to produce)[742] a colorful sash of Hassuwan.

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as a compensation for the worker involved. The function of šu-ba$_4$-ti in such contexts seems to be to indicate that the individual involved received the wool for official purposes, rather than his own use. However sometimes the šu-ba$_4$-ti can be omitted, as well as the name of the official.

[741] For of an example of a wool assignment including a verb see A15, 8 (97) 1 siki "KIN" / kin$_5$-ak / nig$_2$-šu$_2$-sag "1 k.-measure of wool to make a hat" (or perhaps, a felt-lined helmet).

[742] Possibly the man called gun$_3$ "dyer" was actually responsible for the full process of producing the finished textile from the wool, and not merely the coloration or the yarn. In the Ancient Near East it was common for a manufacturing process that involved multiple steps to be named after the final step in the process. For example in the Ur III year formulae the process of building a boat was referred by the final step, "caulking" (du$_8$). Similarly in Gilgamesh Tablet XI, line 95 (=George 2003: 708), the builder of the boat for Uta-Napishti is referred to as the *pēhî ša eleppi* "the caulker of the boat."

Note that [A4, 17] is the same text we have already quoted above, where Ikun-Ilum the merchant of Mari, and *Za-a-mi* the royal son of Hassuwan, were both present at Ebla. Quite possibly, then, this Hassuwan textile was produced as part of those same affairs, especially since the Mari merchant himself also received a garment of his hometown's variety. Unlike the passage [A15, 39], where the garment produced for *A-da-si-in* was white (babbar), this one was colorful (gun_3). The producer and the production process were likewise referred to as gun_3. At Ebla the production of a white textile was apparently instead designated by the term $azlag_4$ ($GIŠ.TUG.KAS_4.KAR$).[743] The exotic nature of this rare logogram for the Eblaite scribes possibly explains its omission in A15, 39 and other contexts.

5.4.0 Textile Manufacturers of Hassuwan

Hassuwan must have, like Ebla, itself been the seat of an active textile industry. That Hassuwan textile producers were present at Ebla once again demonstrates how close relations were between the two powers, not only diplomatically, but economically as well. Even if it was primarily diplomatic affairs which resulted in the specific textual occurrence of a textile producer of Hassuwan in an Ebla palace record (i.e., because a textile was produced on the occasion of a royal visitation by Hassuwan to Ebla), certainly the presence of textile producers at Ebla was part of a larger pattern – a pattern, which also encompasses the near constant presence of Hassuwan merchants at Ebla. Like the merchants themselves, Hassuwan textile producers may well have travelled back and

[743] See A15, 8 (99): 2 siki "kin" *Dam-da-il* / $azlag_4$ "2 k.-measures of wool (received by) *Dam-da-il*, the fuller (in order to produce a white garment)."

forth between the two cities and remained at Ebla for extended periods. Their business certainly included more than what we are able to learn from the Ebla palace texts alone.

[A15, 23; month 3]
(71) 3 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 5 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / gun$_3$-gun$_3$ / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(71) 3 cloaks, 5 colorful sashes: (3$^?$) dyers of Hassuwan.

[A15, 9; month II]
(85): 2 siki "KIN" / dam / *A-tum* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
2 k.-measures of wool for the wife of Atum of Hassuwan (in order to produce a textile).

Here we have evidence that a woman of Hassuwan was present at Ebla and received wool from the palace administration, no doubt in order to produce a garment (or multiple garments). As for the identity of her husband *A-tum*, this name likely represents a variant of *A-ti*, the royal son of Hassuwan whom we have already encountered[744] (yet another variant spelling of his name was *A-du-um*).[745] In Old Assyrian times even the wives of high-ranking traders were engaged in textile production,[746] so it is not surprising in that regard to see the wife of a royal son of Hassuwan taking on such a role.

That a wife of a royal son of Hassuwan was present at Ebla and engaging in textile production with Ebla palace-issued wool truly underscores the closeness of the two regimes. A long-term stay if not semi-permanent residence at Ebla, rather than a mere visitation on the part of this woman must be implied. One is indeed left wondering whether the woman in question was actually a native of Hassuwan who travelled with *A-*

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[744] In [A15, 44] *A-tum Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} occurs in (25), while another royal son of Hassuwan *Za-a-mi* shows up in (46).
[745] On *A-du-um* as a variant of *A-tum* see Pomponio 2013 (=A15-2): 18. *A-tum* and his wife receive textiles together in A15, 44 (25).
[746] For such an example, involving also a female servant, see Barjamovic 2011: 17, fn. 83.

tum to Ebla, or if she was actually an Eblaite whom *A-tum* married, since he was at Ebla so often.

[A15, 36; month broken]
(66) 1 ib$_2$-iii *Ma-ri$_2$* 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* 9 (gin$_2$) ku$_3$-babbar / dumu-nita / *A-du-mi* / guruš-zi / *Ab$_2$-su*^{ki}
(67) 1 ib$_2$-iii *A-bar-sal$_4$* 1 ib$_2$-iii *Ma-ri$_2$* 1 *gu$_2$-li-lum* ku$_3$:babbar ku$_3$-gi / dumu-nita / *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu* / lu$_2$ / *A-da-mu*
(68) 4 sal$_2$-tug$_2$ / gun$_2$ / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(66) 1 sash (in the fashion of) Mari, 1 bracelet (weighing) 9 (shekels) of silver, for the son of Atum (on the occasion when he was) 'a virile young man' in Absu;
(67) 1 sash (in the fashion of) Abarsal, 1 sash in the fashion of Mari, one bracelet of silver and gold for the son Išmah-Damu (son) of *A*-Damu (when he was likewise a 'virile young man' in Absu$^{?}$).
(68) 4 thin garments for (4) dyers of Hassuwan.

In [A15, 36] it is rather conspicuous that the two entries immediately preceding the dyer(s) of Hassuwan in (68) include (rarely encountered) allotments of foreign-style textiles: an ib$_2$-iii *Ma-ri$_2$* in (66) and an ib$_2$-iii *A-bar-sal$_4$* together with another ib$_2$-iii *Ma-ri$_2$* in (67) (with no KI determinatives present). Could the dyers of Hassuwan possibly have been linked to these allotments of foreign textiles? A closer examination renders a connection between these three entries all but certain.

Firstly, one can note that *Ab$_2$-su*^{ki} of (66) is the only foreign city other than Hassuwan from which dyers (gun$_3$) are said to have come from during the ArruLUM period – there is a sole occurrence, and the dyers "of Absu" are, as here, fourin number.[747] And secondly, in (67) the anonymous recipient's father Išmah-Damu was an Ebla man who had close connections with Hassuwan. Namely, he once delivered to Ebla

[747] A15, 33 (2): 4 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 4 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / gun$_3$ / *Ab$_2$-su*^{ki}. Dyers of *Ig-dar*^{ki} are mentioned in A15, 2 (57), but this settlement was not an independent state but rather part of the Ebla realm (Bonechi 1993: 196).

a piece of news concerning Hassuwan,[748] and on another occasion he traveled with four merchants of Hassuwan (probably to Hassuwan itself).[749] The clear Hassuwan background of these affairs give us good reason to suggest that in (66) the spelling *A-du-mi* (a unique attestation) simply represents yet another variant of the same royal son known variously as *A-tum/A-du-um*/*A-ti*.[750] In light of this, it is difficult to imagine that the subsequently mentioned dyers of Hassuwan could have had nothing to do with the rare foreign textiles on this unique occasion involving a guruš-zi.

Given the analogous nature of their allotments, it seems likely that the anonymous son of Išmah-Damu, like the son of Atum, also acted as "guruš-zi," which formed the occasion for his receipt of gifts (otherwise there would be no explanation for his presence). Neither son seems ever to be mentioned elsewhere, and their anonymity implies that both were quite young. In Sumerian, "zi" can have a meaning like "active, virile, healthy, rising up." An Ebla lexical equation for guruš-zi provides a Semitic form likewise interpretable as "mature/virile young man."[751]

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[748] A15, 23 (59) 1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$-sa$_6$ / *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu* / lu$_2$ *A-da-mu* / *in* ud / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / TIL.TIL *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

[749] A15, 37 (13) 4 s[al-tug$_2$ 4 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} / DU / *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu* (*aš$_2$-ti* "with" is to be understood in between DU and *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu*).

[750] According to Ebla spelling conventions, *A-du-mi* can without problem represent /atum/. The sequence CvC can be expressed using a spelling Cv-C(v), with the vowel in -*m*(*i)* thus being purely graphic.

[751] Pettinato 1982: 315 (=M4, VE 1385'): KAL-zi = *a-i-mu-mu*. Interpreted by Sjöberg 2004: 276 as /*ḥalimmu*/, /*aʾimmu*/, with the meaning "true/strong/mature/healthy (man)," from Semitic **ḥlm*. Hajouz 2013: 296 refers to Arabic *ḥālim* "one who has attained puberty, virility" and *ḥulum* "manliness." C.f. the Fara personal name En-guruš-zi "the En is a virile young man" (WF 18, rev i 7), and the Sargonic personal name lugal-guruš-zi (BIN 8, 180 rev 3). For examples of guruš-zi in Presargonic literary texts see Biggs 1976 (=BiMes 3): 27, obv i 4 and ibid.: 28, obv iii 7 (both tablets from Al-Hiba/Lagaš).

Given this meaning, it is possible (but far from certain) that we are here dealing with a coming-of-age ceremony, a widely-attested phenomenon from ancient to modern times. For reasons unknown to us, apparently both Hassuwan and Ebla saw the city of *Ab$_2$-su*^{ki} – which should, very roughly, lie in between the two states – as an appropriate venue for such a rite. And, for some reason, foreign garments of Mari and Abarsal, demonstrative of an international character, were appropriate gifts for such an occasion. As already mentioned, both prince Atum of Hassuwan and Išmah-Damu of Ebla were involved with merchants, and thus the foreign garments for their young sons would seem to appropriately symbolize their cosmopolitan status, their connection to the world of international relations, merchants and trade.

Whether or not our interpretation of the guruš-zi is correct, it is quite striking for our present context that the treaty of Abarsal mentions a merchant (dam-gar$_3$; apparently one from Abarsal) directly alongside a "father of a virile young man" (*A-BU*$_3$ guruš-zi). The passage apparently concerns Abarsal's obligation to ensure that appropriate allotments or payments are provided to the father of the guruš-zi.[752] Likely, it is the same

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[752] Fronzaroli 2003: 55 = A13, 5 (1'): [...] i$_3$-[til] / dam-gar$_3$ / nig$_2$-du$_8$ / *A-BU*$_3$ / guruš-zi / i$_3$-til / *me-nu-ma* [n]u-gal$_2$ / (erasure) / *du-ma-la*$_2$. The broken context renders an unambiguous interpretation difficult. One possible translation: "...[someone] will provide [something]. A merchant (from Abarsal) will provide the payment of the father of the 'virile young man.' Anything which is lacking, you (Abarsal) will fulfill." Fronzaroli translated instead: "(quando) il mercante sarà presente, il padre del dipendente dovrà provvedere il riscatto; qualsiasi somma manchi tu la consegnerai per intero." I highly doubt nig$_2$-du$_8$ here refers to a "ransom" for a captive. To refer to a captive as a "guruš-zi" and to mention his "father" would be nonsensical (Fronzaroli's 'dipendente' is meaningless). Nig$_2$-du$_8$ can simply have a generic meaning of "payment, release (from an obligation);" Catagnoti 2012b: 59 admits that "nig$_2$-du$_8$ could refer to a kind of compensation" and lists several attestations of nig$_2$-du$_8$ in a cultic context. Moreover, the immediately preceding context refers to domestic matters involving a young daughter: an

type of occasion as in [A15, 36] that is being referred to by the treaty. The merchant (dam-gar$_3$) could thus have played an analogous role to the dyers (gun$_3$) of [A15, 36], supplying the textiles needed for the occasion (whatever exactly it may have been).

[A15, 26; month 7]
(78) 1 "KIN" siki / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / gun$_3$
1 k. measure of wool for ENbu-Malik, the dyer.

Concerning the connection between dyers of clothing and merchants, it is possible (but not certain) that the same Hassuwan merchant Rubu-Malik, who we have discussed earlier, is in this text referred to as a dyer, where he receives a wool allotment (presumably to make a colorful sash). There does seem to have been an Eblaite Rubu-Malik during this period, but he seems to have been a relatively high-ranking palace official, without connection to clothing manufacture.[753] Since Hassuwan was a place from which both merchants and dyers came, and there is a natural link between dyers as producers of clothing and merchants as dealers in clothing, such a proposed identity between lu$_2$-kar and gun$_3$ seems possible.

5.4.1 Other manufactured goods of Hassuwan

In the following example we can however be quite confident that we are encountering our same Hassuwan merchant Rubu-malik, because he occurs in a group of men, all of whom together in another text are designated as being from Hassuwan. Here

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adulterous affair, (61), the obligation to marry in such a case (62), and something else (broken) to do with a young girl (63). Thus the subsequent mention of domestic affairs involving a young boy (payments for a coming-of-age rite) is contextually appropriate.

[753] The Eblaite Rubu-Malik could be attested in A15, 9 (48): 2 tug$_2$-ni.ni *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *Ir$_3$-am$_6$-ma-lik* / mu-DU / si / *Ar-ru$_{12}$-LUM* / kas$_4$-kas$_4$.

he is associated with the title ašgab "leatherworker," suggesting that products made of leather were among the commodities dealt with by the Hassuwan merchants.

[A15, 37; month 8]
(21) [5]+1 *gu-zi*-tug$_2$ 6 aktum-tug$_2$ 6 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / 6 nig$_2$-bar-DU / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / ašgab <<ašgab>> (erased) / *I-zi-HAR-da-mu* / Puzur$_4$-*ra-ma-lik* / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *En-a-mi-ir* / *Im*-x / *I$_3$*-[*ba$^{?}$-z*]*i-nu*
(23) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / lu$_2$-kar / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(29) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Du-bi$_2$-ar* / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

(21) 6 *g.*, 6 a., 6 fine colorful sashes, and 6 (pairs of) 'foot wraps' for Rubu-malik the leatherworker (of$^{?}$) *I-zi-HAR*-Damu, Puzra-Malik, Rubu-Malik, Enamir, Im-x, and Iba-Zinu.
(23) One thin cloth for a merchant of Hassuwan.
(29) 1 thin garment for Ṭubi-Ar (royal son) of Hassuwan.

One notes that the name Rubu-malik appears twice in this group. Possibly his name was written twice in error, triggered by the mistake whereby the scribe wrote "ašgab" twice to indicate a plural, then changed his mind and erased one of them. Often (but not always) the Ebla scribes used a notation MIN when two people in the same group share the same name. In the text, we have already quoted from [A15, 38] Rubu-malik also appeared twice, once designated lu$_2$-kar and once as "of *I-za-HAR-da-mu*," with the latter man clearly being identical with our present leatherworker, called "of *I-zi-HAR-da-mu*."[754] So if the two Rubu-maliks of (21) are different people, then at least there is another text where they both appear. But there too it is not impossible that they refer to one and the same person; it is by no means unheard of for the same person to receive allotments twice in one text, and moreover, in one entry he receives a single garment and the other one two, forming a full typical set of three. In any case, whether or not Rubu-Malik the

[754] A15, 38: (20) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / *EN-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / lu$_2$ *I-za-HAR-da-mu* (60) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / lu$_2$-kar.

leatherworker and Rubu-Malik the merchant are the same person is less important, because if they were different people, still one of them would have to be the merchant, who appears in the group headed by the leatherworker. The other men mentioned in this group are also likely to have been merchants themselves as well; we have already suggested possible mercantile identities for *I-ba-zi-nu* above in A15, 40 (83) and for Enamir, A15, 13 (56).

[A15, 47]

(4) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$-u$_2$-hab 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / i$_3$-giš-sag / Puzur$_4$-*ra-ma-lik* / giš-ti
(5) 3 gir$_2$-mar-tu-zu$_2$ ku$_3$-gi / *Ru$_{12}$-bu$_3$-ma-lik* / *En-a*-[*mi*]-*ir* [Pu]zur$_4$-[*ra*]-*ma-lik* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(4) 1 red cloak and 1 a. (on the occasion of) the anointing of the head (upon the death of a relative) of Puzra-Malik, (the one who supplies) arrows.
(5) 3 straight pointed daggers of gold for Rubu-Malik, *En-a-mi-ir* and Puzra-Malik of Hassuwan.

Here we can see a similar situation as above, with one member of the same group of likely merchants being identified as a supplier of arrows,[755] and receiving a red cloak on the occasion of the anointing of his head. The whole group received particularly rich gifts consisting of gold daggers on this occasion, uncommon for men from Hassuwan in this period. This would seem to emphasize how highly valued the supplying of arrows was for the Ebla court. Some time later under king Išar-Damu, 60-65 men were employed by

[755] On the translation of (lu$_2$)-giš-ti as "one who makes arrows" rather than "archer" see Pomponio 2011. Cf. the examples A15, 38 (70): 1 sal-tug$_2$ *La-ga-ab* kin$_5$-ak giš-ti and A15, 12 (23) 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ *La-ga-ab* lu$_2$-giš-ti.

the Ebla administration in order to make arrows,[756] demonstrating what an important industry this was.

That these Hassuwan men were involved in the supplying of weapons of war could also provide them with a military character, in addition to their well-established commercial background (even if the arrows could have also been used for non-military purposes, like hunting animals). There is one additional text where Puzra-malik is identified as an arrow supplier.[757] Considering that arrows at Ebla consisted of a wooden shaft with a metal point,[758] it is probably no coincidence that Puzra-malik is also identified both as a "carpenter" (nagar)[759] and as "smith" (simug).[760] Although those attestations lack clear elements proving for certain that the "smith" and the "carpenter"

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[756] According to two unpublished tablets (excerpted in Archi 2010: 18, TM 75.G.1731 rev xii 22-23 and TM 75.G.1770 rev viii 13-15) referring respectively to groups of 65 and 60 men (1731: 3 e_2-$duru_5^{ki}$ 5 *na-se*$_{11}$ lu_2 giš-ti giš-ti; 1770: 3 e_2-$duru_5$ lu_2 giš-ti lu_2 *Ir*$_3$*-am-da-mu*). Apparently the men are said to have been located in the Ebla territories (SA.ZA$_x^{ki}$; unfortunately Arch does not share exactly how the location of the workers is specified on the tablets).

[757] See A15, 29 (37): 1 *ʾa*$_3$*-da-um*-tug_2 1 aktum-tug_2 1 dul_3-tug_2 1 nig_2-la_2-sag 1 ib_2-ii-sa_6-gun_3 / Puzur$_4$*-ra-ma-lik* / giš-ti. Although this textual occurrence provides no elements connecting Puzur-Malik with Hassuwan, it is quite likely that he is the same man as in [A15, 47 (4)] and [A15, 37 (21)].

[758] For the composition of a bronze arrowhead at Ebla see M12, 35 (16): tar-8 gin_2-DILMUN nagga(AN.NA) / RU *si-in* / 10-la_2-3 ma-na ša-pi-2 (gin_2) a-gar_5-gar_5 / kin_5-ak / 2 *li-im* giš-ti / *ŠE*$_3$ / 1 gin_2-DILMUN nagga / RU *si-in* / 12 gin_2-DILMUN a-gar_5-gar_5 / kin_5-ak-*SU*$_3$ / *ŠE*$_3$ / 1 giš-ti 4-NI / kin_5-ak-*SU*$_3$: "38 shekels of tin, combined with 7 minas 42 (shekels) of copper, in order to make 2000 arrowheads. Thus, 1 shekel of tin combined with 12 shekels of copper is its production (ratio). Thus, (each) 1 arrowhead (weighing) 1/4 shekel (of bronze) is its production."

[759] A15, 3 (20) 2 dul_3-tug_2 / Puzur$_4$*-ra-ma-lik* / nagar; 21 (43) 1 šu-kešda-gun_3 / *Du-bi-zi-kir* / lu_2 Puzur$_4$*-ra-ma-lik* / nagar

[760] A15, 50 (13): 1 gu-dul_3-tug_2 / Puzur$_4$*-ra-ma-lik* / simug. In another text it is instead a son of P. who is called a smith, A15, 37 (68): 1 aktum-tug_2 NIN.UŠ^{mušen} / 1 gu-dul_3-tug_2 1 ib_2-iii-gun_3-tug_2 / Puzur$_4$*-ra-ma-lik* / dumu-nita-*SU*$_3$ [si]mug; note that in this text P. also appears in (21) as part of the group headed by ENbu-Malik the leatherworker. This need not suggest, however, that they were different individuals.

were identical with our Puzra-malik of Hassuwan (an admittedly rather common name), this possibility is strengthened by the fact that it was unambiguously Puzra-malik of Hassuwan who, on another occasion, delivered to the Ebla court one or more examples of a tool associated with woodworking (perhaps a type of borer or drill):[761]

[A15, 56; month 6]

(39) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / Puzur$_4$-*ra-ma-lik* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / giš-*ha-ra-nu* / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

Whatever this tool exactly was, it was quite likely made of both wood and metal,[762] probably bronze.[763] And given its relation to woodworking, it connects Hassuwan with the important timber industry. Seeing thus that these Hassuwan men were connected by

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[761] For the tool giš-*ha-ra-nu* see the lexical entry in Pettinato 1982: 285 (=M4, VE 762): nagar-har-urudu = *ha-ra-nu/num$_2$* (see Hajouz 2013: 335), occurring in a section (VE 757-766) listing various woodworking tools (VE 759: AGA$_3$-urudu = *ba-šum* "axe"; VE 763: DUB.NAGAR-urudu = *ma-ga-NI* "hammer/chisel"; VE 766: šum-urudu = *sar-sa-rum$_2$* "saw"). See the discussion in Waetzoldt 2001: 390-391, who translates "Ring (des Holz-Handwerkers)" and remarks that it is difficult to know for certain what exactly this tool was, attested to have contained only 5, 7, or 10 shekels of bronze. Archi 1995: 9 translates "saw (with a semi-circular handle [= a *lapsus linguae* for "blade?"])." Civil 2008: 91 reads instead bulug-HAR^{uruda} and translates "a type of drill, borer," a translation that seems more likely than "saw" given the rather low weights of metal involved. According to Civil, this *harrānu* has nothing to do with "road" but is to be derived from a root **Hrr/*Hrw* + *ānu* (cf. Sumerian har: "ring"). Perhaps the connection with HAR need not imply that the tool itself was ring-shaped, but rather that its work was achieved by rotation.

[762] In the text A15, 11, both carpenters and smiths receive textile allotments in return for making axes, which thus likewise seem to have consisted of a wooden handle and a metal blade: (7) 26 sal-tug$_2$ / nagar-nagar / kin-ak / giš-šilig; (22) 5 sal-tug$_2$ / simug-simug / kin-ak / giš-šilig. The carpenters receive conspicuously more textiles than the smiths.

[763] On the use of bronze tools in woodworking see Catagnoti 2016: 36, with the unpublished text 75.2359 obv. xii 7–xiii 2-6: 57 gin$_2$ DILMUN nagga RU *si-in* / 6 ma-na ša-pi 6 gin$_2$ DILMUN a-gar$_5$-gar$_5$ / kin$_5$-ak / 5 AGA$_3$-tur tar-tar / 5 dub-nagar sal 15 / 5 dub-nagar sal 10 / 5 *ma-za-ga-u$_9$* 10 / 5 *ma-za-ha-ru$_{12}$* tar / [...] / [...] / [...] x / 5 nagar-nagar gibil / lu$_2$ / ^{giš}taškarin / *Wa-ba-rum$_2$* / šu ba$_4$-ti

the Ebla scribes with leather, wood, and metal products, it seems possible that the Hassuwan merchants dealt in all manner of manufactured goods.

From other sources, we know that among the products dealt with by merchants in the times of Ebla Palace G were live animals and other comestible products. A delivery of "fat-tailed sheep of Hassuwan" could perhaps suggest that such livestock were also among the wares of the Hassuwan merchants, even if the textually attested deliveries themselves did not have a commercial background per se, but were rather contributions to the Ebla court of a diplomatic nature. Fat tailed sheep (gukkal, from *kun-gal) are rarely attested and so were apparently an exotic product at Ebla:

[A15, 3; month 6]
(15) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *X-bar-lum*(?) / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / gukkal-gukkal / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(16) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / *Ir$_3$-da-ma-lik* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / NIN.UŠ^{mušen} / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(15) One thin garment for X., who delivered fat-tailed sheep of Hassuwan.
(16) One thin garment for Irda-Malik, who delivered N.-birds of Hassuwan.

As for the bird called NIN.UŠ^{mušen}, it was not a comestible species of fowl or the like, but rather a large bird of prey: an eagle, hawk, or similar. These birds held a special symbolic status[764] in Eblaite culture, and on a practical level, they were perhaps valued for their plumage. This bird's long, large feathers may have served not merely for decoration, but also fulfilled an important strategic purpose as fletching for arrows, a role not to be underestimated given the great quantities in which these were produced at Ebla.

[764] On the NIN.UŠ^{mušen} and its cultural and symbolic role at Ebla see Bonechi 2000: 268-273.

The following two attestations seem to prove that cuneiform writing was known at Hassuwan during the reign of Irkab-Damu of Ebla:

[A15, 48; month 7]
(23) 3 sal-tug$_2$ / 3 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / dumu-nita / dub-sar / *Ha*-[*z*]*u*-*wa*-*an*^{ki}
(23) 3 thin garments, 3 colorful sashes, for the 'sons' of scribes of Hassuwan.

[A15, 52; no month]
(37) 3 sal-tug$_2$ / 3 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / dumu-nita *Ha*-*zu*-*wa*-*an*^{ki} / dub-sar
(37) 3 thin garments, 3 colorful sashes, for the 'sons' of Hassuwan, scribes.

It is not certain if the designation of these scribes of Hassuwan as "sons" (dumu-nita) needs to imply that they were young boys or apprentice scribes, who had come to Ebla to be educated in cuneiform.[765] Throughout Ancient Near Eastern history, "sons" was a generic term, used to indicate the representatives of any specific profession, without necessarily implying that they were juniors. It seems equally possible that these scribes of Hassuwan were present at Ebla not in order to be educated, but because their service was required by other men of Hassuwan who were there. Their presence could be explained as part of the wider phenomenon that has been outlined above, involving the near-constant presence of Hassuwan merchants at Ebla, or even their long-term presence there as a sort of colony or outpost. In any event, these references constitute an important clue that writing was, already in the mid-third millennium, much more widespread in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia than the current archaeological record is able to demonstrate.

5.5 The Alleged War Between Ebla and Hassuwan, and the meaning of TIL

[765] As postulated by Archi 2006c: 105, "In any case, Ebla was considered a learned center by other Syrian towns. TM.75.G.2470 [=A15, 52] registers a delivery of clothes to three junior scribes from Hassuwan, a town that lay to the north of Ebla...."

The above discussion has established the general context of relations between Ebla and Hassuwan during the reign of Irkab-Damu. Economic and diplomatic relations were close. The ruler of Hassuwan named *A-da-si-in* was present at Ebla on at least one, if not multiple occasions, and large numbers of his sons were visiting Ebla regularly, if not residing there on a semi-permanent basis. One royal son, Atum/Ati, even had a wife at Ebla, who was engaged in textile production. Merchants from Hassuwan traded in all manner of goods with Ebla, and they may even have resided there in connection with a "gate of the ruler of Hassuwan." Ebla brokered relations between Hassuwan and individuals from, among other places, the major centers of Armi and Mari.

Hassuwan's relationship with Ebla could, above all, be seen as part of the new balance of power, which emerged as a result of, on the one hand, the events narrated by the Enna-Dagan letter (where Hassuwan was singled out for special mention), and on the other, the subsequent Abarsal Treaty (where the tacit approval of Mari for Ebla's assumption of preeminence over the upper Euphrates region could be perceived); see in detail above §3.0.

The overall picture could thus imply that Hassuwan was in a type of subservient relationship to Ebla, but to call Hassuwan a client of Ebla would perhaps be going too far. The diplomatic and mercantile relations between Hassuwan and Ebla do not suggest any outright exploitation or extortion of Hassuwan on the part of Ebla. Hassuwan was independent, with its own ruler and its own merchants – otherwise there would be no explanation for the appearance of these figures in the Ebla texts. Hassuwan may have been to some degree subordinated to the more powerful Ebla, but also benefited – at the very least through its receipt of gifts at the Ebla court, and through its interactions with

some of Ebla's important allies, such as Armi and Mari. This all, in general, precludes Hassuwan from having the status of either enemy or client with respect to Ebla.

In contrast to the picture presented above, a previous study, proceeding from a briefer and less in-depth analysis than the present one, has claimed that Ebla was involved in a prolonged war with Hassuwan, covering the entire span of the same period we have been outlining above:

> Some documents from this period mention various military defeats suffered by Hassuwan which must relate to different episodes in a single war in which this city was involved against Ebla. (Archi 2008a: 89)

This idea of a war between Ebla and Hassuwan is based upon a single contention: that the sign TIL, when used in relation with a geographical name, always refers to a military "defeat" of that place – a defeat which was, according to this view, inflicted by Ebla. This putative war seems like a stark and unexpected contrast to the picture we have outlined above, where nothing but peaceful relations between Ebla and Hassuwan, centered mostly around trade, were attested.

> According to TM.75.G.1340 obv II 5–8 [= A15, 5 (3)], an Eblaite messenger, Arsi-aha "brought the news that Hassuwan had been defeated" (níg-mul H. til). However, a little further (III 4–7) [=(6)] the document records that "Zami, the son of the king of H. received a gold dagger", and then (rev. II 4–5) "(the same?) son of the king of H. received a piece of clothing". We must presume that it was Ebla that inflicted the defeat and that, immediately afterwards, peace was agreed upon and the son of the king of Hassuwan's right to succession. (Ibid.)

This "immediate peace" is a reoccurring theme in reconstructions involving alleged wars of Ebla. It strongly resembles the reconstructed alleged war between Ebla and Mari under

Ibbi-Zikir, close to the end of the Ebla archives.[766] Inevitably, the very same tablet as the one on which a reference to war is discovered will contain entries that are incompatible with a violent state of affairs, and so these are explained away as belonging to the war's resultant "peace" (thus meaning the conflict could not have lasted more than one month). Disregarding whether such a short-lived skirmish would deserve the appellation "war," (or how this is to be reconciled with the contention that all the alleged defeats "relate to different episodes in a single war"), it is important to note another interpretational possibility: namely, that in this and other contexts the logogram TIL might have nothing to do with a "defeat" at all. It is important to explore all interpretational possibilities for TIL, because a violent interpretation contrasts so sharply not only with data contained on the same tablet (precious gifts at Ebla for a royal son of Hassuwan), but with the general and overall contextual picture that has been gleaned above.

The logogram TIL does not unambiguously refer to violence in the same way as other terms, used in other times and places, such as for example Sumerian hul "to destroy," "to do evil," or gaz "to smite, to kill."

Although no Semitic reading of TIL is attested at Ebla, in later times TIL could stand for the Akkadian word *gamārum*, which most basically means "to finish, to complete." When used of humans, the logogram TIL can be read as us_2 "to die." Therefore, the logogram TIL could be said to, in general, express the concept of finality and completion. Of the various sub-meanings of later *gamārum* listed by CAD, only the

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[766] Compare the rendering in Archi/Biga 2003: 14 of the unpublished fragment TM.75.G.12450, in their view attesting the war between Ebla and Mari: "obv. iii 10–13: i_3-ti nig_2-kas_4 *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ lu_2 nidba i_3-giš "(who) took part at the expedition (against) Mari which (ended with) the oil offering."

most dramatic one is violent: "to annihilate, to destroy completely, to finish off." Aside from that, *gamārum* can be used in a wide variety of contexts not having to do with violence. It can mean "to use up" a resource (such as barley). It can mean "to spend (money)." It can mean "to settle" a business or legal matter. It can mean "to finish" an activity (such as plowing or canal digging) or "to finish" an object (such as a building, or a textile).[767]

The CAD does not list a meaning "defeat" under the verb *gamāru*. The next closest match to this, and the only sub-meaning having to do with violence, is "to annihilate," which however is a decidedly stronger and more dramatic concept than simple "defeat." Because TIL is so closely linked with the concept of finality, if one believes that an occurrence of "TIL GN^{ki}" is to be linked with a violent military context, then one should more accurately translate TIL with something like "annihilate" or "destroy completely." When TIL = us_2 "to die" is said of a person, then one naturally expects that this person to no longer occur as an active entity in subsequently written texts. Obviously, a person cannot die more than once.

If TIL could stand for **gamāru*, then one comparable attestation might come from an inscription of Naram-Sin[768]: *u_3* / *A-ma-nam* / *SA-TU* / giš-eren / *i-ig-mu-ur*, "And furthermore, Naram-Sin completed (an expedition to) the Amanus, the cedar mountain (in order to fetch cedar)." It is unlikely that Naram-Sin meant to say he "destroyed,"

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[767] CAD/G: 24f, s.v. *gamāru.*

[768] Gelb/Kienast 1990: 256 (Naram-Sin C 5), ii 24–28, with a translation "Ferner hat er den Amanus, das Zederngebirge, unter seine Kontrolle gebracht." Cf. Frayne 1993: 133 (Naram-Sin 26), ii 24–28, with the a translation "Further, he totally (conquered) the Amanus, the cedar mountain." It seems unlikely that even a king as mighty as Naram-Sin would have boasted of "controlling" a wild mountain forest.

"defeated," or "annihilated" such a mountain, which represented an uninhabited wilderness. The same inscription and others display a rich vocabulary to express the concepts of destruction, defeat, and conquest – but the words used are all different ones than *gamārum*.

If one prefers a violent interpretation of TIL, then in the present context, one is forced to believe that Hassuwan was "annihilated" or "completely destroyed" no less than five or six times during the span covered by the ArruLUM texts (no more than four years). The occurrences are presented below in raw form:

[A15, 5; month 5]
(3) 1 sal-tug$_2$ maškim / *Ar-si-a-ha* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} / TIL

[A15, 10; month 1]
(71) 1 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ri$_2$-i$_3$-ma-lik* / ugula BAR.AN BAR.AN / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / TIL / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

[A15, 23; month 3]
(59) 1 *gu-zi-<tum>*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$-sa$_6$ / *Iš-ma$_2$-da-mu* / lu$_2$ *A-da-mu* / *in* ud / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / TIL.TIL *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

[A15, 26; month 7]
(1) 1 *gu-zi-tum* 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / *Ib-du-ru$_{12}$* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / TIL *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

[A15, 28; month 3]
(82) 2 tug$_2$-ni.ni 2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / TIL / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}

[A15, 42; months 1, 2, 3]
(31) *I-zi-*[*u*]*m* / šeš *I-PEŠ$_2$-zi-nu* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} TIL
(51) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$ / *I-bi$_2$-u$_3$* / *Mu-nu-ti-um*^{ki} / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} TIL

All the while, there was, during the intervening months between all these alleged "defeats," no visible change in the status of Hassuwan or in its relations with Ebla. The ruler remained the same, and the royal sons remained the same. Men from Hassuwan

continued to regularly appear in monthly accounts as recipients of gifts. The same Hassuwan merchants continued to visit Ebla, reside there, and deliver various goods, including, it is important to note, weapons of war (i.e., arrows, see above §5.4.1).

Methodologically, it must be overall context that decides if "destruction" or "defeat" related to a violent conflict is an appropriate or plausible interpretation of the cuneiform sign TIL. One cannot begin with the assumption that TIL means "destruction" and then force a context to fit it through a concept of of "immediate peace." When it was demonstrated that the common Ebla notation nig_2-AN.AN.AN.AN is to be understood "news, message," at the same time, the rendering of TIL as "defeat, destruction" was presented without alternative.[769] Previously, however, it had already been proposed to understand TIL instead as "to finish (a journey)," i.e., "to arrive."[770]

Assuming TIL stands for a Semitic verb equivalent to later *gamārum*, then such a meaning "to finish (a journey), to arrive" is entirely possible. One could also compare the later Akkadian verbs *kašādu*. Only in certain contexts is a rendering "to defeat, to conquer" obligatory. Much of the time it can mean simply "to arrive." Only the context can allow for a decision between these two possibilities. Thus, one could still leave open

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[769] Sallaberger 2003: 613 (translating TIL as "(Land, Ort) zertsört/besiegt"); 618 (translating TIL as "geschlagen/zerstört"), with the following remark: "Es entspricht durchaus dem aus anderen Palastarchiven gewonnenen Bild, wenn kriegerisch Ereignisse, Feldzüge, an erster Stelle der Nachrichten stehen." This however, cannot support the contention that TIL always refers to war, since it was this assumption which led to the conclusion that references to war were paramount in the first place.

[770] Pomponio 1989b: 302, "...in tutti gli esempi su presentati a noi sembra verosimile che TIL non si riferisca a una 'distruzione' ma piuttosto a un trasferimento, viaggio, o simili. Come è noto, il valore fondamentale del segno TIL... è quello di "finire" e lo sviluppo semantico che meglio sembra convenire agli esempi sopra discussi è forse quello di "finire (un viaggio)" = "arrivare." Cf. also Waetzoldt 2001: 258.

the option that *some* occurrences of TIL might refer to a violent context. Proceeding from the assumption that *all* occurrences of TIL refer to violence neglects the possibility of a nonviolent interpretation, "arrival."

As far as being an item of news delivered to the Ebla court, a message concerning "arrival" is fully appropriate, when one considers that the very purpose of messages and messengers in general was that these travelled faster than caravans and other large, heavily laden travel groups. The semantic connection between kas$_4$ as a word for "messenger" and word meaning "to run" (Akkadian *lasāmu*) implies that such messengers at times quite literally jogged down the paths between settlements in order to relay messages as quickly as possible – a practice with deep historical parallels. Messages could thus have been sent in advance of the arrival of a large group of foreigners to Ebla, in which case TIL could refer to an "(impending) arrival" of people from GN^{ki}. Indeed, certain more fully formulated news items seem incontrovertibly to refer to such impending arrivals.[771] Similar messages of announcement are ubiquitous in the Old Assyrian material.[772]

On the other hand, when a large party departed Ebla for a distant foreign land, located several weeks' journey away, inevitably they would wish to inform those remaining at home of their safe arrival at their destination. For longer journeys, they

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[771] See e.g. A4, 17 (40): 1 tug$_2$-ni.ni / 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *En-na-Ma-lik* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / en / *mi-nu* / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / ba$_4$-ti "(Textiles) for Enna-Malik, (who brought) the news that the ruler (of Ebla$^{?}$/of Armi$^{?}$) has departed from Armi (towards Ebla);" A15, 23 (26): 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *U$_3$-du-ra* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / gi$_4$ "(Textiles) for *U$_3$-du-ra*, who brought the news: (someone from) Mari has returned (safely to Mari)."

[772] See Barjamovic 2011: ch. 1.

would sometimes send news back to Ebla while they were still en route, having reached a known midway point. The following attestation employs TIL in such a context, even though the term for "news" does not occur:

[A15, 24; month 5]

(51) (gifts) / *Du-si* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / *in* ud / kas$_4$-kas$_4$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / *ʾa$_5$-na* / *Mu-ur*^{ki} / TIL / *A-bar-sal*^{ki}
(52) *Za-bu$_3$-ru$_{12}$* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(52c) *in* ud / TUŠ:LU$_2$×TIL / *mi-<in>*[773] / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / *as$_2$-ti* / *Mu-ur*^{ki}

(51) (a rich set of textiles; gifts in precious metal) for DU-si of Kakmium, on the occasion when the diplomatic expedition, together with (some men of) Ebla towards Mur arrived at Abarsal.
(52) (a slightly less rich set of textiles; a lesser gift in precious metal) for Zaburu of Kakmium, on the occasion when he went to reside at Mari together with (some men from) Mur.[774]

The phrases which occur as part of the subclause *in* ud "on the occasion when," are, in general, comparable to those which occur with nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN, "news." The scribe's rare inclusion of prepositions in this context render the meaning of TIL, and the important related term TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL, clearer than usual. At the same time, it furnishes important data of geographic relevance. According to this passage, the settlement *Mu-ur*^{ki} apparently lay in the direction of Mari.[775] Abarsal was reached (TIL) by the travelling party (kas$_4$-kas$_4$),

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[773] So also Archi 2010b: 17, "...*mi* (an anomalous form for *mi-in*)." He further comments, "In this passage, TUŠ:LU$_2$×TIL seems to mean just "to reside; resident."
[774] For a similar translation, cf. Bonechi 2016a: 60, "(previous garments and objects)... for DU-si from *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} when the caravan (*in* ud kas$_4$-kas$_4$) (departed) from (*aš$_2$-ti*) Ebla to (*ʾa$_5$-na*) (in order) to reach (til) A-bar-sal$_4$^{ki}; (less precious garments and objects are given) to *Za-bu$_3$-ru$_{12}$* from *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} when (*in* ud) he (is gone) to reside (LU$_2$×TIL:TUŠ) in (*mi-<in>*) Mari (coming) from (*aš$_2$-ti*) *Mu-ur*^{ki}. For a different translation, c.f. Pomponio 2008: 249, "...in occasione (dell'andata) di viaggiatori da NL$_2$ a NL$_3$, per la sconfitta (TIL) di NL$_4$.... in occasione della ricevuta in NL$_2$ da NL$_3$.").
[775] It seems likely that *Mu-ur*^{ki} indicates the same place as *Mu-ru$_{12}$*^{ki} and *Mu:ru$_{12}$*^{ki}. Less certain is the identity with *Mu-ur$_2$*^{ki} (for Bonechi 1993: 248, *Mu-ur$_2$*^{ki} was part of the

consisting of men from the western kingdom of Kakmium[776] and from Ebla, on their way to (*ʾa$_5$-na*) Mur. Abarsal was therefore the (rough) halfway point between Ebla and Mur. A similar role for Abarsal as a midway point was already discussed above, in the context of a journey of men from Ebla and Armi to the Habur region.[777] This makes sense in light of Abarsal's likely location close to the Euphrates (suggested above all by its appearance in the Enna-Dagan letter).[778]

Having then arrived at Mur, one member of the travel group, *Za-bu$_3$-ru$_{12}$* of Kakmium, proceeded further in order to reside (TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL) at Mari, conducting some unspecified sort of business there. The context, as well as the association with the directional preposition *mi-<in>*, shows that TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL was not a purely static concept (such as, instead, tuš or al$_6$-tuš), but carried an implication of motion, hence the translation "travel in order to reside (at a place)." In all likelihood, the element TIL which is inscribed within LU$_2$ as part of the compound logogram TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL, is identical to the standalone TIL, "to arrive." Thus, the element TUŠ expresses the notion of residing at a place, while TIL expresses the idea of motion towards and arrival at a place (potentially, the element LU$_2$ lends the term a participial quality, denoting thereby type of function or a periodic professional designation).

The meaning of TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL is of relevance to the present discussion because it, like TIL, has been unjustifiably assigned an exclusively militaristic and violent meaning.

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region of Ebla, but based on the present passage, such a location seems impossible for *Mu-ur*^{ki}). Mur(u) features as the subject of a chancery text, A13, 12, and also occurs in the early Ebla-Mari dossier, in M12, 25 (see above §3.1.3.2).

[776] On Kakmium, see below §6.0

[777] A15, 17 (34); see above §4.2.5.3.

[778] On the location of Abarsal see §3.2.1.0.

According to some, TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL refers to a person who is acting as the "military occupant" of a conquered place.[779] However, exactly as is the case with TIL, the term is too frequently attested in too wide a variety of contexts for "military occupant" to be the only meaning. Sticking with a more generic translation of TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL as "travel in order to reside" leaves open the possibility that *some* occurrences might belong to a military context, but not all of them need to.[780]

In the above example, it seems inherently unlikely that the man from Kakmium could have went all the way to Mari in the context of a military occupation of that place. If one maintains a adherence to the theory that TIL always has a violent context, then one is compelled however to believe that Kakmium was, during the ArruLUM period, a mighty power, which also suffered some dramatic setbacks. In A15, 24 having apparently, with the help of Ebla, succeeded in "defeating" (TIL$^{?}$) Abarsal, Kakmium would in turn have gone on to perform a successful "military occupation" (TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL$^{?}$) against Mari (the role of Mur in this scenario would however be unclear). In another text dated to the same month (and so perhaps exactly one year later), Kakmium would have then turned around and "defeated" the major power of Armi (who was, however, at this

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[779] Biga 2008: 319 lists TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL under "les formules pour indiquer des actions militaires" and provides the following rendering: "Nom de Personne, normalement le vizir, tuš–LÚ×TIL Nom die Lieu = 'le vizir ou un haut fonctionnaire éblaïte occupe la ville qui a eté prise." Archi 2010b: 17 defines TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL as follows: "When a town was conquered, an '(official acting as) occupier,' TUŠ.LÚ×TIL, took possession of it (*even though the local king remained usually in power*) (emphasis mine)."

[780] Unfortunately, many of the occurrences of TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL, TIL, etc., presented in e.g. Biga 2008 and Archi 2010b, are mere excerpts from unpublished texts. Without a full publication, the context cannot be investigated, and so it is impossible to independently ascertain whether the occurrences of TIL, TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL etc. refer to genuine military conflicts or not. The only option is to disregard such citations and excerpts until the original sources are made fully available.

time a close ally of Ebla).[781] In the intervening period however, Kakmium would have suffered a "defeat" at the hands of the minor kingdom of Manuwat (located between Ebla and Mari).[782] Only a few months prior to this, Kakmium would have itself suffered a "military occupation" at the hands of Ebla (during which month Ebla also "occupied" Hassuwan),[783] an event which, according to one view, resulted in the delivery of the severed head of Kakmium's ruler to Ebla as a grim war trophy.[784] More plausibly, none of these occurrences have anything to do with war or violence at all, but instead are scribal notations of rather generic valence, referring to contexts of diplomacy and trade.

The more mundane explanation as "arrival" thus makes better sense of the frequency and reoccurring nature of messages containing TIL. Directly comparable to the above-cited passages from [A15, 24] is the following slightly later occurrence, from the time of Ibrium. Once again, an instance of TIL is directly followed by TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL:

[A4, 10; month broken]

(18) 1 *'a$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Gi-a-da-mu* / maškim / *Ib-ri$_2$-um* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Ga-DU-ma-an*^{ki} / TIL
(19) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 aktum-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / 1 ib$_2$-la$_2$ tar ku$_3$-gi / *En-na-NI-il* / lu$_2$ *Ri-i$_3$-ma-lik* / lu$_2$-kar / TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL / *Ga-DU-ma-an*^{ki}

(18) 1 *a*., 1 colorful sash for Giʾa-Damu, agent of Ibrium, for having brought the news: (someone) arriving at GaDUman.

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[781] A15, 56 (month 5) (20): nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} TIL
[782] A15, 45 (month broken) (65): nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN *Ma-nu-wa-at*^{ki} *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} TIL
[783] A15, 10 (month xx) (1) Gifts, PN, TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}; (2) Gifts, PN, TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}. Pomponio 2008, 2010 *passim* translates TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL as "ricevitore;" cf. Pomponio 2003.
[784] Tonietti 2013; in the present view this reconstruction is untenable. For the translation of sag at Ebla as a financial term "capital" (instead of a reference to a literal head), cf. Sallaberger 2018: 133. It is probably this financial meaning of sag which underlies all the alleged references to deliveries of severed heads at Ebla.

(19) 1 robe, 1 heavy garment, 1 fine colorful sash, 1 belt-holster weighing half a shekel of gold, for Enna-NI-il, subordinate of Reʾi-Malik, the merchant, who went to reside at GaDUman.

Needless to say, the presence here of a "merchant" (lu_2-kar) does not connote violent affairs. Section (18) could refer to news which was delivered to Ebla after *Enna-NI-il* (19) the merchant had "arrived in order to reside" (TUŠ.LU_2×TIL) at GaDUman. Alternatively, the "news" of (18) could have referred not to a delivery to Ebla, but to GaDUman, in advance of the arrival of the slower moving caravan of En-na-NI-il.

[A15, 18; month 8]
(21) 1 *ʾa₃-da-um*-tug_2 / *Bu₃-da-ma-lik* / lu_2 *En-na-NI* / di-ku_5 / nig_2-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Ma-ri₂* TIL

We know that Enna-NI the judge was one of the officials who brought gifts to Mari (see above 3.1.2). In all likelihood, therefore, this news item refers to his "arrival" at Mari on one of his many trips there, where he was likely engaging in both diplomatic activity and commercial business. A "destruction" of Mari at this time by an unknown, anonymous enemy is contextually inappropriate.

[A15, 16; month 1]
(43) 2 gu-dul_3-tug_2 2 ib_2-iii-gun_3-tug_2 / *Ir₃-am₆-da-mu* / *En-na-Il* / nig_2-AN.AN.AN.AN / TIL.TIL / *A-mu-mar*^{ki} / *aš₂-ti* / *U₉-ra-na-a*^{ki}
(43) Two cloaks, two colorful sashes for Irʾam-Damu and Enna-Il, for delivering) the news that (a large group of Eblaites) has arrived at Ammumar with (a group of men from) Warana.

U₉-ra-na-a^{ki} was probably located close to Mari, being likely identical with the *Wa-ra-ne*^{ki} mentioned in a dedicatory inscription found there (see above 3.1.3.2 on the occurrence of *Wa-ra-na*^{ki} in M12, 25). *A-mu-mar*^{ki} seems to be a unique occurrence. This passage was rendered in the *editio princeps* as "…la notizia degli uccisi di NL_1 da parte

di NL$_2$." A translation "da parte" for *aš$_2$-ti* is, however, impossible because *aš$_2$-ti* only ever means "with."[785] The agent of a passive verb cannot be expressed in this way, nor does it seem at all likely that TIL.TIL could means "deaths" or "multiple defeats." Accordingly, a violent meaning for TIL.TIL should probably be ruled out. In this and other occurrences, TIL.TIL most likely is reduplicated to indicate a plurality of the subject, thus referring to the arrival at a location by a large number of individuals. The news item is most likely to refer to a group of Eblaites, well known to the palace, who were travelling to an exotic place, and about whom a message about their safety was desired. Amumar could thus, like *U$_9$-ra-na-a*^{ki}, perhaps have been located somewhere in the vicinity of Mari. Note, in this regard, that early Mari-Ebla texts allude frequently to mercantile affairs involving *U$_9$-ra-na-a*^{ki} (see above §3.2.3.2).

Two passages, both from unpublished tablets, have been similarly assigned a violent context, where the syntax of the passages does not seem to allow this:

[TM.75.G.2429][786] obv. xxiii 16–xxiv 3:
(gifts in previous metal) …*Wa-ru$_{12}$-tum* nig$_2$-mul *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} *ʾA$_3$-du*^{ki} TIL

[TM.75.G.2274][787]
(textiles and identical gifts in precious metal)
…*Wa-ru$_{12}$-tum Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} nig$_2$-mul *ʾA$_3$-du*^{ki} *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} TIL

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[785] Equally impossible is the translation of *aš$_2$-ti* in Archi/Biga 2003: 4, for the passage in A7, 115 rev. i 1–ii 6: …*in* / mu / *Ma-ri$_2$*^{ki} / AGA$_3$.ŠE$_3$ / *aš$_2$-ti* / *ʾA$_3$-ti-NI*, which the authors render as "...the year (in which) Mari was vanquished by ʾAtini." Although ʾAtini is never mentioned again, two possibilities for this passage could be "Year when Mari vanquished (an unmentioned enemy) with (the help of) ʾAtini," or perhaps more likely, given the context of the tablet, which deals with a purification ceremony of Hadda *sikil / ^{d}*ʾA$_3$-da*), the "Year when Mari slaughtered (animals for a feast) with ʾAtini."
[786] Quoted in Archi/Biga 2003: 13, where it is identified as an annual metals account and assigned to year Ibbi-Zikir 10. Unfortunately, the tablet's division into casings are not indicated, but it can probably be assumed that each word stands in its own case.
[787] Ibid., identified as a monthly textile account (no month indicated).

While it is true that Ebla syntax can at times seem loose to us, and so poses interpretational difficulties, it doesn't seem permissable to take "dog bites man" and "man bites dog" to have the same meaning, or to force the latter into "man (gets) bit (by) dog" in order to match the former.[788]

In light of the numerous other apparently non-violent occurrences of TIL, it seems much more likely that behind TIL is some action more neutral with regard to syntax. One could perhaps understand "Mari and ʾAdu have completed business with one another." Or, the first item might mean "News of Mari: ʾAdu has arrived." while the second is simply "News: Adu has arrived at Mari." A less consequential meaning of TIL requires less grammatical twisting to see the same meaning in both passages than one invoking dramatic concepts like "defeat, destruction, kill."

Moreover, there is a perfectly reasonable context for such a news item at Ebla, delivered by a man from Mari, and which concerns Mari and ʾAdu having a meeting with one another. There is preserved from Ebla an entire chancery text, in which ʾAdu's duplicitous behavior towards Ebla in favor of an alliance instead with Mari is reported (see above §3.2.4.3). It has been argued above that the source of this information could only have been Mari itself. This news item could thus refer to that very moment, or a similar one, when Mari was "tattling" on ʾAdu, so both powers would have an excuse to oppress their weaker interstitial neighbor.

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[788] For Ibid., "The passage[s]… must refer to the same event (the total of silver reported is the same), but the syntactical order has strangely been inverted."

A scenario instead, where a Mari messenger reported to Ebla about a "destruction" which Mari inflicted on ʾAdu, only for Mari to find itself on the receiving end of "destruction" from Ebla a short while (allegedly 3–4 years) later, after which Mari was then able to turn the tables and inflict a final destruction on Ebla[789] – seems overly complicated and overly dramatic.

Returning thus to Hassuwan, based on the above arguments, it seems unlikely that Ebla and Hassuwan were at war with one another at the time that these records were produced. Nor does it seem likely that "defeat" or "destructions" was continually inflicted upon Hassuwan by some unnamed enemy. A mundane rendering of TIL produces much better sense:

[A15, 5; month 5]
(3) 1 sal-tug$_2$ maškim / *Ar-si-a-ha* / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} / TIL
(6) 1 gir$_2$-mar-tu ti ku$_3$-gi / *Za-a-mi* / dumu-nita en / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(7) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(8) 1 *gu-zi-tum*-tug$_2$ 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Su-mi-a* / 2 sal-tug$_2$ maškim-*SU$_3$*
(33) 1 sal-tug$_2$ dumu-nita en / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

(3) 1 thin cloth for an agent of Arsi-Aha, (for bringing the news): (a party of men from) Hassuwan will be arriving (soon at Ebla).
(6) 1 golden dagger with a point for Zaʾami, royal son of Hassuwan.
(7) 1 NI.NI and 1 multicolored sash for (somone from) Kakmium.
(8) 1 robe, 1 gown, 1 fine multicolored garment for Sumiʾa (of Armi), 2 thin garments for his (2) agents.
(33) 1 thin garment for a royal son of Hassuwan.

Note that this is the same text already quoted above in §4.3.0 – characterized by an interaction between Armi and Mari, via Ebla – just one month before the arrival of the Armi king to Ebla (§4.2.5f). The immediately adjacent mention, aftter the prince of Hassuwan, of gifts for a representative of Kakmium and for a man of Armi, are probably

[789] As reconstructed by Ibid.

not incidental, but point to a diplomatic interraction among these states – which all belonged to the same rough geographic circle – at Ebla. One can thus better integrate this particular occurrence of TIL within the busy diplomatic environment of Ebla at this time, rather than seeing evidence for unrealistic far-flung military campaigns on the part of Ebla.

Each occurrence of TIL must be studied in and of itself and integrated into as full of a context as possible – for which full publication will be first neccessary. One can remain open to the possibility that some occurrences of TIL might have a violent background – just as some occurrences of *kašādu* mean "conquer" while many simply mean "arrive."

However, especially given the frequency of the occrurences, a non-violent translation is the better default option; it is up to those who wish to reconstruct wars to prove that such wars really happened. Vast shifts in a foreign power's status before Ebla – from friend, to enemy, and back to friend again, multiple times over – are to be ruled out. It is thus very likely that some or all of the elaborate historical and chronological reconstructions that have been proposed based upon the exclusively violent understanding of TIL will need to be revised.

5.6 The fate of Hassuwan

This notwithstanding, it does appear that a change occurred in Hassuwan's status around the start of the Ibrium period. The number of attestations of Hassuwan drop dramatically,

and Hassuwan's merchants more or less disappear from the scene.[790] Many of the few late attestations come from still unpublished texts, so they cannot be studied in full detail.

There does not, however, seem to be any reason to connect this change in Hassuwan's status with the occurrences of TIL, since this change only occurred some time after the attestations of TIL, which are instead interspersed throughout the peak times of Ebla-Hassuwan relations. The reasons for this change remain unclear. The fact that Hassuwan does continue to be attested, albeit rarely, implies that there could have been a political reason for this change, rather than to assume Hassuwan had been conquered or destroyed. It could well be that Hassuwan and Ebla, for some reason, ended their intense mercantile relations, perhaps to the favor of a different power.

One notes, however, that *A-da-si-in* (identified as the ruler of Hassuwan above 5.3.0), along with some of his sons, including *A-ti*, *Za-gu-ru*$_{12}$, and *Iš-mi*/*Il*$_2$*-mi*, continue to occur at Ebla during the post-Arrulum period, but usually without any title or reference to a toponym:

[A1, 13; month 1]
(6) 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ / *Ti-ri*$_2$*-ik-Da-mu* / dam / en / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki} / DU.DU / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(11) 2 *ʾa*$_3$*-da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 2 aktum-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iv-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ / i$_3$-giš sag / *Il*$_2$*-mi* / *A-ti* / lu$_2$ *A-da-si-in*

This reference from a tablet of the Ibrium period thus alludes to *A-da-si-in*'s death, because such unction rites (i$_3$-giš sag) were typically performed for the surving members of a deceased person's family. At the same time, it would seem that his surviving wife,

[790] Cf. Archi 2008: 91–92.

uniquely attested, was now undertaking a (permanent?) journey to Kakmium in the west, with Ebla the apparent intermediary point. Why exactly this was, we cannot be certain.

A few other texts make additional references reference to to the death of *A-da-si-in*:

[A4, 22; month broken]
(25) 1 *ʾa₃-da-um*-tug₂ 1 aktum-tug₂ 1 ib₂-ii-tug₂-sa₆-gun₃ / i₃-giš sag / *A-ti* / lu₂ / *A-da-si-in*

[A3, 596; month broken]
(2′) 1 *a₃-da-um*-tug₂ 1 sal-tug₂ 1 ib₂-iii-gun₃-tug₂ / *A-da-si-in* / E₂×PAP

He is mentioned in a few additional fragments, of uncertain date but probably from the Ibrium period or later. This suggests there could be yet more references to this individual and his sons among the unpublished tablets:

[A3, 940] iv′ 11′f′: 2 sal-tug₂ ti-tug₂ / *A-ti* / lu₂ *A-da-še₃-in*
[A12, 772; month broken] ii′ 5′ f: 1 *a₃-da-um*-tug₂-ii 1 aktum-tug₂ 1 ib₂-iii-tug₂-sa₆-gun₃ / *A-ti* / lu₂ *A-da-s-in*
[A3, 196] iii 8f: 1 ib₂-iii-gun₃-sa₆-tug₂ / *Iš-mi* / lu₂ / *A-da-si-in*
[A12, 1048] i′ 6′f : 1 ib₂-iii-sa₆-gun₃-tug₂ / *A-ti* / *H*[*a-zu-wa-an*^{ki}]
[A3, 562] iv′ 6′ 1 aktum-tug₂ / *Il₂-mi* / lu₂ *A-da-si-in*

Strikingly, *A-da-si-in*, by now already deceased, continued to be a known figure to the scribes of the Ibbi-Zikir period, and a patronymic by which his son, still in some way active on the Ebla scene, could be identified:

[A4, 18; month 4]
(44) 1 aktum-tug₂ / *Il₂-mi* / lu₂ *A-da-si-in*

Ties with Hassuwan thus seem by no means to have been severed, but deeper investigation of the matter will have to await the publication of the relevant sources of the middle and late Ebla periods.[791]

6.0 Kakmium

6.1 Introduction and Overview

The economic importance and unique position of Kakmium, compared to other states of seeming middle rank, has been recognized and alluded to in the past.[792] However, in recent literature Kakmium has been treated somewhat generically. In political status, it is seen as one of the many miscellaneous middle-rank states, which recurrently appear in texts of the so-called "*ARET* I, 1–9" type.[793] This reflects its proposed geographic localization; it has been sought on the upper Euphrates, north of Karkamish,[794] where many of the other such states are thought to have been located. However, the lists which have been invoked in this context do not reflect a geographical grouping, but instead a

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[791] Cf. the paraphrased references from unpublished tablets in Archi 2008: 91–92.

[792] Archi 1993: "[The merchants, lu_2-kar] came from various city-states, but their largest numbers were from Kakmium, Manuwat, and Mari." Compare the statement to a more recent one, Archi 2011: 27, "No other state [than Armi] sent so many people to Ebla, especially merchants, lu_2-kar." Thus, in terms of the quantity of its merchants attested at Ebla, Kakmium was comparable on the one hand to Armi, and on the other hand to Mari and Manuwat (where Manuwat was an interstitial, mid-rank polity between Mari and Ebla, see above §3.2.2).

[793] See above §2.1.7

[794] Archi 2011: 11, "It is impossible to determine the location of Ibubu, NIrar, or Kakmium." Ibid.: 6, "The list of these cities (ARET I 1–9) opens with NI-rar, probably north of Karkamiš. Kakmium must have been in the same area." Archi 2014: 164, "Quelques documents des dernières années du ministre Ibbi-Zikir enregistraient les envois annuels (habituellement du mois IX) aux souverains des cités qui reconnaissaient l'hégémonie d'Ébla.... La liste commence avec NIrar, probablement au nord de Karkamiš. Kakmium devait se trouver dans la même région."

political one, related only to these kingdoms' peer status as middle-rank kingdoms before Ebla.

A deeper investigation reveals that, already beginning in the texts of the ArruLUM period, the quantity and quality of attestations concerning Kakmium set it apart from the miscellaneous Euphratean states. Kakmium is a place of great importance when it comes to trade. Many of the goods with which Kakmium is associated, are associated only with one other place, namely, Armi. The most important of these are certain coastal food products, and timber, both of which strongly suggest a location west of Ebla, towards the Mediterranean.

It has already been recognized that Kakmium must likely share a border with Armi.[795] Therefore, our location of Kakmium to the west of Ebla is, in part, a consequence of our location of Armi in Cilicia. At the same time, the case made below for seeking Kakmium in the west bolsters the probability that our location of Armi is correct.

Kakmium was an interstitial state, between the larger powers of Armi and Ebla. There seems to be a good chance that, from the Ebla perspective, Kakmium was to Armi as Manuwat was to Mari. Both Kakmium and Manuwat served as buffer states, and both were to some degree caught up in the dealings between the stronger major powers on either side of them. Tellingly, the most commonly attested merchants (lu_2-kar) from the Ibrium period onwards are, on the one hand, the ones from Mari and Manuwat, and on the other, the ones from Armi and Kakmium. Geographically, Kakmium is most likely to

[795] Archi 2011: 11, "The territory of Kakmium bordered on that of Armi ..."

be sought in the direction of the ʿAmuq Valley, the ancient plain of Antioch in the modern Hatay province of Turkey.[796]

6.1.2 Kakmium, NIrar, and Hassuwan

Previously invoked as of potential geographical significance has been the occurrence, in a passage of the Abarsal Treaty, of Kakmium alongside NI-rar and Hassuwan (see above §3.2.3). This has been based the belief that the passage implies that all three places were close to one another.[797] However, the context may well imply just the opposite. Namely, these places were far from each other, and located on "opposite corners of the map" from the perspective of Ebla.

The passage in question forbids Abarsal from engaging in relations with "Kakmium, Hassuwan, or NI-rar," without going through Ebla. The greater context concerns the travel of messengers and caravans, and the relationship of these to diplomatic and commercial affairs. When it comes to these, Ebla is always to have the superior position. It could be, therefore, that these three locations are mentioned not because Ebla wished to single each of them out for a special prohibition, but because they were geographically paradigmatic examples. They could have been meant to trace a sort of triangle, delineating a range within which Abarsal could not pursue independent

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[796] As also for Bonechi 2016a: 59 fn. 193 ("to me, between Ebla and the ʿAmuq") and Catagnoti 2016: 48 ("La 'Montagna del bosso'... si trovava presso Ugarit.... la spiegazione più semplice per il ruolo di *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} e *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} nell'approvvigionamento eblaita del legname di bosso è che questi due regni controllassero la 'Montagna del bosso....').

[797] Archi 2011: 6, "A location to the north for Kakmium is suggested also by a passage in the *Treaty with Abarsal*, *ARET* XIII 5 § 39: "(If) the cities of Kakmium, Hassuwan, and NIrar enter into alliance (with Ebla)." Ibid., 27: "Kakmium... was probably east of Hassuwan (Abarsal Treaty, *ARET* XIII § 39: Kakmium, Hassuwan, NIrar."

diplomatic ventures. This makes sense within the context of the treaty, and it fits with what can be proposed for the location of these three places based on other grounds.

Hassuwan has already been discussed above, and there is no disagreement about its general location in the Upper Euphratean region. This can therefore serve as a starting point.

Turning to NI-rar, it seems impossible that it could have been located anywhere near Hassuwan. Instead, it was located quite close to Ebla, actually within the realm of Ebla itself.[798] Of decisive importance for this localization is the occurence of NI-rar in the Ebla royal ritual, as part of the cultic itinerary undertaken by the Ebla king and queen: "The king and the queen sit upon the two seats of their ancestors (located at the shrine) of the waters of Masad, the one (located within) NIrar."[799] Tellingly, no other comparable foreign kingdom is mentioned in the royal ritual, which instead concerns towns of the Ebla countryside such as, eg. *Bi$_2$-na-aš*^{ki}, which is possibly identical with the modern town of Binnish, less than 20 km northwest of Tell Mardikh. The ritual specifies that on "day 4" (20) the couple was in Binaš, while on "day 5" (21) they were in Masad-of-NIrar. Thus NIrar was at most ca. 40-50 km distant from Tell Mardikh, probably less.[800] A location north of Karkamiš[801] would be too distant. One can note furthermore that persons from NIrar are quite frequently mentioned in association with conveyances (šu-mu-tak$_4$) involving cities that were certainly part of the Ebla countryside, such as e.g.

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[798] See already Bonechi 1991a: 68f.
[799] A11, 1 (21); 2 (21): ...al$_6$-tuš / en / *wa* / *MA-LIK-TUM* / *al$_6$* / 2 giš-šudun / *a-ba-*ʾ*a$_3$-su-ma-a* (var: a-mu-*SU$_3$* a-mu-*SU$_3$*) / a-a (var: a / lu$_2$) / *Ma-sa-ad*^{ki} (var: *Ma-ša-du*^{ki}) / *sa-ti* (var: *ša-ti*) / *NI-ra-ar*^{ki}
[800] Bonechi 1991a: 69.
[801] As for Archi 2011: 6.

Barga'u, Abad, Larugadu, Barru, and Luban.[802] In another chancery text, the ruler of NIrar appears, along with that of *Ga-kam*$_4$^{ki}, as part of Ebla's entourage, when engaging in a meeting with tribal chieftains of Ibʾal.[803]

It appears that NI-rar could have had a political status analogous to modern European microstates, such as Monaco or Andorra. The occurrence within the royal ritual suggests a culturally important place. Perhaps NI-rar had nominal political independence for old historical reasons, but in practical terms, and on the international scene, it was beholden to the larger state of Ebla, which surrounded it.

Thus, with NI-rar located nowhere close to Hassuwan, there is no longer any reason why the passage in the Abarsal treaty should imply that Kakmium was likewise close to Hassuwan. If one places Kakmium to the west of Ebla as presently suggested, then the result would be indeed be a rather sensible "triangle" that could have represented the zone within which Abarsal was forbidden to conduct diplomatic or commercial ventures. A northeastern limit would be formed by Hassuwan, situated somewhere north of Karkamish, along or near the Euphrates; the southern point of the triangle would be represented by NI-rar, which was essentially a principality located within the Ebla kingdom proper; and the westernmost limit would be the kingdom of Kakmium, probably located in or near the Amuq Valley.

6.2. Goods of Kakmium

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[802] Bonechi 1991a: 69.
[803] A13, 11 (2): al$_6$-DU / *I-ga-li-im* / Puzur$_4$-*ha-al$_6$* / *A-ba$_4$-il* / *Bi-ni-ma-ni* / en / *Ib-la*^{ki} / en / *NI-la-ar*^{ki} / *wa* / en / *Ga-kam$_4$*^{ki} / i$_3$ nidba$_2$.

One of the strongest clues towards a localization of Kakmium in the west is that Kakmium, along with Armi, are the sole locations attested in association with giš-taškarin, which likely came from the Amanus mountains. Another is that Kakmium was apparently renowned as a wine-producing region, being the most frequently attested location making wine deliveries to Ebla.[804] Finally, Kakmium, like Armi, was the origin of certain coastal delicacies, including "shrimp" (*ki-ba-um* and variant spellings, below 6.2.2) and "fish sauce" A.HA.

6.2.1 Timber

In general, timber is mentioned quite infrequently in the Ebla archives, compared to what its actual economic importance probably was. This is because timber did not generally count as an item of everyday accounting, in the way textiles or precious metals did. It was not something that the scribal administrators needed to exercise narrow control over, counting it down to the smallest unit and recording it as an income or an expense. Characteristically, we mostly only get to hear about timber precisely at the moment when it interfaces with the world of textiles or precious metals, and it somehow valued in relation to these.

In the following example, from a fragment of very early date, a man named Ipṭur-malik is rewarded with a textile for delivering a type of timber, the origin of which is identified as Kakmium:

[A12, 807; month broken]

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[804] Archi et al. 1993: 326 considered Kakium "il centro che maggiormente fornisce Ebla di vino."

iii′ 1f: 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-dur-ma-lik* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ giš-taškarin / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}

iii′ 1f:: 1 NI.NI and one colorful sash for Ipṭur-malik, who delievered boxwood of Kakmium.

This fragment A12, 807 features the occurence in vi′ 4–5 of Ikna-Damu / UL.KI, an Ebla LUGAL of the pre-Arrulum generation. The meaning of the title UL.KI is unknown, but it seems to be exclusive to this official. According to A7, 7 he was present at ma$_2$-NE^{ki} when Iplus-Il received his gift from Igriš-Halab, as narrated in the Enna-Dagan letter (see above 3.1.2). Ikna-Damu "retired" upon the ascendancy of ArruLUM,[805] and thus his presence here provides an unambiguous criterion for a very early dating.[806] Other aspects revealing an early date include the fact that šu-mu-tak$_4$ and giš-taškarin are written in the same case, the abbreviated spelling in viii ′4: <nig$_2$>-bar-DU [807] (a textile, a "foot wrapping" of some sort) and the occurrence in viii ′5 of a reference to the LUGAL of *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$[808] (later texts use UGULA instead).

Indeed, other texts that look like they could be either pre-ArruLUM or very early ArruLUM show that diplomatic relations between Kakmium and Ebla were well-developed already very early on, close in time to the events of the Enna-Dagan letter and

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[805] Archi/Biga 2003: 4.
[806] Catagnoti 2016: 33 stated that a reference to giš-taškarin in a text of the ArruLUM period (A15, 51) is "certamente più antico" than the present fragment A12, 807, but this is unjustified. A12, 807 is clearly the oldest text of that group of texts mentioning giš-taškarin.
[807] Cf. eg. <nig$_2$>-bar-DU in A7, 16 (6), an early text which also features *Ik-na-da-mu* ul.ki in (25), and whose colophon (41) reads: *in* ud / *NI-zi* / lugal / 3 mu.
[808] Note the occurrence of lugal *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ in A15, 55 (18), a text which likewise could also be from before ArruLUM's primacy, as it contains many characteristic abbreviated spellings (eg. *gu* for *gu*<*-zi-tum*>. It also metions an anonymous UL.KI in (91), perhaps referring to Ikna-Damu (cf. Pomponio 2013: 223).

the drafting of the Abarsal treaty. Although A12, 807 is unfortunately only a fragment, it does provide enough additional context to reveal that this delivery of Kakmium's timber took place in the context of diplomatic affairs concerning not only Kakmium, but also Hassuwan; there are also toponyms which elsewhere seem to be associated with Armi.

[A12, 807; month broken]

iii′ 1f: 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-dur-ma-lik* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ giš-taškarin / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} /... / [...]
iv′ 1f: 1 sal-tug$_2$ / 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-tug$_2$ / 1 giš-šilig 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu ku$_3$-gi / *Ib-du-du-lum* / dumu-nita en / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / ... / [...]
vi′ 1f: [...] / *in-ze$_2$* / TUŠ.LU$_2$×TIL / maškim / *Ik-na-da-mu* / [U]L.KI /
vi′ 6f: 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-[tug$_2$] / *En-na*-BAD / maškim / *Dab$_6$-ki*-^{d}Utu / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / ... / [...]
vii' 3f: 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / šeš *Ki-li-im* / *Wa-a-ra-an*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / dara$_3$-maš-da$_3$$^{!}$(NI)
vii' 7f: 3 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Hal-si-um*^{ki} / hi-mu-DU / BAR.AN [...] ...
viii' 3f: 1 *gu-zi-<tum>*-tug$_2$ 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / 2 bar-DU / lugal *A-sa-al$_6$*^{ki}
viii' 6f: 2 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / dumu-nita-*SU$_3$* / [...]
ix' 1f: [...] / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki} / šu-mu-tak$_4$ ku$_2$

iii′ 1f: 1 NI.NI and one colorful sash for Ipṭur-malik, who delievered boxwood from Kakmium.
iv′ 1f: 1 thin cloth, 1 fine colorful sash, 1 battleaxe, 1 golden dagger for Ibdu-Dūrum, royal son of Kakmium.
vi′ 1f ...for In-Ṣīt, agent of Ikna-Damu the UL.KI.
vi′ 6f: 1 colorful sash for Enna-Baʾal, agent of Ṭāb-kī-^{d}UTU of Kakmium.
vii' 3f: 1 colorful sash for the brother of Giʾa-Lim of Waʾaran, who conveyed *gazelles*.
vii' 7f: 3 thin cloths and 1 colorful sash for a man of Halsiʾum who conveyed equids.
viii' 3f: 1 robe, 1 gown, 1 fine colorful sash, and 2 foot-wraps for the LUGAL of Asal.
viii' 6f: 2 cloaks and 2 colorful sashes for his (2) sons.
ix' 1f: [...] for a man of Hassuwan, who delivered food.

Thus we see the presence at Ebla during this month, when boxwood of Kakmium was delivered to Ebla, of a royal son of Kakmium, Ibdu-Dūrum, who seems to be otherwise unattested. Likewise unattested elsewhere seems to be Ṭāb-kī-^{d}UTU, a name which was almost certainly borne by a woman – "Sweet like the Sun" – with the sun having been considered a goddess in this western region, unlike in Mesopotamia. It is thus interesting

that an agent of a female of Kakmium could be operating at Ebla, whatever their exact roles may have been. Ṭāb-kī-^{d}UTU should likely have been a princess or a queen.

The other toponyms mentioned on this fragment are also interesting. On the one hand, we see a fragmentary occurrence of Hassuwan, where a man was rewarded for delivering "food." As we will see below, Hassuwan and Kakmium seem to have interacted with each other via Ebla, with a man of Hassuwan on one such occasion having brought gukkal-gukkal or "fat tailed sheep" with him to Ebla – the generic "food" of this occurrence could have been something similar.

The place *Hal-si-um*^{ki} seems to be a unique occurrence, but it probably represents a variant of *Hal-sum*^{ki} or *Hal-šum*^{ki}. Above, in §4.2.5.4, we encounted *Hal-sum*^{ki} in A15, 17 (9), in a context characterized by the westward movement of men from Kakmium and Armi towards the Habur region, via Ebla. *Hal-sum*^{ki} is also mentioned in a complicated chancery text alongside Armi.[809] This occurrence thus opens the possibility that Armi could have been mentioned in the lost part of this tablet. The fact that *Hal-si-um*^{ki} here brings one or more valuable BAR.AN-equids is also noteworthy, also considering that the context of the aforementioned occurrence in A15, 17 likely concerned the acquisition of equids by Armi and Kakmium.

As for Waʾaran,[810] it was a settlement that belonged to the Ebla kingdom and was the seat of a LUGAL, namely, *Ki-li-im*, known as *Gi-a-li-im* in later texts.[811]

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[809] A13, 9 (47): [DU.DU] / *si-in* nig$_2$-kas$_4$ / *Hal-sum*^{ki} / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *Lam-mi*^{ki} / šu-ba$_4$-ti.
[810] See Bonechi 1993: 321 for the variant spellings: *Wa-a-ra-an*^{ki}, *Wa-la-nu*^{ki}, *Wa-ra-an*^{ki}, *Wa-ra-nu*^{ki}. The Ebla Waʾaran is to be distinguished from a place near Mari called *Wa-ra-ne*^{ki} (attested in Gelb/Kienast 1990: 8–9, MP 7), which appears in Ebla texts instead as *U$_9$-ra-na-a*^{ki} (except for *Wa-ra-nu*^{ki} in M12, 25, above §3.1.3.2).

Also potentially related to Armi could be the toponym *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$, which seems to have been a part of the Ebla countryside. The mention of a LUGAL is likely to be understood as a reference to an Eblaite "nobleman" or officer.[812] Above in §4.5.0, *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ occurred in A15, 56 (63) in direct association with a trip whereby tin was brought from Ebla to Armi.[813] In another passage *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ appears directly alongside a reference to some diplomatic occurrence involving Kakmium and Armi:

[A15, 16; month 1]
(20) 1 ib$_2$-iii-sa$_6$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Mi-gi-il* / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(21) 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ur$_2$-sa$_2$-um*^{ki} / su-mu-tak$_4$ / KA.KA
(22) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$
(23) 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ 1 sal-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / nig$_2$-AN.AN.AN.AN / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / en / igi-du$_8$ / *me* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

Notably, Hassuwan and Ursa'um appear directly next to each other, with Ursa'um delivering an object – KA.KA – of uncertain nature. Or is KA.KA rather something abstract, like "*orders*" (du11-du11 or inim-inim)? The term igi-du$_8$ should suggest a meeting or face-to-face encounter; it seems unlikely that ME could be a syllabic spelling for the logogram me$_3$ "battle."[814] Other occurrences reveal that igi-du$_8$ was something that, like KA.KA above, could be "conveyed" (šu-mu-tak$_4$). It can occur directly with various

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[811] On this official see Bonechi 2016a: 55f.
[812] A mu-DU text of the pre-ArruLUM period (Archi 2000: 31–32) seems to identify the lugal of *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ as *Ib-gi-da-mu*, since the sons of that lugal are grouped under his delivery: M2, 26 vi 1–vii 1: 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ / dumu-nita-dumu-nita / lugal / *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ / 2 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 ib$_2$-iii-tug-gun$_2$ 1 gir$_2$ mar-tu 1 banšur$^?$ / mu-DU / *Ib-gi-da-mu*.
[813] A15, 56 (month 9): (59) 2 tug$_2$-ni.ni *La$_2$-du-gu* / *En-ma-ru$_{12}$* / *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$/ ... /
(62) 2 gu-<dul$_3$-tug$_2$> 2 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-dur-Il* / *Iš-ma$_2$-gar$_3$-du* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / 2 ma-na ša-pi nagga$_x$(an) / *Ar-mi-um*^{ki} / (63) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *A-sa-al*$_6^{ki}$ / (64) 1 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ib-du-ru$_{12}$* / *ma-za-um* / DU / *Ar-mi* ^{ki}
[814] As, very hesitatingly, for Archi 2011: 7, "gift for the news that the city of Kakmium the king … the battle(!?) of A[rmi]."

prepositions like *in*, *si-in*, and *mi-nu*.[815] Perhaps, therefore, *me* represents an archaic spelling of the preposition *mi-in* or *mi-nu*.[816] One could understand the news item of (23) perhaps as: "news concerning Kakmium: (its king) has *departed for a face-to-face-meeting* towards Armi." Possibly, the KA.KA conveyed by Ursa'um in (21) could be related to the igi-du$_8$ of (23), though exactly what is taking place is not so clear. In any event, these entries seem to allude to a complicated diplomatic situation in the region to the northeast and northwest of Ebla, one in which Ebla was highly interested.

6.2.2 Coastal food products

The food product spelled called *ki-ba-um* (8x), *ki-ba-im* (1x), *gi-ba-um* (1x) is no longer mentioned after the ArruLUM period. In general, the ArruLUM texts mention deliveries of exotic animals and certain products that no longer occur later. It seems more likely that this change has a scribal background, rather than reflecting that these commodities were no longer available at Ebla.

Ki-ba-um is mentioned in association with only three different toponyms: Armi, Kakmium, and Irpeš. On the other hand, the commodity A.HA has already been discussed above (§ 4.2.2.1), with an argument for its translation as "fish sauce." A.HA, too, is only associated with a limited set of places, namely, Armi, Kakmium and *ʾA$_3$-ma*^{ki}. The animal *gi-ba-um* is listed in the bilingual lexical lists, as the equivalent of Sumerian AMA.UG$_5$.GA. A translation "locust" has been advanced on the basis of comparative

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816 Cf. the archaic preposition spelled *mi* (Pomponio 2013: 457).

Semitic etymology.[817] While it is true that the consumption of locusts is known in the Near East up until this day, and are even attested in later periods in a palatial context, such a definition does not fit the limited distribution among the the toponyms very well.

Kakmium and Armi are among the sole sources of "fish sauce," and at the same time of *ki-ba-um*. This makes it seem very likely that these putative "locusts" were, in fact, "locusts of the sea" – i.e. shrimp or another type of aquatic crustacean. Cross-linguistically, this is not at all a far-fetched contention. In the Roman period, Pliny the Elder referred to crayfish as "locustae crusta." The word "lobster" likewise derives from an Old English pronunciation of the Latin word "locust." A similar error appears to lie behind the definition of *šiqqu* (fish sauce) in the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary: "*garum* (a brine or sauce made of fish or locusts)."[818] Locusts cannot ferment and cannot produce a flavor like fish, so these "locusts" must actually be shrimp/prawns, crabs, lobsters, or something similar. In Akkadian, shrimp were indeed known as "locusts of the sea" (*erib* For shrimp as the Akkadian "sea locust" (*erib tiʾāmtim*)[819]

Thus, the *ki-ba-um* is to be linked with the commodity A.HA, for which it even could have been one of the ingredients. Unlike fish, crustaceans could have been delivered still alive to locations distant from a body of water. The nearly exclusive association of A.HA and *ki-ba-um* with Kakmium and Armi is a datum in favor of their localization near the Mediterranean coast. The following attestation reveals that shrimp from Kakmium were delivered to Ebla in the context of diplomatic relations highly

[817] See Hajouz 2013: 540 with references.
[818] CAD Š/3: 99 *sub voce šiqqu*.
[819] Cf. Barjamovic 2011: 120, fn. 366.

reminiscent of the ones seen in the fragment above, when boxwood of Kakmium was delivered to Ebla. The tablet itself seems to be of similarly early date:

[A15, 3; month 6]
(4) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / guruš-mah / 3 sal-tug$_2$ / maškim-*SU$_3$*
(5) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *ki-ba-um* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(6) 1 gu 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-du$_3$-sa$_6$ / lugal DAR.AB$_2^{ki}$ / 2 gu 2 tug$_2$-ni.ni 2 ib$_2$-du$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$-iii / šeš-*SU$_3$* / 3 sal-tug$_2$ maškim-*SU$_3$* / 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / dam / lugal / DAR.AB$_2^{ki}$
(7) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 *gu-*<*zi-tum*-tug$_2$> 2 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *I-gi* / ur$_4$ / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(9) 1 *gu-*<*zi-tum*-tug$_2$> 1 zara$_6$-tug$_2$ 1 ib$_2$-sa$_6$-tug$_2$ / 1 giš-šilig 1 gir$_2$-mar-tu ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / *Ar-si-a-ha* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(10) 15 sal-tug$_2$ 1 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ / 15 ib$_2$-du$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Lu$_5$-a-tum*^{ki}
(11) 1 sal-tug$_2$ / 1 1 *gu-*<*zi-tum*-tug$_2$> 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Zu-mu-da* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *ki-ba-um* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(12) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *Si-na-ad* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / *ha-na-NE*
(13) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *Du-bi$_2$-šum* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / gukkal-gukkal / (*Kak-mi-um*^{ki})
(14) 1 aktum-tug$_2$ / *Ar-si-a-ha* / maškim / *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$*
(15) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *X-bar-lum* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / gukkal-gukkal / *Ha-su-wa-an*^{ki}
(16) 1 sal-tug$_2$ *Ir$_3$-da-ma-lik* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ / NIN.UŠ-mušen / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}
(21) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI / *Bu$_3$-ti* / šu-mu-tak$_4$ *ki-ba-im* / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki}
(32) 1 tug$_2$-NI.NI 1 *gu-*<*zi-tum*-tug$_2$> 1 ib$_2$-DU$_3$-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / *Ga-mu* / giš-dug-du / *Kak-*[*mi*]*-um*^{ki}
(33) *Iš$_{11}$-a-ma-lik* / giš-dug-du / *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} / *Ha-zu-wa-an*^{ki}

Thus the delivery of shrimp took place during a busy diplomatic, involving also individuals from DAR.AB$_2^{ki}$, *Lu$_5$-a-tum*^{ki}, Hassuwan, and Mari. Ebla specifically seems to have played an intermediating role between Kakmium and Hassuwan, since entry (33) records a giš-dug-DU between these two places.

A deep investigation of the over 400 published attestations of *Kak-mi-um*^{ki} cannot be undertaken within the present scope. It is likely that future studies will further substantiate the picture above – that Kakmium played the role of an interstitial state, between Ebla and Armi, in the same way that Mannuwat played this role between Ebla and Mari (see above §3.3.0).

7.0 Mari–Ebla Relations in the Late Period

7.1 War and Peace on the International Scene

It has been alleged that, during the period covered by the archives, Ebla engaged in one or more wars against: Mari (with the help of Nagar and Kish),[820] Nagar (with the help of Armi[821] and with the help of Mari[822]), Kish (with the help of Mari),[823] Armi[824] (with the help of Manuwat),[825] Hassuwan[826] and Ibʿal.[827] While this study cannot deal with every one of these reconstructions in detail – in part because they are largely based on unpublished or partially published documents – this overall picture seems inherently unlikely.

The present study takes the position that most probably none of these alleged wars or situations of violent conflict took place. Instead, such campaign events, involving Ebla and one or more of the main powers on the scene, had a primarily diplomatic

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[820] Archi/Biga 2003: 13–16; Archi 2011: 17; Archi 2018: 19–20.
[821] Otto/Biga 2010: 485, "...an expedition against Armi itself, assisted by the king of Nagar."
[822] Archi/Biga 2003: 11; Archi 2011: 13, "Ibgitum of Mari, who brought the news that Nagar was destroyed (til)."
[823] Archi 2014a: 167, "Par conséquent, Mari prit part à la guerre contre Kiš." Archi 2010b: 16; Arch/Biga 2003: 11.
[824] Archi 2011: 14, with refrence to an "(unexpected) war against Armi," in the "3rd year" of Ibbi-Zikir); Ibid.: 17, "It is just after the campaign against Mari that a war against Armi is recorded."
[825] Ibid.: 19, "Manuwat, an allied city, provided men for the war against Armi."
[826] Archi 2008: 421.
[827] Archi/Biga 2003: 12; Archi 2011: 16 ("8th year"); 17 ("13th year").

background, and were peaceful, even if some of the men who participated in them had a military connotation, or even carried weapons with them.[828]

The main problem is that highly consequential reconstructions of wars are based entirely on the interpretation of one or two key terms, which, on a strictly textual level, can by no means said to unambiguously refer to war or violent affairs. The main terms in question are nig$_2$-kas$_4$ and TIL. On TIL, see above §5.5.

For nig$_2$-kas$_4$, the main argument has been that, because nig$_2$-kas$_4$ seems to be consistently used with the meaning "military campaign" in the chancery texts published in ARET XIII, then this term must always have this meaning when it is used in an administrative text. But, first of all, it has not been proven that nig$_2$-kas$_4$ always refers to a war in the chancery texts – these texts are very difficult, and our ability to unambiguously and confidently interpret them remains in an early stage. And even if this were the case, then it would by no means follow that, simply because nig$_2$-kas$_4$ refers to a war in one type of text, then this must apply in all others. Chancery texts and administrative texts inherently refer to different contexts: namely, chancery texts refer to exceptional situations, while the administrative ones instead deal with more mundane, ongoing, repetitive and routine affairs. The fact is, there is no word in the Near Eastern languages of the second and first millennium that means only "military expedition" to the exclusion of any other kind of expedition, e.g. religious commercial. The word behind

[828] The true background of most of the Ebla "campaigns" (nig$_2$-kas$_4$), e.g. the one to Mari (Archi/Biga 2003) has likely already been alluded to, Archi 2010b: 15, "The balance of power require that any... state give an annual demonstration of force."

nig$_2$-kas$_4$ is almost certainly a semantic equivalent of later terms like *girru*[829] or *harranu*.[830] In later when these words are used, they have a very wide meaning, encompassing basically anything having to do with a "road" or "trip," including arrangements or groups by which such paths are travelled. The case was almost certainly the same at Ebla. Only the context can decide if nig$_2$-kas$_4$ is to be connected with active military affairs, let alone connected with such a consequential rendering as "war."

The context, in fact, does not suggest a war for the vast majority of the occurrences of nig$_2$-kas$_4$ that involve Ebla and a major power. As has been admitted, every one of these "wars" seems to be followed by the immediate resumption of active peaceful relations, often on an intense level, with large numbers of merchants from the alleged enemy country present at Ebla, receiving gifts of high value. Sometimes the putative war and peace are seen on the very same tablet, in the very same context. As a paradigmatic example we can take the following quotation from an unpublished tablet fragment:

[TM.75.G.12450][831]
(x) ...nig$_2$-kas$_4$ *Ma-ri$_2$* lu$_2$ nidba$_2$ i$_3$-giš
(x) ...the expedition to Mari of the offering of oil.

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[829] CAD/G: 90, s.v. *girru*, "1. road, path 2. journey, caravan, business trip 3. military campaign, expeditionary force, march 4. travel provisions, 5 (special mngs.)." This word possibly represents a loan into Akkadian from Sumerian gir$_3$.
[830] CAD/H: s.v. *harranu*: "1. highway, road, path 2. trip, journey, travel 3. business trip 4. caravan 5. business venture 6. business capital 7. military expedition 8. expeditionary force, army 9. corvée work 10. service unit 11. times (math. term) 12. obscure mngs."
[831] Unpublished, cited in Archi/Biga 2003: 14. Unfortunately, the authors have not indicated how the tablet's lines are divided into cases, which is potentially of interpretational relevance.

According to previous interpreters, this passage is to be rendered, "... the expedition (against) Mari which (ended with) the oil offering." The oil offering, they allege, refers to the "peace treaty" to which the defeated Mari was forced to submit. However, it makes more sense that the peace treaty was conceived of as the purpose of the "mission" (nig$_2$-kas$_4$) to begin with, as this is what the text plainly states.

The fact is, there is not a single attestation, published or unpublished, which unequivocally states that Mari and Ebla fought a battle against one another, either before or after this major nig$_2$-kas$_4$.

7.2 Timber, and a Mari Merchant colony the south of Ebla,

Evidence from tablets of the late period reveal the existence of a settlement of Mari merchants (lu$_2$-kar) and other workers (*NA-SE$_{11}$*) residing at Tunep to the south of Ebla.[832] These tablets likely postdate the major nig$_2$-kas$_4$ "diplomatic expedition" (the alleged war) of Ebla to Mari, because they come from locus 2752, which represents a group of tablets, dating to just before the destruction, which someone had gathered from the main archive in an apparent attempt to save them from that final conflagration which put an end to Palace G.

One of the merchants, likely the head of the group, was called Puzur-Aštar.[833] A man with this name was encountered already in the early text M12, 25, dating to Iplus-Il

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[832] This dossier has recently been studied in detail by Bonechi 2016a: 48–51 (with references to previous litterature), whose work formed the basis for the present study of this episode.

[833] A man with this name, and bearing a strong mercantile connotation, was encountered already in the early text M12, 25 (11): Puzur$_4$-*aš-dar* lu$_2$ ga'eš$_x$; see above §3.1.3.2.

(see above §3.1.3.2), where he was designated a lu_2 ga'eš$_x$, "representative of the long-distance trader." Considering that HI-dar, the final LUGAL of Mari and certainly the one in power at this late stage, was also mentioned already in M12, 25, it seems possible that we are here likewise dealing with one and the same Puzur-Aštar. His progression from a "representative of a trader" at Ebla in the early text, to the apparent leader of a merchant settlement in the later one, could reflect the advancement of his career throughout his life. Around him (or including him) were thirty additional merchants (lu_2-kar), themselves also likely of relatively high rank, together with their thirty wives:

[75.2251; month 10][834]
rev. vi 9–17: ...*Puzur*$_4$*-ra-*^{d}*Aš-dar* /$^?$ lu_2-kar /$^?$ *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ /$^?$ al$_6$-tuš /$^?$ *Du-ne-eb*$_2^{ki}$ /$^?$ *in* /$^?$ SA.ZA$_x^{KI}$ /$^?$ šu-ba$_4$-ti
"(a set of three garments) Puzur-Aštar, (chief) merchant of Mari, residing in Tunep; received from the (Eblaite) treasury."

[M5, 4; month 12]
obv. vi 13–19: 30 gu-mug-tug$_2$ 30 sal-tug$_2$ 30 ib$_2$-iii-gun$_3$-tug$_2$ / lu_2-kar / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ / al$_6$-tuš / *Du-ne-eb*$_2^{ki}$ / 30 kin siki / dam-dam-*SU*$_3$
"30 g., 30 thin garments, 30 multicolored sashes for (30) merchants of Mari, residing in Tunep. 30 wool measures for their wives."

This situation recalls the one involving the long-term presence of Hassuwan merchants at Ebla, likely in the context of a "gate of the ruler of Hassuwan" (see above §5.2.0f). There, the wife of a royal son of Hassuwan was also issued wool, most likely to produce a textile; there were also present at Ebla Hassuwan "dyers" who received wool from the Ebla palace, for the explicit purpose of textile production. As with the wife of the Hassuwan prince, it is not known whether these wives had travelled to Tunep from Mari, or were local women whom the Mari men took for themselves while residing there.

[834] Excerpted in Archi 1985: 76; the month name is given in Pettinato 1979: 159.

In the present example, the wool allotment could be a "ration" for the personal use of the women, but it likely also testifies the fact that these women were engaged in textile production. That textiles were being produced at Tunep for workers in the service of the Mari merchants is confirmed by the following passages:

[M5, 12; month 11][835]
rev. x 1–5: 380 kin siki / mu$_4$[mu] 3 *mi-at* 80 *NA-SE$_{11}$* / lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri$_2$*[ki] / al$_6$-tuš / *Du-ne-eb$_2$*[ki]
"380 k-measures of wool (in order) to make garments for 380 workers (in the service) of the merchants of Mari who are residing in Tunep."

[M5, 2; month 2][836]
rev viii 21–ix 9: 4 *mi-at* 70 kin siki / mu$_4$[mu] 4 *mi-at* 70 *NA-SE$_{11}$* / lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri$_2$*[ki] / al$_6$-tuš / *Du-ne-eb$_2$*[ki]
"470 k-measures of wool (in order) to make garments for 470 workers (in the service) of the merchants of Mari who are residing in Tunep."

Although no "wives" are mentioned in these passages referring to the manufacture (mu$_4$[mu])[837] of textiles, it is possible that such women were actually involved in this manufacture. At the very least, it is quite likely that the 30 wool-measures that the "wives" received above in M5, 4 served an analogous purpose. As for the term *NA-SE$_{11}$*, in this context it most likely serves essentially as a synonym for guruš "able-bodied male worker(s)," rather than denoting a mixed group of men, women, and children.[838] These "workers" are defined as having been in the service of the (30 or more) Mari merchants who were residing at Tunep. Whether or not there was an overlap between the groups of 380 and the 470 workers in the two passages, or whether they represented completely

[835] Also published as A8, 532.
[836] Also published as A8, 522.
[837] On mu$_4$(TUG$_2$)[mu] at Ebla see Lahlouh/Catagnoti 2006: 566, with the translation "assegnazione di tessuti; vestizione," and further literature.
[838] So also Bonechi 2016a: 49, with fn. 125.

seperate groups, is unclear. At any rate, this is a quite cosnsiderably high number of individuals.

Another passage (from the same unpublished tablet mentioning Puzur-Ašdar, quoted above) gives a slightly different perspective on the textile allotments for these workers, specifying what types of garments they each received, and stating that they received them from the Ebla "treasury, territorial holdings" (SA.ZA$_X^{ki}$). The workers also receive a silver payment consisting of six shekels each:

[TM.75.G.2251; month 10][839]
obv. i-ii: 45 *ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-ii 21 gu-dul$_3$-tug$_2$ /$^?$ 1 *mi-at ʾa$_3$-da-um*-tug$_2$-i 94 gu-mug-tug$_2$ /$^?$ 2 *mi-at* 60 aktum-tug$_2$ *dam-ša-lu* 2 *mi-at* 60 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ /$^?$ 26 ma-na ku$_3$:bar /$^?$ 2 *mi-at* 60 *NA-SE$_{11}$* /$^?$ lu$_2$-kar lu$_2$-kar /$^?$ al$_6$-tuš /$^?$ *Du-ne-eb$_2^{ki}$* /$^?$ *in* / SA.ZA$_X^{ki}$ / šu-ba$_4$-ti
"45 two-ply *ʾa.*-garments, 21 cloaks, 100 one-ply *ʾa$_3$*-garments, 94 g.-garments (=260); 260 "imitation" heavy garments, 260 fine multicolored sashes; 26 minas of silver (i.e., 6 shekels each) for 260 workers (in the service) of the (Mari) merchants, stationed in Tunep; they received (it all) from the Ebla treasury."

It is perhaps more likely that "*in* / SA.ZA$_X^{ki}$" is, from the perspective of the Ebla bureaucracy, a statement of financial, rather than physical or spatial relevance. It could be meant to indicate that the Ebla royal exchequer provided the funds for these allotments; whether the workers physically obtained their garments at the city of Ebla, somewhere in its outskirts, or in Tunep itself, is probably less relevant. In another example, the textiles are instead supplied by the household of the Ebla vizier Ibbi-Zikir:

[TM.75.G.2330; no month$^?$][840]
obv vii 1–7: 20 ib$_2$-iv-tug$_2$-sa$_6$-gun$_3$ 2 *mi-at* 33 ib$_2$-iii-tug$_2$-gun$_3$ /$^?$ *Ma-ri$_2^{ki}$* /$^?$ al$_6$-tuš / *Du-ne-eb$_2$* /$^?$ e$_2$ /$^?$ *I-bi$_2$-zi-kir* /$^?$ šu-ba$_4$-ti

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[839] Excerpted in Archi 1985: 76; the month name is given in Pettinato 1979: 159.
[840] Quoted in Archi 1985: 77. Pettinato 1979: 167f does not provide a month name.

"20 fine multicolored sashes, 233 (regular) multicolored sashes for (253 men) of Mari who are residing at Tunep; received (from) the house(hold) of Ibbi-Zikir."

Thus the Ebla vizier apparently paid for these items from his own funds, in contrast to the previous example where it was the Ebla royal administration who supplied the items. The contribution of Ibbi-Zikir seems to have represented a lesser expenditure, consisting only of sashes. The different types of sashes imply a hierarchical division among those Mari men: only 20 out of a total of 253 receive "fine" sashes. It seems therefore likely that among those 20 were some of the 30 men who in M5, 4 who were specifically identified as holding the rank of "merchant" (lu_2-kar), and who had wives (dam) at Tunep. The 233 could have been lower-ranked laborers or workers (*NA-SE*$_{11}$). A similar division of rank could be detected in the following related allotment:

[A4, 1; month 4]
(30) 60 aktum-tug_2 / 80 *dam-ša-lu* / 2 *mi-at* 10-la_2-3 sal-tug_2 / 1 *mi-at* ib_2-[x]-tug_2-sa_6 / 2 *mi-at* 50-la_2-3 ib_2-iii-tug_2-gun_3 / lu_2-kar / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ / al_6-tuš / *Du-ne-eb*$_2^{ki}$
(30) 60 heavy garments, 80 "imitation" (heavy) garments, 207 thin garments (=347); 100 fine sashes, 247 multicolored sashes (=347), for (347 workers in the service of) the merchant(s) of Mari who are residing in Tunep.

Here, 60 out of the 347 men – collectively designated simply as "(of) the merchant(s)" – receive heavy garments. 80 only get "imitation"[841] heavy garments, and the lowest 207 of them merely thin garments. Perhaps among the highest 60 were genuine "merchants" (lu_2-kar) while the rest were assistants or laborers of respective

[841] A similar designation (*dam-ši-lu*, *dam-še*$_3$*-lu*) also occurs as an Akkadian loanword in the Ur III period, where it is applied to linen (gada) textiles, see CAD/T: 150, no. 5 sv. *tamšīlu*. On this designation see Pasquali 1997: 222–223, for whom "una traduzione '(la stoffa) che assomiglia (al lino)' può essere presa in considerazione …"

middle and low rank; this would seem to roughly correspond with the figures given for lu_2-kar and *NA-SE*$_{11}$ in the other texts.

We thus have a rich textual evidence for the existence a genuine *kārum*-style settlement of Mari, funded in part by Ebla, and residing in a town located on the southern fringes of the Ebla realm, at a time quite close to the end of the Ebla archives. The documents belonging to this dossier are dated to months 2, 4, 10 (2x), 11, and 12. They thus cover at least one full year, but their exact chronological relationship with one another is uncertain.

It has been demonstrated that the Ebla palace and its elites controlled large tracts of agricultural land in the vicinity of Tunep.[842] There is also ample evidence for the participation of Eblaites in religious life in the area of Tunep, where a form of Rašap and his consort ʾAdamma (aka BAD.MI$_2$ = **Baʾaltum*) were venerated.[843] Tunep can therefore safely be considered to have belonged to the realm of Ebla proper. Based especially on its occurrence in later sources, the identification of Tunep with the modern Tell ʿAcharneh has been considered virtually certain.[844] But are there any clues as to why this large group of Mari merchants, apparently surrounded also by a large contingent of workers, would have been residing at Tunep of all places? Most important is the following attestation from a fragment:

[A3, 118; month 10]

rev. iii 6′–9′: 1 *mi-*<*at*> 20 *ha-zi*-uruda / *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$ / al$_6$-tuš / *Du-ne-eb*$_2^{ki}$

[842] See Bonechi 2016a: 40–487.
[843] Ibid.: 38–40.
[844] Cf. Ibid: 37 with extensive additional sources.

"120 *copper* axes for (120 workers in the service of the merchants) of Mari residing at Tunep."

Looking at the likely position of Tunep on the map (see above §2.1), one notices it was located exceedingly close to the southwestern Lebanese mountain region, which at that time was probably heavily forested. Therefore, it seems exceedingly likely – for lack of other options – that these 120 copper[845] axes[846] or hatchets served for the harvesting and/or finishing of timber from nearby forests, and perhaps also its working into finished or semi-finished products, which could then be shipped back to the Euphrates region, towards Mari and beyond (see above §3.1.3.3.2). According to other sources, *ha-zi* were usually made of bronze (zabar) and usually weighed one and a half minas.[847] In contrast, another type of axe called AGA_3 weighed only half a mina, while the larger AGA_3 gal weighed one mina. In an exceptional example (see above §3.1.3.3.2 on the tablet Archi 1981: Text 8), an AGA_3 mah seems to have weighed over four minas. These *ha-zi* were thus somewhere in the middle. Its possible that even a large cedar could have been cut down using a one and half mina *ha-zi*; hacking through its trunk would have been merely a matter of persistence. If persistent strikes were the method used to fell a tree, then a lighter axe could have even been preferable to a heavy one. At the same time, it is also

[845] In this an other occurrences, it cannot be ruled out completely that uruda "copper" actually stands as an abbreviation for bronze ($UD.ZU_2.BAR$ = zabar), or as a *pars pro toto*, "copper and (tin/arsenic)." In this regard, note that the Ebla texts use a different term ($a\text{-}gar_5\text{-}gar_5$, usually rendered as "pure copper") when listing quantities of bronze and tin (an.na = nagga) combined to form bronze.
[846] For an Ebla lexical occurrence of *ha-zi*, see Civil 2008: 91–92.
[847] Archi 2010b: 18.

possible that these Mari merchants and their workers would have possessed larger axes or other tools, not directly recorded by the texts.

An unpublished document reveals that Ebla, at one point, also supplied men from Armi with similar tools, AGA$_3$ "axes" and DUB.NAGAR "chisels," who, this time, are explicitly called "carpenters" (nagar).[848] Finally, we can note one reference to a carpenter (nagar) in the context of Tunep, further bolstering the likelihood that these *ha-zi* axes likewise served a purpose related to timber.[849]

For comparative purposes, one can note that in the later Ur III period, approximately 60 workers were employed in the forest sector of the Umma province[850] – where the "forests" were likely to have been mere thickets of shrubs in comparison to the true forests located near Tunep. Here, during the late Ebla Palace G period, at least twice as many men were actively engaged in some work, quite close to some forests, using axes or hatchets. If the workers in the the other texts quoted were engaged in similar work, then there could have been over four hundred men actively engaged in the exploitation of these woodland resources.

Posssibly related to this Mari *kārum* phenomenon at Tunep is the attestation of 735 kin-measures of wool for 490 merchants of Mari.[851] This figure is quite close to 470

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[848] Archi 2011: 14, quoting TM.75.G.10088 (for him, dating to 'Ibbi-Zikir 3'), as follows "obv. XVII 7–8 registers 908 g. of tin and 66;18 kg minas (sic.) of copper for a delivery of axes (gin$_2$) [scil. AGA$_3$] and hammers or chisels (dub-nagar) for carpenters (nagar) from A."

[849] M5, 12 (=A8, 532) rev. ii 6–iii 6 (gifts) / *I-na-aš$_2$-da* / *Ur-sa$_2$-um*^{ki} / tuš.lu$_2$×til / *Du-ne-eb$_2$*^{ki} / *En-mar* / nagar / *Lu-ba-an*^{ki} / šu-du$_8$ / *in* / *ʾA$_3$-la-u$_3$*^{ki} (cf. Bonechi 2016a: 50).

[850] Steinkeller 1987b: 78.

[851] A20, 22 (62), quoted in Archi 2018: 34. The volume *ARET* XX appeared too late to be consulted for this work.

"workers of the merchant(s) of Mari" (*NA-SE*$_{11}$ / lu$_2$-kar *Ma-ri*$_2^{ki}$) attested above in M5, 4. In any event, attestations of this sort are completey incompatible with any sort of hostile scenario whatsoever between Ebla and Mari, whether as its prelude or aftermath. It shows that Mari and Ebla remained allies until the end of the archives, with exceedingly close diplomatic and economic ties. The interpretation of those events behind the key term nig$_2$-kas$_4$ must therefore be adjusted accordingly.

At the same time, this situation involving possible Mari lumberjacks to the south of Ebla, should not be interpreted to constitute a situation that was totally unbalanced in the favor of Mari. Even though the exact details of this arrangment will likely continue to elude us, one can rest virtually assured that in some way Ebla was also in some way able to profit from this situation.

Indeed, a unique document, dating to close to the end of the Ebla archives (and thus likely quite close in time to the above-studied dossier) proves, without a doubt, that Ebla was able to make an enormous profit off the timber trade – possibly at this very same moment, when men from Mari were engaged in timber harvesting near Tunep:

[TM.82.G.266][852]

(15) 1 *li-<im>* 7 *mi-<at>* ma-na ku$_3$:bar$_6$ / nig$_2$-sam$_2$ (NINDA$_2$×ŠE+ZA^{l}(MIN)) / giš-taškarin / giš-ir-nun / (blank) / lu$_2$ *I-bi*$_2$*-zi-kir*
(15) 1,700 minas of silver: the price (i.e., present or future income from the sale of) taškarin-wood and cedar. (Goods) belonging to (the household of) Ibbi-Zikir.

This tablet, discovered outside of the main archive in the southern wing of Palace G, has the character of a draft, or a rough calculation, rather than an archival document. The text

[852] Published in Archi 1993b: 8–11. This important source and its consequences for the reconstruction of Ebla trade were discussed in Steinkeller 2004.

displays rough, abbreviated spellings, and shows a very unusual feature, whereby the columns on the reverse of the tablet are written from left to right, as if it were a "second obverse."

The only question regarding the meaning of nig$_2$-sam$_2$ "price" in this context is whether it represents a transaction which has already been completed (i.e., with the wood no longer in Ebla's possession, and the silver having been obtained) or if it represents an estimated value of harvested timber resources which were still on hand. Even if one goes with the latter option, this by no means should be seen as a "theoretical" calculation, since such a figure would be administratively useless, if it the conversion of this wood to silver were not possible, imminent, and inevitable. Such a conversion between wood and silver, or between wood and another type of good valued in silver, could have taken place at one of the many "markets" (KI:LAM$_7$)[853] attested in the Ebla archives (for a similar type of transaction, involving the conversion of oilve oil to textiles using a silver valuation, see above §3.1.3.3.1 on A7, 11). The rough nature of this tablet underscores its utilitarian nature; the household of the Ebla vizier had either already obtained such a silver income from this wood, or expected to soon. This also helps explain why such mentions of the value of wood are so rare – because wood did not usually count as an item of accountability, a fact which is underscored, in that the quantity of wood involved is not even reported. Clearly, this document did not belong to a regular typology, but was an ad-hoc creation to aid in economic planning. The Ebla administrators either needed to know how much silver they had on hand, or how much they could expect to receive in the very

[853] On the markets (KI:LAM$_7$) at Ebla, see Biga 2003.

near future. It is possible that this text dates to the very end of Palace G, shortly before the destruction, and that an impending difficult situation had prompted its composition.

Exactly how this information is to be reconciled with the fact that Mari merchants apparently played a role in timber harvesting to the south of Ebla is unclear. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that this type of income from wood constituted a unique occurrence; Ebla could possibly have obtained silver approaching this quantity of 1,700 minas, or even more, as profit from the timber trade on an annual basis.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 Geography

One of the most important contributions of the present work has been to provide Ebla with a deep and meaningful link to Anatolia, via two of its most important allies, on the one hand the middle-ranked state of Kakmium, and on the other, the mighty Armi, which can now be geographically compared with the later Kizzuwatna, known primarily from the Hittite archives, or the Hellenistic or Medieval kingdoms of Cilicia.

Armi can now be considered the oldest known political entity in Anatolia. It was the forerunner of those later polities whom we glimpse first through the perspective of the business documents of Mesopotamian traders found at Kaneš, and then later through native sources discovered at Hattuša. This development comes right as the third millennium B.C.E. is becoming better known archaeologically in Anatolia, above all with the discovery of a massive third millennium palace at Kaneš. Further research into this early period in the area of Cilicia, and along the routes that link it with Northern Syria, will likely prove fruitful.

From the perspective of later history it is not surprising that political relations between Syria and Cilicia were already active in the Ebla period. In the Hittite period, Kizzuwatna found itself caught up in in the middle of a power struggle between Hattuša in Central Anatolia and Mitanni, in Northern Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. This shows that, while the paths between Syria and Cilicia may have been narrow, they were by no means an impermeable barrier, and armies, messengers, and traders alike could flow back and forth between both lands. The power dynamic between Syria and Cilicia seems to have been different in the third millennium. Cilicia, instead of being the weak middle ground which other powers fought over, was itself the seat of a major power. Although this is a tentative picture that will have to be confirmed by further research, it seems as though Armi could have been larger and more powerful than Ebla itself, being instead equivalent to Mari or even Kish in might. On the greater international scene Ebla seems, to some degree, to have played the role of an intermediary power – albeit a major one – between the worlds of Anatolia, represented by Armi, and Mesopotamia, represented by Mari and Kish (and also, to no insignificant degree, Nagar).

Indeed, this role could be what was at the root of Ebla's economic ascendancy. On the one hand, the Euphrates flowed from its source in Eastern Anatolia, passing through the zone near Karkamiš, Emar, and Abarsal, where Ebla exerted tried to exert its influence, before passing into the area controlled by Mari, finally reaching Kish, lower Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, Ebla could access Anatolia from the other direction, via the famous Cilician Gates. Unlike the routes that traversed the Euphrates, either up or across it, Ebla had exclusive access to these routes, because Ebla's own position blocked its Near Eastern neighbors from accessing them. Further research

will be able to reveal in greater detail how Ebla was able to take advantage of this position.

8.2 History

In recent reconstructions, the Ebla era has been portrayed as a "warring states" period, a time of quickly shifting alliances and dramatic shifts in fate, with an at first seemingly defeated Mari making a spectacular comeback in order to finish its enemy Ebla off for good, before Mari itself would fall victim to Sargon of Akkad.

While it is true that the Ebla texts often speak in great detail about military affairs, and that Ebla had a large army, consisting of thousands or perhaps even tens of thousands of men, the military attestations have been exaggerated by an overly ardent interpretation of nig_2-kas_4 and TIL, which, in the present view, can occur in far wider a variety of contexts than a purely military one.

Ebla is attested to have made some offensive strikes, such as the one against *Il-la*^{ki} attested in A13, 20. These were probably punctual strikes against more or less defenseless targets. On the other hand, the Ebla army seems to have been involved in military affairs in remote areas, such as Tarhatum or Nabu[854], both apparently somewhere in the vicinity of Armi and Kakmium. It seems likely that these consisted of policing operations or preemptive strikes, directed against potentially unruly groups, who probably lived more or less outside the margins of the world covered by the textual evidence. It seems likely that it was seminomadic groups of this nature who were

[854] On the complicated episode involving Ebla, Armi, and Nabu, and the determining of a "border" (ki-sur), see Bonechi 2016a: 78–82.

responsible in the end for the destruction of Ebla, though it remains difficult to know from what direction this came.

To an extent this work has sought to shift the image of Mari as an arch enemy of Ebla, as has been presented in recent literature. Although their relationship was surely complicated and likely at times displayed aspects of what could be called a rivalry, in other ways Mari displays the qualities of an ally, with whom Ebla engaged in intense relations of a diplomatic and mercantile nature. There was also a significant cultural exchange.

A late chancery document, unfortunately very fragmentary, seems to show a Mari that was ready to "help" (a_2-dah)[855] Ebla in a time of need. It has been interpreted as part of a treaty that was composed in the aftermath of a war, but this seems unjustified. The occurrence of a_2-dah suggests just the opposite – friendly relations.

8.3 Collapse: The End of Ebla

It seems unlikely that Mari had anything to do with the violent events that caused Ebla's end. There are references in late chancery texts and letters – still in need of deeper synthetic study – which clearly allude to a difficult situation and an imprending doom. However, Mari is not mentioned in this context; if Mari really were a hated arch enemy, as has been portrayed, we would have every right to expect that she would be explicitly mentioned in this kind of context, especially considering that Mari is one of the most commonly mentioned foreign toponyms in the Ebla archives. Instead, the enemy is left

[855] A16, 20.

anonymous. On the other hand, there are references to rather large numbers of soldiers from Armi, present in the Ebla countryside.

[A16, 19]
(6) *ap*/ *su-ma* / DU.DU / DU-*nu* / *wa* / al$_6$-en-tar$_3$ / *ze$_2$* / dingir / *wa* / za-us$_2$-*ma* / *in* / *Ib-la*^{ki} / sa$_6$-*ma* / *wa* / za$_3$-us$_2$ / *wa* / DU.DU / 1 *ri$_2$-bab* / *as$_2$-da* / en / *wa* / [nig$_2$]-kas$_4$ / [*ar-hi-iš*] / *ar-hi-<iš>*

(6) And so, if we (really) are to go on on our mission, and (if) the will of the god has been consulted (through extispicy), and (if) the elite troops in Ebla are in good condition.... then let the elite troops go forth, the ten thousand that are with the king! Let them go on a [cam]paign as quickly as possible.

[A16, 4]

(7) *ap* / za$_3$-us$_2$ / lu$_2$ / *aš$_2$-da* / en / e$_3$ / *ga-lu* / *wa* / aga$_3$-us$_2$-*ma* / *Ar-mi*^{ki}

(7) And so, the elite troops who are with the king have went forth, all of them, and also the soldiers of Armi.

[A16, 10]
(2) *i-na ma-na* / 1 *li-im Ar-mi*^{ki} / sA.ZA$_X$^{ki} / šu-mu-nigin$_2$ / *in* / iti hu-lu-mu /
(3) *ap* / *ma-na* / iti e$_3$ / *ba ma-na* / ku$_2$ / *kam$_4$-mu* / uru^{ki}
(4) *mi-na* / še / *a du-ša-ga-du* / *NA-SE$_{11}$ NA-SE$_{11}$ /* iti kur$_6$
(5) *wa* / zabar / dingir-dingir-dingir / *mi-na* / a / i$_3$-na-sum / *NA-SE$_{11}$ / NA-SE$_{11}$*
(6) *su-ma* / *Ar-mi*^{ki} / *uš-da-ki-du* / šu-mu-nigin$_2$ / uru^{ki} / iti ^{d}*A-dam-ma* / kalam-*TIM* kalam-*TIM* / i$_3$-ti

(2) Of course! As far as concerns the food provisions for 1,000 men of Armi who are touring the (Ebla) countryside during month 10.
(3) And as far as the provisions for month 11, (well), here (we have) silver for the food for the clans of the city.
(4) But how much barley are you going to be able to provide for the people in month 12?
(5) And what shall the people give the bronze (images) of the gods?
(6) If Armi will be able to provide (food) when they tour the city – it will suffice for month 1.

These passages, representing just a few extracts from a rich corpus, clearly speak of unrestful events, and of desperate soldiers assembling to face some looming threat. They also allude to food shortages. There are at least 1,000 men of Armi present in the area of

Ebla, apparently in a capacity as "soldiers" (aga$_3$-us$_2$). The fact that they are referred to in this way seems to exclude them having been "enemy" soldiers. In some way these Armi men are related to the issue of food. Ebla apparently has to provide them with food, but there seems to be a chance that they themselves might later bring some food to Ebla, unless this possibility is mentioned as a sarcastic statement.

Thus, Armi was in some way tied to the ultimate fate of Ebla, but the exact nature of this connection is not yet fully clear. Was there some unrest going on near the area of Armi itself? Or was Armi arriving to help Ebla against an enemy approaching from a different direection?

The balance of power that was achieved in the Palace G period was perhaps a fragile one. The major powers on the scene had all grown very wealthy together, but at the same time they had dug themselves in deeply. Their wealth had come to constitute a risk, and they had to try to keep themselves walled off from violent outside threats, whether represented by their peers on the international scene, or by outsiders who refused to play by any rules. Once a sufficient element of chaos was introduced into the system, things probably began to change very quickly.

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