

# Edward Lipinski (orientalist)

## CHAPTER III LAQÉ



**Edward (Edouard) Lipiński** (born 18 June 1930 in Lodz, Poland)

is a Belgian Biblical scholar and Orientalist.

His first major work, published in 1965, was a monumental monograph entitled *La royauté de Yahwé dans la poésie et le culte de l'ancien Israël*. In 1969, he was appointed professor at the Catholic University of Leuven, where he taught i.a. the comparative grammar of Semitic languages and history of ancient Near Eastern religions and institutions. He was head of the Department of Oriental and Slavonic studies at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from 1978 to 1984. He directed the publication of the *Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique* (1992) and the *Studia Phoenicia* series (from 1983). He also published *Semitic Languages. Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (1997, 2001) and dealt extensively with Old Aramaic dialects and history, in particular in his *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics* (1975, 1994, 2010) and in *The Aramaeans: Their Ancient History, Culture, Religion* (2000). Referring to the latter work a reviewer noted that it "embodies the accumulated insights of one of the greatest Semitic scholars of our time". Professor Edward Lipiński was awarded a doctorate honoris causa by the Lund University in 2003. Although he retired from KU Leuven in 1995, he continues teaching and doing research mainly in Aramaic and Phoenician studies.

The WorldCat database lists over a hundred publications by Edward Lipiński in his various fields of expertise.

A complete bibliography was published by The Enigma Press. Here is a short list of his major publications:

- *La Royauté de Yahwé dans la poésie et le culte de l'ancien Israël* (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België. Klasse der Letteren, Jaarg. XXVII, Nr 55), Paleis der Academiën, Brussel 1965, 560 pp. ; second edition, Brussel 1968.
- *Le Poème royal du Psaume LXXXIX, 1-5.20-38* (Cahiers de la Revue Biblique 6), J. Gabalda et Cie, Paris 1967, 110 pp.
- *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics I–III* (Orient. Lov. An. 1, 57, 200), Leuven University Press, Peeters & Oriëntalistiek, Leuven 1975, 1994, 2010, 240 pp., 273 pp., XX + 308 pp.
- Author of volumes 1, 5 and 6 of *Studia Paulo Naster Oblata: Orientalia antiqua* published 1982 Peeters Publishers<sup>[7]</sup>
- (Ed.), *Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique*, Brepols, Turnhout 1992, XXII + 502 p., 14 colour pls.
- *Dieux et déesses de l'univers phénicien et punique* (Orient. Lov. An. 64; Studia Phoenicia XIV), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 1995, 536 p.
- *Semitic languages: outline of a comparative grammar*, 2000. ISBN 978-90-429-0815-4
- *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (Orient. Lov. An. 80), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 1997, 756 pp.; 2nd ed., Leuven 2001, 780 pp.
- *The Aramaeans: their ancient history, culture, religion*, 2001. ISBN 978-90-429-0859-8
- *The Aramaeans: Their Ancient History, Culture, Religion* (Orient. Lov. An. 100), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 2000, 697 pp.
- *Itineraria Phoenicia* (Orient. Lov. An. 127; Studia Phoenicia XVIII), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 2004, XXVI+ 622 pp.
- *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age. Historical and Topographical Researches* (Orient. Lov. An. 153), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 2006, 484 pp.
- *Prawo bliskowschodnie w starożytności. Wprowadzenie historyczne* (The Near Eastern Law in Antiquity. A Historical Introduction; Studia historico-biblica 2), Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2009, 492 pp.
- *Resheph. A Syro-Canaanite Deity* (Orient. Lov. An. 181; Studia Phoenicia XIX), Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, Leuven 2009, 297 pp.



## CHAPTER III

### LAQĒ

The ethnic components of the land of Laqē were on the scene since the second millennium B.C., but this particular political and cultural entity did not come into being before 1000 B.C. It was created by mixed groups of North-Arabian clans from the Syrian steppe and of Aramaean tribes that have settled in the 12th century B.C. on the Lower Ḥābūr and on the Middle Euphrates<sup>1</sup>. The appellation Laqē does not derive from a city name, although there are examples of the spelling <sup>uru</sup>*La-qé-e* with the determinative of city names in the stela of Tukulti-Ninurta II from Šerqu (*Sirqu*), modern Tell al-‘Ašāra<sup>2</sup>, and in variants of Ashurnasirpal II’s inscriptions<sup>3</sup>. The name originates from the same root as Arabic *laqiya*, “to encounter”, “to meet”, with the related nouns *luqya*, *liqāya*, *liqā*’, all meaning “encounter”, “meeting”. The word *Laqē* seems therefore to designate a tribal confederacy, comparable to the tribal league of early Israel. The latter formed a confederation of twelve tribes or an amphictyony<sup>4</sup>, although the effective number of its members was sometimes smaller. Assyrian sources dealing with the land of Laqē mention twelve Laqaean places or rulers in the 9th century B.C. This number “twelve” is scarcely a coincidence, since it was rigidly adhered to in the case of Israel, although it appears that component members could fluctuate. This system is applied in the Bible also to twelve Aramaean tribes

<sup>1</sup> A summary description of the *māt Laqē* is given by J.N. POSTGATE, *Laqē*, in *RLA* VI, Berlin 1980-83, p. 492-494.

<sup>2</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.1004, p. 188, line 2. A new decipherment of the inscription is proposed by R.-J. TOURNAY, *La stèle du roi Tukulti-Ninurta II. Nouvelle interprétation*, in M. LEBEAU (ed.), *Subartu* IV/2, Turnhout 1998, p. 273-278. A synthetic presentation of the history of this important site, called Terqa in the Old Babylonian period, is given by M. CHAVALAS, *Terqa and the Kingdom of Khana*, in *BA* 59 (1996), p. 90-103. See also O. ROUAULT, *Tell Ashara - Terqa*, in *Syrian-European Archaeology Exhibition / Exposition syro-européenne d’archéologie*, Damas 1996, p. 87-90.

<sup>3</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 214, lines 27 and 32; p. 215, line 38.

<sup>4</sup> The classical work on the subject remains M. NOTH, *Das System der Zwölf Stämme Israels* (Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament, 4th ser., 1), Stuttgart 1930. Despite the criticism expressed in some quarters, e.g. by C.H. J. DE GEUS, *The Tribes of Israel. An Investigation into Some of the Presuppositions of Martin Noth’s Amphictyony Hypothesis* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 18), Assen 1976, the basic thesis of M. Noth remains valid and cannot be questioned seriously, although it is not fashionable nowadays.



(Gen. 22, 20-24), to twelve Ishmaelite tribes (Gen. 25, 12-16), and to twelve Edomite tribes (Gen. 36, 10-14). The case of the Laqaeans should prevent us from considering this system as “biblical”. It wasn’t even typically Semitic, since the Sumerian organization of the central temple at Nippur was based on services provided by twelve cities<sup>5</sup> and certain sacral leagues or amphictyonies in the ancient Mediterranean world are known to have had twelve members, as the Delphic League in Greece<sup>6</sup> and the Etruscan League of Fanum Voltumnae<sup>7</sup>. The number “twelve” was probably dictated by the requirement of a monthly turn at the maintenance of the central shrine, as it was certainly the case at Nippur, in Greece, and in Etruria.

We have no direct knowledge of a Laqaeon central shrine, unless *Bēt-Ha-lu-pe-e* is no usual dynastic name of the kind attested often in Assyrian and Aramaic inscriptions, but the designation of a priestly clan headed by a priestess, whose function could be compared with that of the North-Arabian queens-priestesses which were active in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the oldest mention of the clan in the annals of Adad-nirari II for 894 B.C. uses the determinative of feminine names: <sup>m</sup>*Ba-ar-a-ta-ra mār Ḥa-lu-bé-e* or <sup>h</sup>*Ha-lu-pé-e*<sup>9</sup>, “Bar-‘Attar, son of Ḡalubē” or “Ḥalupē”. The latter name may be a real personal name as well as a title. Two etymologies, *hlp* and *glb*, and at least three different explanations can be taken into consideration.

If the name derives from the root *hlp*, “to substitute” or “to be the successor”<sup>10</sup>, it may first designate the priestess acting or speaking in the

<sup>5</sup> W.W. HALLO, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, in *JCS* 14 (1960), p. 88-114.

<sup>6</sup> G. BUSOLT, *Griechische Staatskunde* (Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft IV/1, 1), vol. II, 3rd ed. by H. SWOBODA, München 1926, p. 1280 ff.; G. DAUX, *Delphes aux II<sup>e</sup> et I<sup>er</sup> siècles depuis l’abaissement de l’Étolie jusqu’à la paix romaine (191-31 avant J.-C.)* (BÉFAR 140), Paris 1936; R. FLACELIÈRE, *Les Aitoliens à Delphes* (BÉFAR 143), Paris 1937; V. EHRENBERG, *The Greek State*, 2nd ed., London 1972, p. 103-131; the most up-to-date edition is the French version *L’État grec*, Paris 1976.

<sup>7</sup> The list of the twelve cities of Etruria has been established first by E. BORMANN, *Der Städtebund Etruriens*, in *Archäologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn* 11 (1887), p. 103-126. Fanum Voltumnae, the holy place of an Etruscan goddess, was not far from modern Orvieto, but it has yet to be identified archaeologically.

<sup>8</sup> N. ABBOT, *Pre-Islamic Arab Queens*, in *AJSL* 58 (1941), p. 1-22.

<sup>9</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 114. — The feminine qualification of the name is one of the reasons why *Ḥalupē* cannot be related to the social status of men called *ḥalīf* in the Arab society of the 7th century A.D., in which the *ḥulafā’* were male allies of a clan or family without being its members by birth. Cf. A. GOTO, *An Aspect of Arab Society of the Early Seventh Century*, in *Orient* 12 (1976), p. 75-88. See also here below, p. 82, n. 28.

<sup>10</sup> ZADOK, *WSB*, p. 129. The ending *-ē* appears often in feminine names; cf. *ibid.*, p. 171. Names formed on *hlf* occur frequently in North-Arabian.



name of the divinity, as the prophetess Deborah in early Israel (Judg. 4, 4-5) or the pythoness of the Delphic League. An extremely interesting parallel institution is found among Chadic clans belonging to the Hadjerai society whose culture is centered on the cult of deities called “margai”: “The most powerful of these gods have an enclosed shrine in which the ‘keeper of the shrine’ resides, a woman who lives in celibacy, as the forces generated by her constant proximity to the godhead would kill any man having sexual intercourse with her. During the celebration of a ritual for one of these major margai deities, the god will attend through his medium, a woman of his choice, using her body as a means of appearing to the people and speaking to them. The woman falls into a trance and is transformed into the god, to whom questions may now be addressed with great reverence and gestures of humility concerning matters of importance to the community. The replies made by the medium are in the form of commands, as these are the words of the god and demand unquestioning obedience irrespective of any consequences which might ensue from them. When the questions finished, the medium loses consciousness, only to awake when the god has left her body”<sup>11</sup>.

The name of <sup>l</sup>*Ha-lu-pé-e* may alternatively signify that the woman thus named is the lawful “she-successor” in the function of queen-priestess or as head of the whole lineage in a matrilinear order in which kinship, descent, succession, and inheritance are reckoned in the feminine line, and in which women are selected as priestesses, ministrants to divine beings, and depositories of important social functions.

In both interpretations based on the root *hlp*, *Ḫalupē* would provide the oldest known example of an Aramaean or Arab woman who was politically influential, so much that she bore the title of “queen” (*šarratu*) or “priestess” (*apkallatu*, *kumirtu*) in later Assyrian texts<sup>12</sup>. Somewhat earlier than these Assyrian sources, a Neo-Babylonian letter from Nippur shows us a certain <sup>l</sup>*Na-ad-ba-ta* who writes in an authoritative way to a man called Erēšu<sup>13</sup>, certainly a high official at Nippur. Her name *Nadbata*, “the free-will offering”, is certainly Westsemitic, possibly Aramaic<sup>14</sup>, and has cultic overtones<sup>15</sup>. The six known “queens of the Arabs” in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. include Zabibē<sup>16</sup>,

<sup>11</sup> P. FUCHS, *In the Shadow of War the Gods hold their Peace*, in *German Research Reports of the DFG* 1997/1, p. 4-7, quotation from p. 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> See here above, p. 78, n. 8.

<sup>13</sup> *Nippur* IV, No. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Several parallel names with the root *ndb* are collected *ibid.*, p. 54-55.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. CONRAD, *ndb*, in *ThWAT* V, Stuttgart 1986, col. 237-245.

<sup>16</sup> *Tigl. III*, p. 68, line 2; p. 87, lines 6-7; p. 89, line 8; p. 108, line 19.



Šamši<sup>17</sup>, Yaṭi'e<sup>18</sup>, Tabū'a<sup>19</sup>, 'Aṭīya or Hadīya<sup>20</sup>, and Te'elḥunu<sup>21</sup>, who also bore the Arabic title of 'apkallatu, "priestess"<sup>22</sup>, translated in Aramaic by *kumirtu*<sup>23</sup>. Two other women are named as queens in the land of Bāzu that might be located in the Azraq oasis<sup>24</sup>, namely Yapa', queen of Dihrān, and Bašlu, queen of Iḥīlu<sup>25</sup>. All these parallels may suggest that the members of Bēt-Ḥalupē were Arabs.

If the name of Ḥalupē derives, instead, from the root *ḡlb*, "to vanquish", it would mean "victorious" and appear as a kind of *nomen omen* related to the role played by the so-called "*Schlachtenjungfrau*", the Arab priestess transported with the divine symbol in the sacred *qobba* or 'otfa, on the back of a dromedary, and leading the troops to the battle. This practice, witnessed by Arab writers and still attested in the earlier part of the 20th century<sup>26</sup>, has probably inspired the biblical author

<sup>17</sup> *Tigl. III*, p. 80, line 18'; p. 141, line 19'; *Sargon II*, p. 110 and 320, Ann. 123; p. 198 and 344, Displ. 27.

<sup>18</sup> *Sennacherib*, p. 51, line 28.

<sup>19</sup> R. BORGER, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien* (AfO, Beih. 9), Graz 1956, p. 53, lines 15-16; p. 100, lines 12-13; ID., *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, Wiesbaden 1996, p. 70, line 13.

<sup>20</sup> M. STRECK, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergang Niniveh's* (VAB 7), Leipzig 1916, vol. II, p. 202, line 26; R. BORGER, *Beiträge, op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 62, A VIII 24; p. 115, GIE II' 1'; cf. M. WEIPPERT, *Die Kämpfe des assyrischen Königs Assurbanipal gegen die Araber*, in *WO 7* (1973-74), p. 39-85 (see p. 42, n. 17).

<sup>21</sup> *Sennacherib*, p. 92, line 22, largely restored from M. STRECK, *op. cit.* (n. 20), p. 222, K. 3405, line 12; *Sanherib*, p. 131, lines 53' and [5"]; R. BORGER, *Beiträge, op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 70, line 12.

<sup>22</sup> R. BORGER, *Asarhaddon, op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 54, line 4; cf. ID., *Assyriologische und altarabistische Miscellen*, in *Or 26* (1957), p. 1-11 (see p. 9-10), followed by I. EPH'AL, *The Ancient Arabs*, Jerusalem 1982, p. 118, n. 400; *PNA I/1*, p. 113. For the masculine title 'pkl, cf. *DNWSI*, p. 95-96.

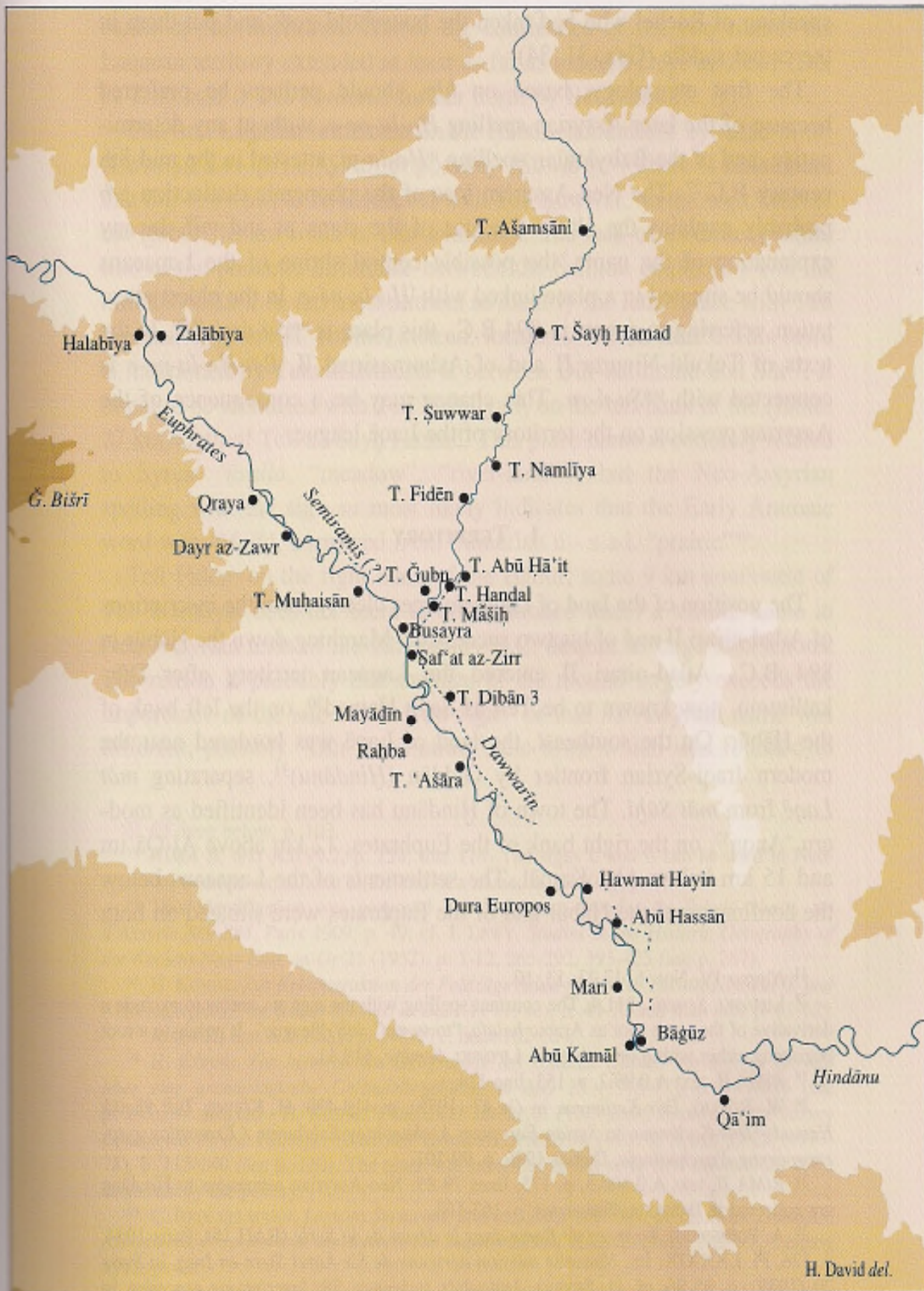
<sup>23</sup> M. STRECK, *loc. cit.* (n. 20); cf. p. 216, K. 3087, lines 1-2; R. BORGER, *Beiträge, op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 70, line 12.

<sup>24</sup> D.T. POTTS, *Back to Bazu*, in *NABU 1999*, p. 95-96, No. 96; cf. I. EPH'AL, *op. cit.* (n. 22), p. 52-54, 126, 130-136; else E. LIPINSKI, *Buz*, in *DEB*, Turnhout 1987, p. 222.

<sup>25</sup> R. BORGER, *Asarhaddon, op. cit.* (n. 19), p. 56, lines 64 and 67.

<sup>26</sup> H. LAMMENS, *L'Arabie occidentale avant l'Hégire*, Beyrouth 1926, p. 110-119 and 127. Attestations have been collected by J. HENNINGER, *Die Familie bei den heutigen Beduinen Arabiens und seiner Randgebieten* (Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie 42), Wien 1943, p. 23-26; ID., *Ist der sogenannte Nilus-Bericht eine brauchbare religionsgeschichtliche Quelle?*, in *Anthropos 50* (1955), p. 81-148 (see p. 121, n. 189). The largest evidence was collected by J. MORGENSTERN, *The Ark, the Ephod and the Tent of Meeting* (= *HUCA 17* [1942-43], p. 153-266; 18 [1944], p. 1-52), Cincinnati 1945, p. 5-41. See also F. CUMONT, *Études syriennes*, Paris 1917, p. 262-276; H. SEYRIG, *Procession d'un cheval et d'un chameau*, in *Syria 15* (1934), p. 159-165 and Pl. XIX; M. HÖFNER, *Die Beduinen in den vorislamischen arabischen Inschriften*, in F. GABRIELI (ed.), *L'antica società beduina* (Studi semitici 2), Roma 1959, p. 53-68 (see p. 55-56).





2. The land of Laqē.



speaking of Rachel who had taken the household gods and put them in the camel-saddle (Gen. 31, 34).

The first etymology, based on *hlp*, should perhaps be preferred because of the later Assyrian spelling *Ḥa-lu-pe-e*, without any determinative, and of the Babylonian spelling <sup>m</sup>*Ḥa-la-pi*, attested in the mid-8th century B.C.<sup>27</sup>. The Neo-Assyrian loss of the phonemic distinction *p/b* probably explains the alternative use of the signs BI and PI<sup>28</sup>. In any explanation of the name, the possible central shrine of the Laqaeans should be situated in a place linked with <sup>f</sup>*Ḥa-lu-pé-e*. In the oldest attestation, referring to events in 894 B.C., this place is <sup>uru</sup>*Ṣú-ú-ri-iḫ*<sup>29</sup>. In the texts of Tukulti-Ninurta II and of Ashurnasirpal II, *Bēt-Ḥa-lu-pe-e* is connected with <sup>uru</sup>*Su-ú-ru*. This change may be a consequence of the Assyrian pression on the territory of the Laqē league.

## 1. TERRITORY

The position of the land of Laqē emerges clearly from the inscriptions of Adad-nirari II and of his two successors. Marching down the Ḥābūr in 894 B.C., Adad-nirari II entered the Laqaeian territory after Dūr-katlimmu, now known to be Tell aš-Šayḥ Ḥamad<sup>30</sup>, on the left bank of the Ḥābūr. On the southeast, the land of Laqē was bordered near the modern Iraqi-Syrian frontier by Ġiddān (*Ḥindānu*)<sup>31</sup>, separating *māt Laqē* from *māt Sūḫi*. The town of Ḥindānu has been identified as modern 'Anqa<sup>32</sup>, on the right bank of the Euphrates, 12 km above Al-Qā'im and 15 km below Abū Kamāl. The settlements of the Laqaeans below the confluence of the Ḥābūr and of the Euphrates were situated on both

<sup>27</sup> *Nippur* IV, Nos. 6, 17.23; 13, 10.

<sup>28</sup> LIPÍŃSKI, *Semitic*, §11.4. The constant spelling with the sign ḤA seems to exclude a derivative of the same root as Arabic *ḥalafa*, "to swear", *ḥilf*, "league". It points to a root beginning either with *ḥ* or with *ḡ*; cf. LIPÍŃSKI, *Semitic*, §19.11.

<sup>29</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 114.

<sup>30</sup> W. RÖLLIG, *Dūr-Katlimmu*, in *Or* 47 (1978), p. 419-430; H. KÜHNE, *Tell Sheikh Hamad - Dur-Katlimmu*, in *Syrian-European Archaeology Exhibition / Exposition syro-européenne d'archéologie*, Damas 1996, p. 99-101.

<sup>31</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 175, lines 79-85. Neo-Assyrian references to Ḥindānu are collected in PARPOLA, *Toponyms*, p. 163-164.

<sup>32</sup> A. POIDEBARD, *La trace de Rome dans le désert de la Syrie* (BAH 18), Paris 1934, p. 126, Pl. LXXXIX; ID., *Nouvelle mission aérienne de Sir Aurel Stein en Iraq*, in *Syria* 20 (1939), p. 95-96; cf. H. SEYRIG, *Antiquités syriennes*. 58. *Inscriptions grecques*, in *Syria* 31 (1954), p. 212-218 (see p. 212-214). A. MUSIL, *The Middle Euphrates: A Topographical Itinerary*, New York 1927, p. 14-15, n. 12, points at Tell al-Ġabrīya, with the ruins of a large city (line drawing *ibid.*, p. 17, Fig. 8).



banks of the Euphrates. Above the confluence of the two rivers, the Laqaean territory extended at least as far as modern Dayr az-Zawr (Der ez-Zor), and it was bordered further north by Bēt-‘Adini<sup>33</sup>.

The first Laqaean settlement on the Ḥābūr encountered by Adad-nirari II was *Ṣú-ú-ri-ih*, i.e. \**Ṣūriḥ* or possibly \**Ṣuwariḥ*<sup>34</sup>. There is little doubt that this town has to be identified with Tell Ṣuwwar, on the west bank of the Ḥābūr, 18 km south of Dūr-katlimmu. The lack of a correct evaluation of the phonetic difference between the Semitic emphatic *ṣ* and the initial *š* of *Su-ú-ru* led most authors to identify the latter place with Tell Ṣuwwar<sup>35</sup>, where H. Kühne, instead, localizes *urru-Ṣa-la-a*<sup>36</sup>. This town is mentioned by Tukulti-Ninurta II between Dūr-katlimmu and Šūr<sup>37</sup>. It ought to be identified with Tell Namliya<sup>38</sup>, on the left bank of the Ḥābūr, 27 km south of Tell aš-Šayḥ Ḥamad. This place name is certainly related to Syriac *’ūsallā*, “meadow”, “river-land”<sup>39</sup>, but the Neo-Assyrian spelling with the sign *sa* most likely indicates that the Early Aramaic word was *’ūsallā*, borrowed from Sumerian *ú - s a l*, “prairie”<sup>40</sup>.

Tell Fidēn, on the right bank of the Ḥābūr, some 9 km southwest of Tell Namliya, does not seem to be mentioned under a similar name in Neo-Assyrian texts of the 9th century B.C. despite its large dimensions. The reason is probably that the size of the mound largely exceeds the importance of the site in the Iron Age<sup>41</sup> or that its Assyrian name was different, possibly “Dūr-Adad-nirari”, the town which was founded in

<sup>33</sup> Cf. here below, p. 103.

<sup>34</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 114. The signs *u* and *ú* can be used in Neo-Assyrian to mark *wa*, at least at the end of a name; cf. *SAIO II*, p. 230.

<sup>35</sup> This identification was proposed by V. SCHEIL, *Annales de Tukulti Ninip, roi d’Assyrie 889-884*, Paris 1909, p. 49; cf. J. LEWY, *Studies in the Historic Geography of the Ancient Near East*, in *Or* 21 (1952), p. 1-12, 265-292, 393-425 (see p. 267).

<sup>36</sup> H. KÜHNE, *Zur Rekonstruktion der Feldzüge Adad-nirari II., Tukulti-Ninurta II. und Aššurnasirpal II. im Ḥābūr-Gebiet*, in *BaM* 11 (1980), p. 44-70 and map (see p. 61-62).

<sup>37</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.100.5, p. 176-177, lines 102-104.

<sup>38</sup> H. KÜHNE, *Zur historischen Geographie am Unteren Ḥābūr. Vorläufiges Bericht über eine archäologische Geländebegehung*, in *AfO* 25 (1975-77), p. 249-255 (see p. 253); W. RÖLLIG - H. KÜHNE, *The Lower Habur. A Preliminary Report on the Survey Conducted by the Tübingen Atlas des Vorderen Orients in 1975*, in *AAAS* 27-28 (1977-78), p. 115-140 (see p. 120). The place was inhabited in the early first millennium B.C., as shown by the pottery.

<sup>39</sup> C. BROCKELMANN, *Lexicon Syriacum*, 2nd ed., Halle a/S 1928, p. 35; cf. H. ZIMMERN, *Akkadische Fremdwörter als Beweis für babylonischen Kultureinfluss*, 2nd ed., Leipzig 1917, p. 43.

<sup>40</sup> S. LIEBERMAN, *The Sumerian Loanwords in Old-Babylonian Akkadian I*, Missoula 1977, p. 519, No. 693. Tell Namliya was inhabited in the third and second millennia B.C.; cf. W. RÖLLIG - H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 38), p. 120.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 38), p. 254.



the early 8th century B.C. by Nergal-ēreš in the land of Laqē<sup>42</sup>. The name of the tell probably corresponds to Greek Ἀπαδάνα/Ἀπαδάνα, Latin *Apadana*, and biblical *Paddān*<sup>43</sup>. According to H. Kühne, however, Tell Fidēn is the site of *Sūru* in the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions of the early 9th century B.C., whereas Tell Maših, 18 km to the south, would be the site of Rummunina, also mentioned by Tukulti-Ninurta II<sup>44</sup>. These identifications are questionable for various reasons. First of all, it is not safe to use, as a rule, apparent average figures of 18 km or 36 km per day as an aid to the identification of sites mentioned in itineraries, since we often do not know whether all the nightly stoppings are reported in the texts. Besides, not all the available data are taken into account by the author and not all the sites along the Lower Ḥābūr and in its vicinity are considered.

Let us first examine the case of Rummunina. Tukulti-Ninurta II's annals mention the encamping "in the meadow of the Euphrates by <sup>uru</sup>*Ru-um-mu-ni-na* where lies the canal of <sup>id</sup>*Si[q]-i[a]*"<sup>45</sup>, rather than '*Ḥa<sup>2</sup>-bur*' according to the preserved traces. Now, *šiqyā* means "irrigation" or "canal" in Aramaic and the canal mentioned by Tukulti-Ninurta II must correspond to the Nahr ad-Dawwarīn, that is fed from the Ḥābūr just below As-Siğar, about 20 km above the point where the Ḥābūr joins the Euphrates<sup>46</sup>. It is a lateral canal, following the left bank of the Ḥābūr and of the Euphrates until Abū Kamāl where it joins the river. In its present state, it is almost 130 km long and 9 to 11 metres wide, thus fit also for navigation, at least in this state. The ancient sites identified along this waterway prove that it existed already in the Neo-Assyrian period, and very likely as early as the Bronze Age. In fact, the settlements along the canal could not have lived without the water supply it provided. One of

<sup>42</sup> See here above, p. 72 with note 63.

<sup>43</sup> See above, p. 70-72.

<sup>44</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 95-97. Cf. H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 36), p. 61-62.

<sup>45</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 95-96.

<sup>46</sup> Nahr ad-Dawwarīn is mentioned by G.L. BELL, *The East Bank of the Euphrates from Tell Ahmar to Hit*, in *Geographical Journal* 36 (1910), p. 513-537 (see p. 530); EAD., *Amurath to Amurath*, London 1911, p. 78 and 82; J.H. BREASTED, *Oriental Fore-runners of Byzantine Painting*, Chicago 1923, p. 25, n. 1, and map 2; F. THUREAU-DANGIN - É. DHORME, *Cinq jours de fouilles à Asharah*, in *Syria* 5 (1924), p. 265-293 (see p. 267 and 277); A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 204. See further B. GEYER, *Géomorphologie et occupation du sol de la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate dans la région de Mari*, in *MARI* 4 (1985), p. 27-39, especially p. 34, n. 12; B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *Prospection de la moyenne vallée de l'Euphrate. Rapport préliminaire: 1982-1985*, in *MARI* 5 (1987), p. 293-344, in particular p. 313, 324, and 341, No. 66, with the maps on p. 307 and 329, No. 66.



these settlements, Tell Dibān 3, was certainly occupied in the Iron Age. Its situation — 13 km north of Tell al-‘Ašāra, 17 km south of Al-Buṣayra, and 1.5 km east of an ancient meander of the Euphrates — suggests that it has better chances of corresponding to Rummunina than Tell Maših, on the Ḥābūr. The name of <sup>uru</sup>*Ru-um-mu-ni-na* is probably Aramaic; it seems to derive from the noun *rūmmān*, “pomegranate”, with the suffix *-ayn* > *-ēn/-īn* of place names. Despite its name, Rummunina cannot be identified with the mediaeval Dayr ar-Rummān. According to Yāqūt, this was a large town with market places for the Bedouin between Ar-Raqqā and Al-Ḥābūr, where the caravans from Iraq to Syria used to stop<sup>47</sup>. Although Yāqūt fails specifying that this place is situated on the right bank of the Euphrates, this may be the case because there the easiest road via Palmyra to Damascus branches off from the road along the right bank of the Euphrates to northern Syria. The same place, as it seems, is simply called Ad-Dayr in the chronicle of Abulfeda (1273-1331) for the year A.D. 1331 that reports the destruction of the pontoon bridge at Dayr Bašīr<sup>48</sup>, probably modern Al-Buṣayra: the Euphrates, which was then in great flood, demolished the bridge and destroyed much property in the area of Ar-Raḥba<sup>49</sup>, near Al-Mayādīn.

Another canal, rediscovered in 1985, followed the left bank of the Euphrates from the area of Zalābīya to a point above Al-Buṣayra<sup>50</sup>. The outlet of this canal may then correspond to the borough Φάλιγα on the Euphrates, that the *Parthian Stations* situate just above the confluence of the Ḥābūr and of the Euphrates. The same place, the name of which apparently originates from *palgu*, “canal”, appears as Πάλιγα in a document from

<sup>47</sup> YĀQŪT, *Mu‘ğam ‘al-buldān*, ed. F. WÜSTENFELD, Leipzig 1866-73, vol. II, p. 662. See also ABU L-FADĀ’IL, *Marāšid*, ed. T.G.J. JUYNBOLL, Leiden 1850-64, vol. I, p. 430.

<sup>48</sup> ABŪ L-FIDĀ’, *Muḥtaṣar ta’rīḥ ‘al-bašar*, Cairo 1905, vol. IV, p. 106.

<sup>49</sup> These circumstances are reported by IBN KAṬĪR, *Bidāya wa-nihāya* (Codex Vindobonensis 813 [N.F. 187]), National-Bibliothek, Vienna, vol. VII, fol. 20<sup>r</sup>, quoted by A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 3, n. 3, who identifies Ad-Dayr with Dayr az-Zawr (also on p. 254), 45 km northwest of Ar-Raḥba. Considering the distance, this identification is uncertain. For the sites of Ar-Raḥba and of Al-Mayādīn, see the global presentation by Q. TOUEIR - Th. BIANQUIS - M.-O. ROUSSET, *Raḥba Mayadin*, in *Syrian-European Archaeology Exhibition / Exposition syro-européenne d’archéologie*, Damas 1996, p. 183-184.

<sup>50</sup> B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 315. Traces of this canal have been first recognized by F.R. Chesney during his exploration of the course of the Middle Euphrates in 1835-37. It might be the Nahr Semiramis mentioned by ISIDORUS OF CHARAX, *Parthian Stations* 1; cf. J. LAUFFRAY, *Ḥalabiya-Zenobia, place forte du Limes oriental et la Haute-Mésopotamie au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle* I (BAH 119), Paris 1983, p. 56-57.



Dura Europos, dated in A.D. 121<sup>51</sup>. It is called Φάλγα by Arrian in a fragment where he describes the sailing of Trajan's fleet on the Euphrates, and by Stephen of Byzantium, who states like the *Parthian Stations* that Φάλγα is a place situated "halfway"<sup>52</sup>. The place is referred to also by Pliny: *a Sure autem proxime est Philiscum oppidum Parthorum ad Euphratem*<sup>53</sup>.

Now, Tukulti-Ninurta II moves on from Rummunina to "uruSu-ú-ri of mār Ha-lu-pe-e, which is upon the Ḥābūr"<sup>54</sup>, but he does not mention the encamping of his army there. This seems to indicate that the troops pitched camp at some distance, most likely because that place was on the opposite side of the river, near the point where the Ḥābūr joins the left bank of the Euphrates. The Ḥābūr is there 30 metres wide<sup>55</sup>, as it was at the time of Xenophon who speaks of one πλέθρον<sup>56</sup> or 100 feet, i.e. 29.5 metres according to the foot most generally used in Greek buildings. At this point, called Al-Buṣayra, there are ruins going back not only to Roman *Circesium*, but also to Xenophon's Κορσωτή, a "large town" that was already abandoned in 401 B.C.<sup>57</sup>. In fact, the Ḥābūr is most likely identical with the Μάσκα of Xenophon, and the distance of 35 parasangs given by him to the way from the Araxes, i.e. the Balīḥ at Ar-Raqqā, to Maska<sup>58</sup> is a fair estimate of the actual distance<sup>59</sup>. Maska occurs as a name of the Ġagğag-Ḥābūr also in Syriac (*Mašaq*)<sup>60</sup>, uruMa-sa-ka is the

<sup>51</sup> C.B. WELLES - R.O. FINK - J.F. GILLIAM, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report V, Part I. The Parchments and Papyri*, New Haven 1959, p. 115, No. 20, 2. A. LUTHER, *Zwei Bemerkungen zu Isidor von Charax*, in *ZPE* 119 (1997), p. 237-242 (see p. 238), locates Phaliga on the west bank, facing Nabagath, which he identifies with *Circesium* (!). This conception is vitiated by the interpretation of the adjective παραποτάμιος in the *Parthian Stations* (p. 237-238). This word means "by the river" and cannot be identified with the region of Παραποταμία without further proof. In the *Parthian Stations* 1, it is a synonym of the preceding παρ' Εὐφράτην, "by the Euphrates".

<sup>52</sup> ARRIAN, *Parthica* X, frg. 8, edited in *FHG* III, p. 588; A.G. ROOS, *Flavii Arriani quae exstant omnia* II. *Scripta minora et fragmenta*, Leipzig 1928, p. 229: 20; cf. ID., *Studia Arrianea*, Leipzig 1913, p. 50-51. The passage is quoted by STEPHEN OF BYZANTIUM, *Ethnica*, ed. by A. MEINEKE, *Ethnicorum quae supersunt*, Berlin 1849, p. 656.

<sup>53</sup> PLINY THE ELDER, *Natural History* V, 21, 89; cf. E. MOMMSEN, quoted by STURM, *Philiscum*, in *PW* XIX/2, Stuttgart 1938, col. 2378.

<sup>54</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 97-98.

<sup>55</sup> V. MANFREDI, *La strada dei Diecimila: Topografia e geografia dell'Oriente di Senofonte*, Milano 1986, p. 120.

<sup>56</sup> XENOPHON, *Anabasis* I, 5, 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* I, 5, 4. The antiquity of the site is shown by the discovery of a sherd from Early Bronze Age II; cf. W. RÖLLIG - H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 38), p. 119. The ancient levels are covered by the important remains of the Hellenistic through Islamic periods.

<sup>58</sup> XENOPHON, *Anabasis* I, 5, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. V. MANFREDI, *op. cit.* (n. 55), p. 116-123.

<sup>60</sup> W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum* III, London 1872, p. 1130; G. HOFFMANN, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Martyrer*



name of a Neo-Assyrian district on the Ġagğag<sup>61</sup>, and this appellation is apparently preserved by the modern name of Tell Maših, on the left bank of the Lower Ḥābūr. The original word was obviously *mašqē*, “watering-place”, thus no specific river name. Xenophon’s description of the site of Κορσωτή as “watered by the Maska all around” (περιερρεῖτο δ’ αὐτὴ ὑπὸ τοῦ Μασκα κύκλῳ) corresponds perfectly to the description of Circesium by Ammianus Marcellinus: *cuius mænia Abora et Euphrates ambiunt flumina, velut spatium insulare fīngentes*<sup>62</sup>.

The ancient mound of Al-Buṣayra is situated on a low, oblong ridge running out to the Euphrates. It shows walls of unbaked brick and two burnt layers, each one metre thick, but has never been excavated in a systematic way. It is badly damaged, has recently been cut in two by a profound dig, probably made in order to fuel a pumping station, and its western part seems to have been largely eroded<sup>63</sup>. Now, Xenophon characterizes Κορσωτή in 401 B.C. as an “abandoned, considerable city” (πόλις ἐρήμη, μεγάλη), although the region was then populated and the Greeks were thus able to supply themselves with food<sup>64</sup>. The abandonment of the city implies a drastic change in the composition of the local population and it is not surprising therefore that the ancient name of the city was unknown to Xenophon’s informants who apparently called it \**kark-sōt*, “burnt city”<sup>65</sup>. Xenophon took it for a real city name.

Ashurnasirpal II’s account of his campaign on the Middle Euphrates in 878 B.C. clearly indicates that Šūr of Bēt-Ḥalupē was distant from Šerqu only by a day’s journey<sup>66</sup>. Since Tell Fidēn is distant from the point on the left bank of the Euphrates facing Šerqu by 60 km as the crow flies, this distance cannot be travelled over in one day<sup>67</sup>. Instead, the distance from Al-Buṣayra to Šerqu amounts to 28 km, what corresponds to a day’s journey of caravans and to a day’s march of Assyrian troops<sup>68</sup>. Moreover,

(Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 7/3), Leipzig 1880, p. 171 and 217, n. 1732; E.A.W. BUDGE, *The Book of Governors* I, London 1893, p. CXXVI.

<sup>61</sup> MILLARD, *Eponyms*, p. 120, sub 815.

<sup>62</sup> AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, *History* XXIII, 2, 6.

<sup>63</sup> V. MANFREDI, *op. cit.* (n. 55), p. 122. The site was in a better condition at the time of E. SACHAU, *Reise in Syrien und Mesopotamien*, Leipzig 1883, p. 286-288.

<sup>64</sup> XENOPHON, *Anabasis* I, 5, 4.

<sup>65</sup> The word heard by Xenophon was most likely pronounced [*korsōt*], with the elision of the second *k* and the monophthongization *aw* > *ō* of the root *šwt*, attested in Syriac by the verb *sāt*, *nāsūt*, “to be burnt”, and in Arabic by the noun *šuwāz*, “fire”.

<sup>66</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.101.1, p. 213, line 8.

<sup>67</sup> H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 36), p. 63.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69. The distance covered daily by an army is usually considered as inferior to 25 km, but the Greek mercenaries of Cyrus the Young travelled about 5.5 parasangs a





Basalt stela (90 cm high) representing the Storm-god while killing the mythical serpent. It was erected by Tukulti-Ninurta II (890-884 B.C.) at Tell al-‘Ašāra to commemorate his father’s, Adad-nirari II (911-891 B.C.), and his own victorious campaigns in the land of Laqē (Aleppo Museum, Inv. No. 3165 [1]).



Ashurnasirpal II's account of another campaign, between 877 and 867 B.C., probably early in that period, also seems to indicate that Al-Buṣayra is the site of Šūr of Bēt-Ḥalupē. Taking rafts made especially at Šūr, where the Ḥābūr flows into the Euphrates, the king went up the river as far as the great défilé of Ḥanuqa, above Ḥalabīya: "I made my own boats in Šūr, I set out for the bank(s) of the Euphrates, (and) I went up as far as the gorge of the Euphrates", *eleppēti<sup>meš</sup> ša raminiya ina uruSūri ētapaš ana pūt<sup>id</sup> Puratte ašbat adi ḥinḡi ša<sup>id</sup> Puratte attarid<sup>69</sup>*. He further records that he burnt Laqaeen villages on the banks of the Euphrates "from the mouth of the Ḥābūr as far as Šibbātu"<sup>70</sup>. Šibbātu is apparently the same place as *Ši-ib-na-tim* (genitive) in the Mari texts, which lies in the province of *Saggarātum*, halfway between Terqa/Šerqu and Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim<sup>71</sup>, thus north of the mouth of the Ḥābūr and probably on the western bank of the Euphrates. This campaign of Ashurnasirpal II started from Šūr, that seems therefore to be situated at the mouth of the Ḥābūr, at Al-Buṣayra.

This place may have been called Šūr already in the Old Babylonian period. According to a Mari letter, certain works have been executed "in the Valley of Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim", i.e. near the confluence of the Euphrates and of the Ḥābūr, "from *Pa-Šu-ri-im* to *Sa-ḥa-ra-ta-a*"<sup>72</sup>. Considering the particular location of these works near modern Al-Buṣayra, *Pa-Šu-ri-im* must be the mouth of the Ḥābūr at Šūr, as suggested by its name "Mouth of Šūr". Since this region passes from history towards the end of the 8th century B.C., we do not know the circumstances in which the site has been destroyed, so that only ruins remained in the 5th century B.C.

This site has been rebuilt and resettled in Hellenistic times. Michael the Syrian relates that Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226 B.C.) built a town called Karkis on the Ḥābūr<sup>73</sup>. This is a shortened form of the city name which appears in the trilingual inscription of Sapor I from Naqš-i Rūstam,

day, i.e. about 28 km, sometimes more; cf. V. MANFREDI, *op. cit.* (n. 55), p. 25-26 and *passim*. A summary of the available evidence from the Middle East can be found in G.I. DAVIES, *The Significance of Deuteronomy I, 2 for the Location of Mount Horeb*, in *PEQ* 111 (1979), p. 87-101, especially p. 89-97.

<sup>69</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 214, lines 29-30.

<sup>70</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 214, lines 31-32.

<sup>71</sup> *ARM* XXVI, 16, 25-27; 163, 7'-11'.

<sup>72</sup> *ARM* II, 107, 22-25, where *Sa-ger-ra-ta-a* should be corrected in *Sa-ḥa-ra-ta-a*; cf. J.-M. DURAND, *Villes fantômes de Syrie et autres lieux*, in *MARI* 5 (1987), p. 199-234 (see p. 229).

<sup>73</sup> MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, *Chronicle*, ed. by J.-B. CHABOT, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)*, Paris 1899-1906, vol. IV, p. 78.



where the Sassanid king mentions Κορκουσίωνα, Parthian *Krkisy'*, among the places he conquered during his second campaign<sup>74</sup>, probably in 256 A.D. The name used by Latin writers was *Circessum*, *Circusium* or *Circesium*<sup>75</sup>. Syriac sources generally transcribe it by *Qarqūsyōn* or *Qarqīsyōn*<sup>76</sup>, while Jewish Aramaic texts refer to the city as *Qirqasyōn*<sup>77</sup>. The meaning of the place name was no more understood, but judging from the Parthian spelling it was possibly *\*Karki-Šai'*, "Fortified city of Šai'", the North-Arabian protective god of the caravans<sup>78</sup>.

A. Musil was of the opinion that the same site is called Φάλιγα and Ναβαγάθ in the *Parthian Stations*<sup>79</sup>. This opinion cannot be sustained any more, since the first place belonged in the 2nd century A.D. to the hyparchy of Ἰάρδα, while the second one was situated in the hyparchy of Γαβαλεῖν<sup>80</sup>. Nevertheless, the two places were very close to each other, since no distance is indicated in the *Parthian Stations*. As argued above, Φάλιγα was probably situated at the outlet of an ancient canal, north of the Ḥābūr, while Ναβαγάθ was a κωμόπολις close to the ford where "the troops were crossing over to the Roman territory". Now, this ford of the Euphrates must correspond to the site of the mediaeval pontoon bridge at Dayr Baṣīr (Al-Buṣayra)<sup>81</sup>, rather than to the ford just east

<sup>74</sup> E. HONIGMANN - A. MARICQ, *Recherches sur les Res Gestae Divi Saporis*, Bruxelles 1953, p. 13, line 17; p. 147, No. 27, and p. 153; A. MARICQ, *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*, in *Syria* 35 (1958), p. 295-360 and Pl. XXIII-XXIV (see p. 311, line 17).

<sup>75</sup> Roman attestations are related already to the emperors Gordian III (A.D. 238-242) and Decius (A.D. 249-251). For Gordian III's burial place, see EUTROPIUS, *Breviarium ab Urbe condita* IX, 2 (*Miles ei tumulum vigesimo milliaro a Circesso... aedificavit*), and IULIUS CAPITOLINUS, in *Historia Augusta* XXXIV (*apud Circesium castrum*). For this subject, see now M.J. JOHNSON, *The Sepulcrum Gordiani at Zaitha and Its Significance*, in *Latomus* 54 (1995), p. 141-144. For the time of Decius, see the *Paschal Chronicle*, ed. by L. DINDORF, *Chronicum Paschale* (CSHB), Bonn 1832, p. 504 (*ab Arabia et Palaestina usque ad Circesium castrum*).

<sup>76</sup> R. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* II, Oxford 1901, col. 3760. See also E.W. BROOKS (ed.), *Vitae virorum apud Monophysitas celeberrimorum* (CSCO 7-8), Louvain 1907, vol. 7, p. 61:8 = vol. 8, p. 40:4; MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, *op. cit.* (n. 73), vol. II, p. 475 = vol. IV, p. 448, col. I, 6; BARHEBRAEUS, *Chronicon Syriacum*, ed. by P. BEDJAN, Paris 1890, p. 38.

<sup>77</sup> JASTROW, p. 1426a. See further here below, p. 91, n. 87.

<sup>78</sup> This is an abridged form, used also in onomastics, of the North-Arabian divine name Šai' al-Qawm, literally "companion of the kinsfolk". Cf. M. HÖFNER, *Šai' al-qawm, Šai' haq-qawm*, in H.W. HAUSSIG (ed.), *Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient* (Wörterbuch der Mythologie I/1), Stuttgart 1965, p. 465-466.

<sup>79</sup> A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 334. V. MANFREDI, *op. cit.* (n. 55), p. 121-122, identifies Ναβαγάθ with Al-Buṣayra.

<sup>80</sup> C.B. WELLES - R.O. FINK - J.F. GILLIAM, *op. cit.* (n. 51), p. 115, No. 20, 2, and p. 128, No. 25, 21.

<sup>81</sup> See above, p. 85.



of Al-Mayādīn<sup>82</sup>. In this hypothesis, Ναβαγάθ, “by which flows the Ḥābūr river”, should be located south of the confluence<sup>83</sup>, possibly at the ruin mound of Saf‘at az-Zirr<sup>84</sup>, where much of the visible building material was already carried away by 1915<sup>85</sup>. This site is about 10 km to the north of the ford of Al-Mayādīn. The place name Ναβαγάθ is Aramaic and derives from the root *nbg*, “to spring up”; it probably means “spring”, unless it is “hillock”, like its Arabic counterpart *nabaka(tun)*. As for the name of the new settlement of Al-Buṣayra, it goes back to Aramaic *bē-‘šīr*, “place (house) of pressed (grapes/olives)”<sup>86</sup>, and has no relation to the earlier names of the settlement<sup>87</sup>.

About 10 km northeast of Al-Buṣayra, there is an ancient mound on the right bank of the Ḥābūr. It is called Tell al-Ġubn and, after A. Musil<sup>88</sup>, it was first signalized by M.E.L. Mallowan<sup>89</sup>. Judging from its location and from Ashur-bēl-kala’s (1073-1056 B.C.) account of his

<sup>82</sup> A. MUSIL, *Palmyrena. A Topographical Itinerary*, New York 1928, p. 235-236, describes this ford: “... beside a large island, the Euphrates turns almost east. The channel there is broad and the current slow, and therefore the river is easy to cross. The convenient location of this ford also proves its importance”, as it conducted one across the Euphrates to the road leading along the Ḥābūr into the interior of Mesopotamia. For his Θάψακος, in Semitic \**tapsah*, “ford” (cf. I Kings 5,4), PTOLEMY, *Geography* V, 18, gives the longitude 73° 30’ E. and the latitude 35° 5’ N., respectively 73° E. and 35° 5’ N. *ibid.* V, 14,5, thus below the point where the Ḥābūr empties into the Euphrates at 35°10’ N. This would bring us in the vicinity of Al-Mayādīn, i.e. at the same latitude as Θάψακος. On the contrary, the latitude of the confluence of the Ḥābūr and of the Euphrates should be read λδ’ δ” instead of λε’ δ”, as in most manuscripts (C. MÜLLER, *Claudii Ptolemaei geographia* I/2, Paris 1901, p. 1001:19; cf. p. 1003:11), i.e. longitude 74° [?] E. and latitude 34° 10’ N., if this lower Thapsacus has to be located in the neighbourhood of the great défilé of Ḥanuqa, as proposed by M. GAWLIKOWSKI, *Thapsacus and Zeugma: The Crossing of the Euphrates in Antiquity*, in *Iraq* 58 (1996), p. 123-133 (see p. 129). As for Αλαμαθα on the Euphrates, in Palmyrena, located by Ptolemy (V, 14, 19) at longitude 73° E. and latitude 35° 5’ N., it might then be the same place as Γαλαβαθα in the *Parthian Stations*, southeast of Ar-Raqqā, and Bronze Age Ḥalabit /Ġalabit/.

<sup>83</sup> Evidence from Dura Europos (Pap. Dura 20 and 25) shows that Φάλιγα and Ναβαγάθ belonged to different hyparchies under Parthian administration and thus were most likely separated by the Ḥābūr; cf. M.-L. CHAUMONT, *Études d’histoire parthe V. La Route Royale des Parthes de Zeugma à Séleucie du Tigre d’après l’Itinéraire d’Isidore de Charax*, in *Syria* 61 (1984), p. 63-107 (see p. 86); M. GAWLIKOWSKI, *art. cit.* (n. 82), p. 131, and here above, p. 90, n. 80.

<sup>84</sup> B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 307 and 340, Nos. 31-32. No material prior to the Seleucids is recorded, like at Al-Buṣayra (but cf. above, p. 86, n. 57).

<sup>85</sup> A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 178. Zirr may be the Ζαιρα of Pap. Dura 26.

<sup>86</sup> WILD, *Ortsnamen*, p. 260.

<sup>87</sup> For the mentions of *Qarqīsiya’* in ancient sources, especially Arabic, see A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 334-337.

<sup>88</sup> A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 82 and 179.

<sup>89</sup> M.E.L. MALLOWAN, *The Excavations at Tell Chagar Bazar, and an Archaeological Survey of the Habur Region, 1934-5*, in *Iraq* 3 (1936), p. 1-86 (see Fig. 1).



campaign against the Aramaeans on the Lower Ḥābūr, Tell al-Ġubn corresponds to <sup>uru</sup>*Sa-an-ga-ri-te* and to the Old Babylonian *Saggarātum*, rather than Tell Abū Ḥā'it, some 6 km above Tell al-Ġubn, on the left bank of the Ḥābūr<sup>90</sup>. In fact, after having combatted against the Aramaeans at Dūr-katlimmu, on the left bank of the Ḥābūr, Ashur-bēl-kala fought with them “opposite (*ina tarši*) Šangarit [and on the bank (*u ina pūt*)] of the Euphrates”<sup>91</sup>. This precise location implies, as it seems, that the city, known to be on the Ḥābūr, was built on the right bank of the river, near the point where it joins the Euphrates from the east. The place name was apparently preserved at least until the 4th or 5th century A.D. in Syriac, since Mār Mu'ayn, who retired in the early 4th century to “the ruined city called Dura”, i.e. Dura Europos, was native from Šiggār<sup>92</sup>, that must be a place in the same region of the Middle Euphrates, called Σαχαρη in Pap. Dura 26, and not Roman Singara.

Another important centre of the Old Babylonian kingdom of Mari, Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim, was close to Šaggaratum<sup>93</sup>. It can possibly be identified with Tell al-Muḥaisān, on the west bank of the Euphrates and nearly 15 km northwest of its confluence with the Ḥābūr<sup>94</sup>. The place was situated at 2 or 3 km from the river, on a canal which may be the Išīm-Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim<sup>95</sup>, and this irrigated area may have been called “valley (*ḥamqum /'amqum/*) of Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim”<sup>96</sup>. The whole region certainly belonged to the Laqaeen territory, but no information is available in this respect.

<sup>90</sup> H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 38), p. 253-255, and *art. cit.* (n. 36), p. 67, identifies *Sangarite/Saggarātum* with Tell Abū Ḥā'it. See also W. RÖLLIG - H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 38), p. 119-120. The site was occupied in the second and first millennia B.C.

<sup>91</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.89.7, p. 102, lines 22-24. Since the <sup>uru</sup>*Sa-an-ga-ri-te* of the Broken Obelisk can hardly be separated from Old Babylonian *Saggarātum* or *Sangarātum* and Old Assyrian *Sà-ga-ri-tim*, the restoration *ša kišād* in line 24 has to be replaced by *u ina pūt* or *ana pūt*, “in front of”; cf. M. STOL, *On Trees, Mountains, and Millstones in the Ancient Near East*, Leiden 1979, p. 81 and n. 312.

<sup>92</sup> Large extracts from the *Syriac Acts of Mār Mu'ayn* have been published by G. HOFFMANN, *op. cit.* (n. 60), p. 28 ff., who has also shown that Dura is Dura Europos (*ibid.*, p. 164 ff.). The place name Šiggār, written Šygr (Šiggār) or Šgr (Šiggār or Šaggār<sup>97</sup>), seems to have designated three different localities; cf. R. PAYNE SMITH, *op. cit.* (n. 76), col. 4058 and 4137.

<sup>93</sup> M. BIROT, *Les lettres de Iasîm-Sumû*, in *Syria* 41 (1964), p. 25-65, especially p. 37-38 referring to ARM XIII, 51. See also ARM XIV, 115 for the one day's journey from Terqa to Šaggaratum.

<sup>94</sup> B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 325, 331. The location of Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim on the right bank of the Euphrates results from ARM XXVI, 158, 5-10, but an identification with Dayr az-Zawr would not correspond to the informations provided by ARM XIII, 51 and XIV, 115 (cf. above, n. 93).

<sup>95</sup> Contrary to ARM XVI/1, p. 18.

<sup>96</sup> ARM II, 107, 22-23.



Tell Ḥandal, 3 km below Tell Abū Ḥā'it, has been identified with <sup>uru</sup>Šá-<sup>m</sup>Ḥa-ra-a-ni, the Laqaeen settlement that the annals of Adad-nirari II locate between <sup>uru</sup>Šú-ú-ri-iḫ and <sup>uru</sup>Si-ir-qi<sup>97</sup>, i.e. Tell al-‘Ašāra on the west bank of the Euphrates. The later annals of Tukulti-Ninurta II report twice a *namurtu ša* <sup>m</sup>Ḥa-ra-a-ni in 885 B.C.<sup>98</sup>. The first one was received at Arbate, where the local ruler Ḥarān paid a tribute to the king of Assyria<sup>99</sup>. In the second case, instead, *Ḥarānu* must designate the same Laqaeen town and clan Šá/Ša-<sup>m</sup>Ḥa-ra-a-ni that is referred to ten years earlier in the annals of Adad-nirari II. From the fact that Tukulti-Ninurta II receives the tribute of this clan when he encamped opposite Šerqu, and that Adad-nirari II mentions <sup>uru</sup>Šá-<sup>m</sup>Ḥa-ra-a-ni between Šūriḫ and Šerqu, one can assume that this clan was living east of the Euphrates and that its settlement was somewhere north of Šerqu, probably on high ground and not on the bank of the Ḥābūr. It may have been a very extended settlement, like those seen by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa on the Middle Euphrates in the 14th century<sup>100</sup> and like the modern villages of the ‘Agēdāt clans between Abū Kamāl and Dayr az-Zawr<sup>101</sup>. This general location may perhaps be confirmed by an Old Babylonian text from Mari which mentions Ḥurrān among the towns around Dūr-Yaḥdun-Lim where their representatives met<sup>102</sup>.

As for Tell Maših on the Ḥābūr, about 2 km below Tell Ḥandal and almost opposite Tell al-Ġubn, it might be identified with *Yaliḫum*, that the Old Babylonian governor of Šaggaratum considers as a suitable place in his neighbourhood, where auxiliary troops could be garrisoned in order to avoid some problems<sup>103</sup>. The name of this settlement, written

<sup>97</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 115. Cf. H. KÜHNE, *art. cit.* (n. 36), p. 67-68.

<sup>98</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 87 and 93.

<sup>99</sup> W. SCHRAMM, *Die Annalen des assyrischen Königs Tukulti-Ninurta II. (890-884 v. Chr.)*, in *BiOr* 27 (1970), p. 147-160 and Pl. I-VI (see p. 160), wrongly identifies *Arbate* with <sup>uru</sup>Šá-<sup>m</sup>Ḥa-ra-a-ni. The texts refer to two different <sup>m</sup>Ḥarānu, just as two different <sup>m</sup>A-zi-DINGIR are mentioned by Ashurnasirpal II in the same land of Laqē, and as <sup>m</sup>Mu-da-da<sup>kur</sup>La-qa-a-ia must be distinguished from <sup>m</sup>Mu-da-da <sup>uru</sup>Sir-qa-a-ia in the annals of Tukulti-Ninurta II.

<sup>100</sup> IBN BAṬṬŪṬA, *Tuḥfat an-nuzzār*, ed. by C. DEFREMERY - B.R. SANGUINETTI, *Voyages d'Ibn Batouta, texte arabe accompagné d'une traduction*, Paris 1853-58, vol IV, p. 14.

<sup>101</sup> H. CHARLES, *Tribus moutonnières du Moyen Euphrate*, Damas 1939, whose description was used by M. ANBAR, *Les tribus amurrites de Mari* (OBO 108), Freiburg-Göttingen 1991, p. 100-101, in his study of the same area in the Mari period.

<sup>102</sup> A. 3550, lines 11-15, in *ARM XXVI/1*, p. 125.

<sup>103</sup> *ARM XIV*, 69, 22. According to J.-M. DURAND, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari II* (LAPO 17), Paris 1998, p. 438, *Yaliḫum* should instead be located on the right bank of the Euphrates, near the first slopes of the Ġebel al-Biṣrī.



*Ylh* in a variant of the “South-Arabian” script, appears on a slab found at Ḥamā, and it should therefore be located in the Laqaeen territory of the mid-8th century B.C.<sup>104</sup>.

In the region to the north of the Lower Ḥābūr there were several settlements of the Laqaeans on both banks of the Euphrates and on high grounds east of the river. They are first mentioned by Ashurnasirpal II<sup>105</sup> in connection with the campaign which brought him to “the gorge of the Euphrates”, certainly the great défilé above Ḥalabīya<sup>106</sup>. There were Laqaeen settlements on the banks of the river in the area of Dayr az-Zawr and further north. Some of their sheikhs are named, but not so their settlements, except Kipina dealt with further down.

Other Laqaeen cities are referred to by Tukulti-Ninurta II in the account of his campaign progressing from the south near the east bank of the Euphrates. Thus, after Ġiddān (*Ḥindānu*), situated on the west bank, the Assyrians travelled at a distance from the river through a rocky region to reach <sup>uru</sup>*Na-gi-a-te*, which is not said to belong to the Laqaeans<sup>107</sup>. A. Poidebard localizes the city Ġiddān, classical Γιδδαν or *Eddana*, at ‘Anqa, below Abū Kamāl<sup>108</sup>, while *Na-gi-a-te* must refer to the islands in front of Abū Kamāl, since this name is related to Jewish Aramaic *nəgāwāt(ā)*, “islands”<sup>109</sup>, and to Neo-Assyrian *nagītu* that has the same meaning<sup>110</sup>. Thus, <sup>uru</sup>*Na-gi-a-te* should be located near the present Iraqi-Syrian frontier, at Bāgūz aš-Šnamāli, where large and small islands are near both the right and left banks of the river. There are about 87 km by road from this point to Tell al-‘Ašāra. The annals mention four stations on this way, thus implying daily journeys of average 17/18 km. The distances are of course greater if the army followed the bank of the river. The first Laqaeen place mentioned is <sup>uru</sup>*A-qa-ar-ba-ni*<sup>111</sup>, which is called <sup>uru</sup>*Na-qa-ra-ba-(a)-ni* in the annals of Ashurnasirpal II<sup>112</sup>. The initial *n* in the latter spelling probably reflects the nasal twang which is

<sup>104</sup> OTZEN, *Hama*, p. 303, *AramGraf* 33. See also below, p. 276-278.

<sup>105</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 214, lines 30-32 with variants in note.

<sup>106</sup> See above, p. 89.

<sup>107</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 175, lines 82-84.

<sup>108</sup> A. POIDEBARD, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 126 and Pl. LXXXIX. Cf. p. 82, n. 32.

<sup>109</sup> In particular, the word translates Hebrew *‘iyyīm* in Gen. 10, 5 and Is. 66, 19; cf. A. SPERBER, *The Bible in Aramaic* I, Leiden 1959, p. 14; III, Leiden 1962, p. 132.

<sup>110</sup> Ships are needed to reach <sup>uru</sup>*Na-gi-te-Rak-ki*, “which is in the middle of the sea”, and to go to <sup>uru</sup>*Na-gi-tù-Di-’-bi-na*; likewise, the sea must be crossed to reach <sup>uru</sup>*Na-gi-ti ša kur Elamti*<sup>ki</sup>; cf. *Sennacherib*, p. 35, line 64; p. 38, lines 35-38. See G. FRAME, *Nagītu*, in *RLA* IX/1-2, Berlin 1998, p. 80.

<sup>111</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 175-176, lines 84-86.

<sup>112</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 213, lines 10-11.



audible nowadays before *'ain* in some Arabic and Jewish dialects<sup>113</sup>. We can assume the existence of a similar phenomenon in Laqaean and thus explain this place name as *'Aqār Bāni*, “landed property of Bāni”, unless *bāni* is an abridged form of a tribal name “sons of X”. The settlement should probably be looked for on the bank of the river, near Mari, modern Tell Ḥarīrī. Although there is no recorded Iron Age site on the left bank of the Euphrates in front of the Mari area<sup>114</sup>, the city should be located on the east bank.

The same problem arises with the second place, Ṣupru, which is mentioned both by Tukulti-Ninurta II and by Ashurnasirpal II<sup>115</sup>. The city is well-known from the Old Babylonian Mari archives where it clearly belongs to the area between Mari and Terqa, modern Tell al-‘Ašāra<sup>116</sup>. Tukulti-Ninurta II does not say that he spent the night at Ṣupru or that he pitched camp in its meadow, but Ashurnasirpal II does. This is why the city must have been on the east bank, rather at Tell Ḥawmat Hayin<sup>117</sup>, in the area opposite Dura Europos, than at Tell Abū Hassān<sup>118</sup>, 10 km to the south.

A much later information about Laqē in the same region is provided by a Hellenistic parchment found at Dura Europos and dating most likely from the first century B.C. It mentions a Λακείτη κόμη<sup>119</sup> that preserves the memory of the Laqaeans in this area, but cannot be localized. The toponym appears in a fragmentary section of the document and probably indicates the residence of people borrowing seven hundred drachmas on mortgage. Their names are lost. One can assume that the borough was located on the west bank of the Euphrates, like Dura Europos, but even this is not certain. The parchment in question is so far the latest text containing an allusion to the Laqaeans.

<sup>113</sup> LIPÍŃSKI, *Semitic*, §17.8. Another cuneiform example is provided by the Neo-Assyrian spelling *Ba-'li-ma-an-zer* of the Tyrian royal name *\*Ba'li-ma'zer*; cf. E. LIPÍŃSKI, *Ba'li-ma'zer II and the Chronology of Tyre*, in *RSO* 45 (1970 [1971]), p. 59-65.

<sup>114</sup> B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 339-341.

<sup>115</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, line 86; p. 213, lines 9-10.

<sup>116</sup> *ARM* XVI/1, p. 31.

<sup>117</sup> B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 308, 339, No. 11.

<sup>118</sup> W.F. ALBRIGHT, *Notes on the Topography of Ancient Mesopotamia*, in *JAOS* 46 (1926), p. 220-230 (see p. 223); B. GEYER - J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT, *art. cit.* (n. 46), p. 308, 339, No. 9, who do not record any Iron Age occupation. See also M. LIVERANI, *Studies on the Annals of Ashurnasirpal II, 2: Topographical Analysis*, Roma 1992, p. 65.

<sup>119</sup> F. CUMONT, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922-1923). Texte* (BAH 9), Paris 1926, p. 301, No. I, B, VII, 36; C.B. WELLES - R.O. FINK - J.F. GILLIAM, *op. cit.* (n. 51), p. 95, No. 17D, 40.



Tukulti-Ninurta II specifies that he moved on from Şupru only at noon and encamped at <sup>uru</sup>*Ar-ba-te*<sup>120</sup>. The latter place should not be far to the north of Şupru<sup>121</sup>, also on the east bank. Its name ought to be related to Arabic *'araba(tun)*, “swift river”, and it would thus indicate the vicinity of a narrower channel of the Euphrates.

Şerqu (<sup>uru</sup>*Si-ir-qu*) was reached two days later. This was a major Laqaeen centre on the west bank and it is mentioned in the annals of Adad-nirari II, Tukulti-Ninurta II, and Ashurnasirpal II<sup>122</sup>. Its name, written *S<sup>2</sup>rq* in a variant form of the “South-Arabian” script, appears on a slab which was found at Hamā and is dated from the mid-8th century B.C.<sup>123</sup>. This spelling indicates that the name of the city was *Şerqu* and that this was an Arabian interpretation of the old toponym Terqa, understood as *şerqu*, “sunrise, east”, a noun which corresponds to Classical Arabic *şarqu(n)*. Such an interpretation is understandable from the point of view of populations living in the Syrian desert, west of the Euphrates. There is no doubt that *Şerqu* must be identified with Tell al-‘Aşāra<sup>124</sup>. So far excavations did not recover remains from the early first millennium B.C., except the basalt stela of Tukulti-Ninurta II (see p. 88). The site was probably abandoned in the later period, but the artificial mound still covering a superficies of 12 hectares and being about 18 metres high could easily be seen from afar. This is why *ΘΕΛΛΑ*, located at alt. 34° 45' N. in Ptolemy's *Geography* V, 17, 5, thus south of the mouth of the *Ḥābūr* (alt. 35° 10' N.) and north of *Αφραδανα* (alt. 34° 35' N.), is most likely *ΘΕΛΛΑ*, “the Mound”, an appellation referring obviously to a conspicuous hill on the bank of the Euphrates. *Ἄσιχα/Gazica*, mentioned in the *Parthian Stations* and in Pap. Dura 60B, must be located a few kilometres north of Tell al-‘Aşāra, as it results from the distances reported by Isidorus of Charax. The Semitic name of the borough was

<sup>120</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 87-88. One wonders whether this is not the *Castellum Arabum* of the Dura Europos documents; see the references in C.B. WELLES - R.O. FINK - J.F. GILLIAM, *op. cit.* (n. 51), p. 40 and 441.

<sup>121</sup> The identification with Tell 'Afrīya was proposed by S. HORN, *Zur Geographie Mesopotamiens*, in *ZA* 34 (1922), p. 123-156 (see p. 150).

<sup>122</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 116; p. 176, lines 90-95; p. 213, lines 8-9.

<sup>123</sup> OTZEN, *Hama*, p. 302, *AramGraf* 32. See also below, p. 276-278.

<sup>124</sup> H.F. RUSSELL, *The Historical Geography of the Euphrates and Habur according to the Middle- and Neo-Assyrian Sources*, in *Iraq* 47 (1985), p. 57-74, especially p. 63 with previous literature. One should add G. BUCCELLATI, *TPR* 11, Malibu 1980; Id. - O. ROUAULT, *L'archive de Puzurum* (Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 16), Malibu 1984; M. LUCIANI, *Zur Lage Terqas in schriftlichen Quellen*, in *ZA* 89 (1999), p. 1-23, and the references given here above, p. 77, n. 2. Al-‘Aşāra is already mentioned under this name in ca. 900 A.D. by QODĀMA IBN ĠA'FAR, *Nabḍ min Kitāb 'al-ḥarāğ*, ed. by M.J. DE GOEJE, *Bibliotheca geographorum Arabicorum* VI, Leiden 1889, p. 184-266, see p. 217.



apparently 'Azīqā, which means "(newly) tilled land". Although it seems to be Aramaic, nothing suggests a relationship with a settlement of the Laqē federation. In his further march to the north, Tukulti-Ninurta II reached Rummunina, probably Tell Dibān 3, 13 km north of Tell al-'Ašāra<sup>125</sup>, but probably on the east bank of the Euphrates.

More to the north, the Laqaeen city <sup>uru</sup>*Ki-pi-na* was situated on the west bank near another important ford (*nēberu*), and not far from the Ġebel al-Bišrī<sup>126</sup>. A location at Dayr az-Zawr or in its neighbourhood seems to fit these indications best, all the more so because Dayr az-Zawr lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, opposite a green islet, across which fording to the left bank is facilitated. In fact, the Parthian text of the great inscription of Sapor I from Naqš-i Rostam mentions a *Byrt' Kwpn* between 'Āna and Sūra, while Pap. Euphr. 2 calls this place Βείρθα Οκβανων, with a metathesis *ok // kw*. E. Honigmann has identified it convincingly with the important Roman fortress of Qraya, 14 km above Dayr az-Zawr<sup>127</sup>, on a large rock dominating the river. This situation would explain the name of <sup>uru</sup>*Ki-pi-na*, formed on the Aramaic base *kēp*, "rock", and would thus corroborate an identification with *Kwpn*, simply called Γαδειρθα, "the fortress", in Ptolemy's *Geography* V, 18.

In any case, one can hardly rely for the location of this crossing-point on Strabo's mention of a ford called Θάψακος, i.e. Semitic \**tapsah*, "ford", about 2000 stades or some 355 km downwards from the northern ζεῦγμα, i. e. "crossing", probably at Balkis, about 10 km above Birecik (ancient BIRTHA)<sup>128</sup>. In fact, another estimation leads to the crossing at Zalābīya/Ḥalabīya<sup>129</sup>, about 50 km northwest of Dayr az-Zawr. This ford was later protected on the right bank of the river by another Βίρθα, men-

<sup>125</sup> See the discussion above, p. 84-86.

<sup>126</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 215, lines 37-41. The context of lines 40-41 clearly shows that the phrase *šá SAG* <sup>id</sup>*Pu-rat-te* means "on the bank of the Euphrates" and not "in the direction of the Euphrates".

<sup>127</sup> E. HONIGMANN - A. MARICQ, *op. cit.* (n. 74), p. 146, No. 2, and p. 161-163. The site of Qraya (or Ġariya) was discovered by A. POIDEBARD, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 85-88 and 149, Pl. LXXXVI-LXXXVII. See also here above, p. 42-44.

<sup>128</sup> STRABO, *Geography* XVI, 1, 22; cf. V. MANFREDI, *op. cit.* (n. 55), p. 106. For this location of Ζεῦγμα, see F. CUMONT, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 127-142; D. KENNEDY (ed.), *The Twin Towns of Zeugma on the Euphrates. Rescue Work and Historical Studies* (Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary Series 27), Portsmouth 1998, especially the maps on p. 14, 22, 32, and the survey of ancient sources on p. 139-162.

<sup>129</sup> In his very careful analysis of the available evidence M. GAWLIKOWSKI, *art. cit.* (n. 82), p. 123-133, locates Strabo's Thapsacus at Zalābīya/Ḥalabīya, counting the distance from Balkis. Already Old Babylonian *Halabit*, modern Ḥalabīya, was a major crossing point on the Euphrates; cf. J.-M. DURAND, *Documents pour l'histoire du royaume de Haute Mésopotamie* I, in *MARI* 5 (1987), p. 155-198 (see p. 160-161).



tioned by Ptolemy (V, 18) and by Sapor I (*Byrt' Spwrkn* / Βίρθα Ἀσπωράκου)<sup>130</sup>, and later called Zenobia. Within view on the opposite bank, the ruins of Zalābīya are believed to represent the town of Basileia mentioned in the *Parthian Stations* as the site of a temple of Artemis, founded by king Darius. The mention of the Laqaean <sup>m</sup>*I-la-a* (*'Ilaha*) in this area implies the existence of other Laqaean settlements near the territory of Bēt-ʿAdini<sup>131</sup>, but their names are not reported in the Assyrian annals. Downwards Isidorus of Charax still mentions Ἀλλάν and Βηονάν, with a sanctuary of Artemis. The latter information suggests correcting *BHONAN* into *BHΘNAN* and interpreting it as “the House of Nanay”, the Babylonian goddess which was Artemis to the Greeks. The precise location of the place cannot be established as yet, but it might be identical with the URU.BĀD-<sup>d</sup>*Na-na-a* of the Assyrian deed SAA VI, 245 from 672 B.C., since the estate adjoining this town was sold by the deputy governor of Rašappa.

## 2. HISTORY

Dūr-katlimmu belonged in the 13th century B.C. to Assyria and was the residence of a governor<sup>132</sup>, but the cities and the Ḫābūr valley to the south were occupied by the Aramaeans in the 11th century B.C. This was

<sup>130</sup> The name might appear also in a document from Dura Europos, dated in A.D. 159/160, if we read there Σπωράκ'ο'[υ Βίρθα]: C.B. WELLES - R.O. FINK - J.F. GILLIAM, *op. cit.* (n. 51), p. 124 and Pl. XI, 2, No. 24, 4. At any rate, the district of Σφωρακηνή is mentioned in Pap. Euphr. 5, published by D. FEISSEL - J. GASCOU, *Documents d'archives romaines inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III<sup>e</sup> s. après J.-C.), I. Les pétitions*, in *Journal des Savants* 1995, p. 65-119, who locate Sphorakene along the Middle Euphrates, between Sūra and Dura Europos (see p. 115). An opposite view is held by T. GNOLI, *I papiri dell'Eufrate. Studio di geografia storica*, in *Mediterraneo Antico* 2 (1999), p. 321-358 (see p. 348-349). He would situate this region in the area of Marcopolis/Suruç (Turkey), a location which seems precluded by the dependence of the Sphorakene from the administrative centre of Appadana, as it appears from Pap. Euphr. 5, 15-16, especially if Appadana is to be identified with Tell Fidēn, on the Lower Ḫābūr; cf. here above, p. 70-72. This location is corroborated by the dependence of the Ἀβουρηνή from Appadana, as it results from Pap. Euphr. 8 and 9 published by D. FEISSEL - J. GASCOU - J. TEIXIDOR, *Documents d'archives romaines inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III<sup>e</sup> s. après J.-C.), II. Les actes de vente-achat (P. Euphr. 6 à 10)*, in *Journal des Savants* 1997, p. 3-57. In particular, one of the boroughs named there is called Βαναθσαμσα (Pap. Euphr. 8, ext. 20), Βανασαμσα (Pap. Euphr. 9, int. 2), or Βονασαμσα (Pap. Euphr. 9, ext. 8). It can probably be identified with Tell Ašamsāni on the right bank of the Ḫābūr, about 60 km north of Tell Fidēn. This place name preserves the element -ασαμσα of the ancient toponym, only omitting the Βav-/Bov- of the current pronunciation.

<sup>131</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.101.1, p. 215, lines 43-44, cf. line 42.

<sup>132</sup> W. RÖLLIG, *art. cit.* (n. 30), especially p. 428-430.



the situation at the time of Ashur-bēl-kala (1073-1056 B.C.) who fought against the Aramaeans at “Magrisu of the [Ri]ver-land”, near Hassake, and at Dūr-katlimmu, apparently attacked by them, and he confronted the Aramaeans also further to the south, opposite <sup>uru</sup>*Sa-an-ga-ri-te*<sup>133</sup>. In the same year, he fought with them in the land Gulgulu<sup>134</sup>, which may be the area of Tell Kawkab, east of Hassake, as suggested by the shape of this extinct volcano (alt. 533 m) and by the meaning of *gulgul(l)u*, “skull”. Ashur-bēl-kala also crossed the Euphrates in pursuit of the Aramaeans<sup>135</sup>, but he does not mention any conquest of Aramaean cities in this area or a tribute paid to him by Aramaean chieftains of the region. These campaigns seem thus to have been little effective and this lack of any concrete results suggests that the Aramaean pressure was continuing unabated. Since most if not all of Ashur-bēl-kala’s inscriptions date very early in his reign, the Aramaeans must have gradually gained the upper hand in the later part of his reign, as suggested by the decline of Assyrian power under Ashur-bēl-kala’s successors.

While Ashur-bēl-kala only speaks of Aramaeans, the annals of Adad-nirari II (911-891 B.C.) and of his successors mention the Laqaeans in the same area. This change in the terminology used by the Assyrian scribes does not simply witness a better knowledge of the Aramaean tribes in the Lower Ḥābūr and along the Middle Euphrates. It also reflects a change of the situation. In fact, the name of Laqē as well as that of Ḥalupē, of ‘*Aqār-Bāni*, and of ‘*Arbate* seem to be North-Arabian<sup>136</sup>. If <sup>m</sup>*Ba-ar-a-ta-ra*<sup>137</sup> is certainly the Aramaic name *Bar-‘Attar*, “Son of ‘Attar”, the Semitic god worshipped in central Syria until the

<sup>133</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.89.7, p. 102, lines 21-24. The land [*I*]a-ri, as restored in *RIMA II* (*ibid.*, line 21), does not exist, while the alternative restoration *šá KUR [Ma]-a-ri* is unlikely, because of the spelling and of the restricted use of the toponym Mari in kings’ titles, where it is justified only by the legendary prestige attached to this ancient royal seat. Therefore, it is difficult to accept this restoration advocated by S.M. MAUL, *Die Inschriften vom Tall Bderi* (Die Ausgrabungen von Tall Bderi 1. Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient. Texte 2), Berlin 1991, p. 54, n. 218, and F.M. FALES, *Mari: An Additional Note on “Rašappu and Hatallu”*, in *SAAB* 6 (1992), p. 105-107 (see p. 106-107). The restoration [*Na*]-a-ri perfectly corresponds to the area of Hassake, where Magrisu should be located; cf. W. RÖLLIG, *Magarisi, Magrisu*, in *RLA VII*, Berlin 1987-90, p. 199-200, with literature.

<sup>134</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.89.7, p. 103, line 26. Possibly identical with later *KUR Ku-ki-bi* (*SAA I*, 244, 10).

<sup>135</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.89.6, p. 98, lines 7’ ff. No obvious reason suggests the mention of a conquered city in the lacuna.

<sup>136</sup> See above, p. 77-82 and 94-96.

<sup>137</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 114. The name seems to be missing in *PNA I/2*, while *Bir-‘Attar* and *Bur-‘Attar* are mentioned on p. 345b and 353b.



Roman period<sup>138</sup>, the name of the Laqaeen chieftain <sup>m</sup>*He-en/em-ti-DIN-GIR*<sup>139</sup> /*Ḥamdi-'Il*, “Praise (be) to God!”, appears instead as a North-Arabian proper name<sup>140</sup>. This onomastic and toponymic evidence reveals the complexity of Laqē’s origins and shows that Aramaean as well as North-Arabian clans have formed the Laqaeen “amphictyony”.

The available sources allow sketching a table of the components of this league in the first half of the 9th century B.C. As a rule, not all the Laqaeen towns mentioned in the Assyrian annals must be considered as centres of a tribe or clan. Thus a place where Tukulti-Ninurta II, e.g., spends the night without receiving the tribute of a chieftain could be a settlement of a tribe the main centre of which lies at a certain distance. Beside Nagiate, which may not belong to the land of Laqē, this could have been the case at Rummunina, where Tukulti-Ninurta II did not receive any tribute. However, he did not spend the night “in” (*ina*) the city, but “in the meadow of the Euphrates”<sup>141</sup>. This does not mean necessarily that the city was walled and its ruler or town council had denied the Assyrians admittance and tribute.

Places	Local Rulers	Assyrian Kings	RIMA II
1) 'Aqār-Bāni	Mūdād	TN.	p. 175-176, lines 84-86
"	?	Anp.	p. 213, lines 10-11
2) 'Arbat	Ḥarān	TN.	p. 176, lines 88-89
3) Euphrates-North west bank	'Ilaha	Anp.	p. 215, lines 43, 45
4) Euphrates-South east bank	Ḥamdi-'Il	Anp.	p. 214, line 30 p. 215, lines 46-48
5) Kipina	'Azzi-'Il	Anp.	p. 214, line 30 p. 215, lines 38-39
6) Rummunina	?	TN.	p. 176, lines 95-96
7) Ša-Ḥarāni	?	Adn.	p. 153, line 115
"	?	TN.	p. 176, line 93

<sup>138</sup> We find, e.g., Αθαρολας, i. e. 'Attar-'allah, “Attar is the god”, on an epitaph from the 3rd century A.D.: J. LASSUS, *Inventaire archéologique de la région au nord-est de Hama I. Texte* (Documents d'études orientales 4), Damas 1936, p. 209, site No. 140. For 'Attar, see here below, p. 607-614.

<sup>139</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.101.1, p. 214, line 30, and p. 215, line 40.

<sup>140</sup> ZADOK, WSB, p. 248 and 373, with the interpretation “My ardour is the god (or 'Il)”. The present writer thinks instead that this is a genitive compound name. The spellings with the sign *ti* are phonetic and reflect the devoicing *md* > *mt*; cf. LIPÍŃSKI, *Semitic*, § 10.8.

<sup>141</sup> RIMA II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 95-96.



8) Šerqu	Mūdād	Adn.	p. 153, lines 116-117
"	"	TN.	p. 176, lines 90-92
"	?	Anp.	p. 231, lines 8-9
9) Šupru	Ḥamathite ruler	TN.	p. 176, line 86
"	?	Anp.	p. 213, lines 10-11
10) Šūr	Ḥamathite ruler	TN.	p. 176, lines 97-102
"	'Aḥi-yababa	Anp.	p. 198-200, lines 74-96
"	'Azzi-'Il	Anp.	p. 213, lines 6-8
11) Šūriḥ	Bar-'Attar	Adn.	p. 153, lines 113-114
12) 'Ušallā	?	TN.	p. 176, lines 102-104

This table shows that “the land of Laqē” was never under the unifying control of one ruler. It was a rather loose confederation of North-Arabian and Aramaean sheikhs, whereas the larger centres of Šupru and of Šūr had a Ḥamathite ruler, in reality a governor depending to some degree from the king of Ḥamath<sup>142</sup>. This extension of the Ḥamathite power as far as the area around the confluence of the Ḥābūr and of the Euphrates is confirmed by the mention of “Naharima” and of the “river-land of Laga”, i. e. Laqē, in a hieroglyphic Luwian inscription of king Uratami of Ḥamath<sup>143</sup> and by the letter sent to the same king by his neighbour Marduk-apla-ušur, a semi-independent ruler of Sūḥu<sup>144</sup> in the third quarter of the 9th century B.C. The accession of Zakkūr from the land of 'Anā (Ḥana) to the throne of Ḥamath and Luḡath at the end of the 9th century B.C.<sup>145</sup> and the slabs from Ḥamā with inscribed Laqaean place names<sup>146</sup> indicate that the Ḥamathite influence in “the land of Laqē” lasted until the mid-8th century B.C. It appears also from the Assyrian annals of the earlier part of the 9th century B.C. that the Ḥamathite semi-independent governors of Šupru and Šūr had good relations with the Assyrians. At the same time, as it seems, they belonged to the Laqaean confederation of local rulers.

Ashurnasirpal II refers to them once as “kings”<sup>147</sup>, but elsewhere, when he mentions <sup>m</sup>I-la-a <sup>lú</sup>na-si-ku šá <sup>kur</sup>La-qe-e<sup>148</sup>, he uses the characteristic appellation *nasīku* of tribal chieftains. The other passages of his inscriptions and the annals of his predecessors just refer to the

<sup>142</sup> See below, p. 251-252.

<sup>143</sup> A.M. JASINK, *Gli stati neo-ittiti. Analisi delle fonti scritte e sintesi storica* (Studia Mediterranea 10), Pavia 1995, p. 102; *CHLI*, Ḥama 2.

<sup>144</sup> S. PARPOLA, *A Letter from Marduk-apla-ušur of Anah to Rudamu/Uratamis, King of Hamath*, in P.J. RIIS- M.-L. BUHL (eds.), *Hama II/2*, København 1990, p. 257-265. Sūḥu is Šw' in Ez. 23,23, Šwḥ in Gen. 25,2; I Chron. 1,32, with Šwḥy in Job.

<sup>145</sup> See below, p. 299-302.

<sup>146</sup> See below, p. 276-278.

<sup>147</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.1, p. 200, line 94.

<sup>148</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.1, p. 215, line 45.



“Laqaean” or to the *mār* <sup>f</sup>*Ha-lu-pé-e*<sup>149</sup>. Only the Ḥamathite ruler is called LÚ.GAR, i. e. *šaknu*, “governor”<sup>150</sup>, a title given also to ‘Azzi-’Il, which was appointed by Ashurnasirpal himself<sup>151</sup>. The evidence adduced reveals the complexity of Laqaean institutions and the Assyrian annals show also that the situation was fluctuating and that a political influence of Bēt-‘Adini was playing a role as well.

Although Ashur-bēl-kala had already fought against the Aramaeans on the Lower Ḥābūr<sup>152</sup>, the land of Laqē is first mentioned by Adad-nirari II who marched in 896/5 B.C. from Dūr-katlimmu to Šūrīḥ and to Šerqu, receiving a tribute from various towns and rulers, in particular from Bar-‘Attar and from Mūdād<sup>153</sup>. In 885 B.C., Tukulti-Ninurta II entered the land of Laqē from Ġiddān (*Hindānu*) and marched from the south to the north along the east bank of the Euphrates and of the Ḥābūr. He received the tribute of the local chieftain Mūdād at ‘Aqār-Bāni and the tribute of the Ḥamathite semi-independent governor of Šupru. Further on, he collected the tribute of Ḥarān the Laqaean at ‘Arbat, of the ruler of Šerqu, Mūdād, and of Ša-Ḥarāni. On the Ḥābūr, he received rich presents from the Ḥamathite ruler of Šūr and, thereafter, the tribute of the city ‘Uśallā<sup>154</sup>. Although these gifts are always called *nāmurtu*, they consist of sheep, oxen, grain, straw, bread, and beer in some places, like ‘Aqār-Bāni, Šupru, ‘Arbat, and ‘Uśallā<sup>155</sup>, but include gold, silver, tin, and bronze vessels at Šerqu and Šūr, and even precious metals form part of the tribute given by Ša-Ḥarāni<sup>156</sup>. Besides, myrrh (ŠIM.SES) was offered at Šerqu<sup>157</sup> and purple wool (SÍG.ZA.GÌN.MI) at Šūr<sup>158</sup>, clear indications that international commercial transactions were then flourishing between the Mediterranean coast, South Arabia, and Mesopotamia. Moreover, the Ḥamathite governor of Šūr gave his two sisters with bountiful dowries to Tukulti-Ninurta II<sup>159</sup>. This must imply the conclusion of an alliance, sealed by a double political marriage<sup>160</sup>. It also explains Ashurnasirpal

<sup>149</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.99.2, p. 153, line 114.

<sup>150</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 198, line 75.

<sup>151</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 199, line 89.

<sup>152</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.89.7, p. 102, lines 21-24.

<sup>153</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.99.2, p. 153-154, lines 113-119.

<sup>154</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 175-177, lines 84-103.

<sup>155</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 175-177, lines 85, 86-87, 88, 103.

<sup>156</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, lines 90-91, 93-94, 98-99.

<sup>157</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, line 91.

<sup>158</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, line 99.

<sup>159</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.100.5, p. 176, line 101.

<sup>160</sup> Literature referring to this subject can be found in E. LIPÍŃSKI, *Aram et Israël du X<sup>e</sup> au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle av.n.è.*, in *ActAnt* 27 (1979 [1981]), p. 49-102 (see p. 82, n. 102).



II's reaction in 883 B.C., when nobles of Šūr had assassinated the Hamathite governor and replaced him with a man from Bēt-‘Adini.

When Ashurnasirpal II, while in Katmuḥu, heard of this sedition, he changed immediately of plan and travelled down to the land of Laqē. The frightened notables of Šūr handed over the usurper Aḥi-yababa to the Assyrian king who sent Assyrian nobles to Šūr, appointed a certain ‘Azzi-’Il as governor, exacted a heavy tribute, committed terrible atrocities upon the guilty parties, and brought Aḥi-yababa to Nineveh, where the man was flayed. When in Šūr, Ashurnasirpal received a large tribute from “all the kings of the land of Laqē” and from the ruler of Ġiddān (*Hindānu*)<sup>161</sup>.

In 878 B.C., Ashurnasirpal led another expedition down the Ḥābūr and the Middle Euphrates passing through the land of Laqē and receiving tribute from Šūr, Šerqu, Šupru, and ‘Aqār-Bāni, before crossing in the territory of Ġiddān (*Hindānu*)<sup>162</sup>. Ashurnasirpal says that he had spent the night in Šūr, called “city of Bēt-Ḥalupē”, in Šerqu, in Šupru, and in ‘Aqār-Bāni (<sup>uru</sup>*Na-qa-ra-ba-a-ni*)<sup>163</sup>, while he specifies that he pitched camp “in front of” (*ina pu-ut*) Ġiddān, which “lies on the other bank of the Euphrates”<sup>164</sup>. This distinction might indicate that he had crossed the Ḥābūr and the Euphrates on Laqaean territory, but had then returned to its east bank at Šupru. As on the marches led by his father and grandfather, no resistance was encountered in the land of Laqē.

However, the situation has changed a few years later, between 877 and 867 B.C., and probably early in that period, when Ashurnasirpal II led another expedition on the Middle Euphrates. Taking boats made especially at Šūr, that was subdued to the Assyrians, Ashurnasirpal attacked the Laqaean settlements of ‘Azzi-’Il, ‘Ilaha, and Ḥamdi-’Il. The first chieftain, who bore the same name as the governor of Šūr appointed by Ashurnasirpal in 883 B.C. but can hardly be identified with him, offered stiff resistance, especially at the crossing of the Euphrates at Kipina, probably near Dayr az-Zawr<sup>165</sup>. He was routed and pursued by the Assyrians as far as the cities of Bēt-‘Adini, in the direction of Ġebel al-Biṣrī, but managed to escape, while two towns of Bēt-‘Adini, viz. Dummetu and Asmu, were burnt and destroyed by Ashurnasirpal’s army. Another Laqaean chieftain from the north, called ‘Ilaha, was also

<sup>161</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 198-200, lines 74-99.

<sup>162</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 213, lines 6-12.

<sup>163</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 213, lines 6, 8, 9, 10-11.

<sup>164</sup> *RIMA* II, text A.0.101.1, p. 213, line 12.

<sup>165</sup> See above, p. 97.





The Euphrates at Dayr az-Zawr.

vanquished and 500 of his troops were deported to Assyria<sup>166</sup>. Ashurnasirpal's Banquet inscription claims that the king has settled "a multitude of Laqaeans" at Calah<sup>167</sup>. A third chieftain, Ḥamdi-'Il, was confined in his city, the name of which is not mentioned, but he gave heavy tribute and was not captured<sup>168</sup>. Despite the Assyrian claims, this campaign does not seem to have been very successful: none of the Laqaean chieftains was made prisoner and the few known Laqaean towns, as Šerqu, Şupru, and 'Aqār-Bāni, are not mentioned. Instead, two forts were founded on opposite banks of the Euphrates, obviously to control an important crossing, viz. Kār-Aššur-nāšir-apli and Nēbarti-Aššur, i.e. "crossing of Ashur"<sup>169</sup>. Their location is uncertain, but the repeated mentions of "Šerqu which is at the crossing (*ša nēberti*) of the Euphrates"<sup>170</sup> suggests that this ford was at Tell al-'Ašāra itself rather than about 15 km to the north, near the modern town of Al-Mayādīn<sup>171</sup>.

<sup>166</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.1, p. 214-215, lines 28-46.

<sup>167</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.30, p. 290, lines 35-36.

<sup>168</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.1, p. 215, lines 46-48; cf. p. 214, line 30.

<sup>169</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.1, p. 216, lines 49-50.

<sup>170</sup> *RIMA II*, text A.0.101.26, p. 281, lines 50-51; p. 285, line 4; p. 287, line 11'; p. 290, lines 34-35.

<sup>171</sup> See above, p. 90-91 with n. 82. A location still further north, at Zalābīya and Ḥalabīya, was proposed by A. MUSIL, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 208, 211.



From the silence of Assyrian sources after the report of this campaign of Ashurnasirpal II one cannot conclude that the Assyrian power was well established in the land of Laqē. The mention of this region in one of the hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions of Uratami of Ḥamath<sup>172</sup> and the letter he received from Marduk-apla-uṣur of Sūḫu<sup>173</sup> rather suggest that the Ḥamathite influence was preponderant there in the mid-9th century B.C. and later. The case of Zakkūr<sup>174</sup> seems even to imply that Laqaeans from the west bank of the Euphrates were influential in the heartland of the Ḥamathite kingdom towards the end of the 9th century.

In the early 8th century B.C., the land of Laqē is mentioned as part of the provincial holdings of Nergal-ēreš, between Šerqu and Ġiddān, and between Raṣappa and Šerqu<sup>175</sup>. The royal charter found at Nineveh grants Nergal-ēreš the province of Ġiddān (*Hindānu*) in 797 B.C.<sup>176</sup> and one of his inscriptions mentions his founding of a new town called Dūr-Adad-nirari with its fifteen villages in the land of Laqē<sup>177</sup>. The authority exercised by the Assyrian governor on these territories of the Middle Euphrates is partly confirmed by the inscription of Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur, the ruler of Sūḫu in the mid-8th century B.C.<sup>178</sup>. These inscriptions inform us that immediately prior to the time of his father, Shamash-rēsh-uṣur, the city of Anat had been ruled by Assyria for fifty years, and they name the governors of the land of Sūḫu during these fifty years<sup>179</sup>. The Assyrian rule ended after the third year of Shamash-rēsh-uṣur's governorship, in the first quarter of the 8th cen-

<sup>172</sup> See above, p. 101 with n. 143.

<sup>173</sup> See above, p. 101 with n. 144.

<sup>174</sup> See below, p. 299-302.

<sup>175</sup> Saba'a stela, lines 23-25, published by E. UNGER, *Reliefstele Adadniraris III. aus Saba'a und Semiramis*, Istanbul 1916 = *RIMA III*, text A.0.104.6, p. 207-209; Tell ar-Rimāḥ stela, lines 13-14, published by S. DALLEY, *A Stela of Adad-nirari III and Nergal-ereš from Tell al Rimah*, in *Iraq* 30 (1968), p. 139-153 and Pl. XXXIX-XLI (see p. 142) = *RIMA III*, text A.0.104.7, p. 209-212; mace-head Assur 10274, quoted by E.F. WEIDNER, *Die assyrischen Eponymen*, in *AfO* 13 (1939-40), p. 308-318 (see p. 318); cf. *RIMA III*, text A.0.104.2007, p. 230. A synoptic table is given by M. WEIPPERT, *Die Feldzüge Adadniraris III. in Syrien: Voraussetzungen, Verlauf, Folgen*, in *ZDPV* 108 (1992 [1993]), p. 44-67 (see p. 44, n. 15).

<sup>176</sup> *SAA XII*, 85 = *RIMA III*, text A.0.104.9, p. 213-216.

<sup>177</sup> S. DALLEY, *art. cit.* (n. 175), p. 142 = *RIMA III*, text A.0.104.7, p. 211, line 19.

<sup>178</sup> The inscriptions of Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur have been found recently in the Ḥadiṭa area (Iraq) and published by A. CAVIGNEAUX - B.Kh. ISMAIL, *Die Statthalter von Suḫu und Mari im 8. Jh. v. Chr. anhand neuer Texte aus den irakischen Grabungen im Staugebiet des Qadisija Damms*, in *BaM* 21 (1990), p. 321-456 and Pl. 35-38. They are republished in transliteration and translated in *RIMB II*.

<sup>179</sup> *RIMB II*, text S.0.1002.9, p. 315-316, lines 6-26; cf. text S.0.1002.4, p. 307, lines 5-14; text S.0.1002.5, p. 308, col. IV, 1-9; text S.0.1002.10, p. 318, lines 15-20.



tury B.C., but Sūḥu's independence was probably brought to an end by Tiglath-pileser III (744-727 B.C.)<sup>180</sup>. The neighbouring land of Laqē continued to be governed by Assyria during that period, but its Assyrian governor, Adad-da''ānu, was able to muster only four chariots and two hundred soldiers, when two thousand Aramaean tribesmen attacked the region about 770 or 760 B.C.<sup>181</sup>, and the provincial governor of Raṣappa, Sīn-šallimanni, beat the retreat when he saw the strength of the Aramaean forces<sup>182</sup>. The attackers belonged to the Ḥaṭallū tribe<sup>183</sup>, whose territory seems to have been situated west of Wādī Tartār<sup>184</sup>.

Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur was extremely proud of his decisive victory over the Aramaean tribesmen and he expressed the hope that the souvenir of this event will remain alive in all memories<sup>185</sup>. This is also the stated reason why he left alive two hundred and fifty-four Aramaeans from the two thousand men of the band. There is a short account of this victory and more than one recension of the longer version is clearly attested. The incursion of the Ḥaṭallū tribesmen into the land of Laqē is described briefly: "They went to plunder the land of Laqē. They seized one hundred villages of the land of Laqē, took countless booty, and turned the land of Laqē into a heap of ruins"<sup>186</sup>. The account then records Adad-da''ānu's appeal to Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur for help and Sīn-šallimanni's speedy retreat<sup>187</sup>. Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur then mustered his forces, waited one day at Būr Ṣumū'a ("the Well of the Thirst"), then fell upon the Aramaeans

<sup>180</sup> For details on the history of Sūḥu, see in particular BRINKMAN, *PKB*, p. 183-184, n. 1127; N. HAKLAR, *Die Stellung Suḥis in der Geschichte, eine Zwischenbilanz*, in *OA 22* (1983), p. 25-36; A. NORTHEGE - A. BAMBER - M. ROAF, *Excavations at 'Ana, Qal'a Island*, Warminster 1988, p. 1-5; A.K. GRAYSON, *Studies in Neo-Assyrian History II: The Eighth Century B.C.*, in E. ROBBINS - S. SANDAHL (eds.), *Corolla Torontonensis*, Toronto 1994, p. 73-84 (see p. 80-84); P. DION, *Les Araméens du Moyen-Euphrate au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle à la lumière des inscriptions des maîtres de Suḥu et Mari*, in J.A. EMERTON (ed.), *Congress Volume. Paris 1992* (VTS 61), Leiden 1995, p. 53-73.

<sup>181</sup> *RIMB II*, text S.0.1002.1, p. 292, lines 24-26; text S.0.1002.2, p. 296, lines 30-32; text S.0.1002.3, p. 302, lines 22'b-25'.

<sup>182</sup> *RIMB II*, text S.0.1002.1, p. 292-293, lines 27-28; text S.0.1002.2, p. 296, lines 33-35; text S.0.1002.3, p. 302, lines [26'-28'].

<sup>183</sup> The correct reading is provided by the spelling <sup>uru</sup>Ḥa-ṭa-al-lu-ú-a of the gentilial form and by the name <sup>uru</sup>Ḥa-ṭa-la-' of the Babylonian town founded by settlers belonging to the tribe: V. DONBAZ - M. W. STOLPER, *Istanbul Murašû Texts*, İstanbul 1997, Nos. 16, 20 and 42, 2. Cf. here below, p. 426-427.

<sup>184</sup> See here below, p. 426.

<sup>185</sup> *RIMB II*, text S.0.1002.1, p. 293, lines 43b-50; text S.0.1002.2, p. 297, lines 29b-35; text S.0.1002.4, p. 306, col. III, 4b-14; text S.0.1002.8, p. 314, lines 15b-r. 4a.

<sup>186</sup> *RIMB II*, text S.0.1002.1, p. 292, lines 22-24a; text S.0.1002.2, p. 296, lines 27b-30a; text S.0.1002.3, p. 302, lines 19'b-22'a.

<sup>187</sup> References here above, p. 105, in n. 178 and 179.



in the steppe, from Būr Maqīru (“the Well of the Source”) as far as Būr Qallabu (“the Well of the Spring”) and Būr Šuribu (“the Well of Drinking”), and annihilated them. Their leader Šama‘-Qām-lī was killed and his skin draped at the gate of Āl-gabbāri-bānī<sup>188</sup>.

The destructions caused by the incursion of the Ḥaṭallū tribesmen may have set some Laqē clans on to leaving this region. This could explain why the Šaknu clan of Bēt-Halupē is mentioned in a Neo-Babylonian archive from Nippur, dating from the mid-8th century B.C. This clan must have been living at that time in Nippur itself or among the clans of the Aramaean Rupū’ tribe, along the Euphrates, since it is covered by the provisions of an agreement concluded between the governor of Nippur, the sheikhs of the Chaldaean tribe of Bīt-Amukkāni, and the Aramaean Rupū’ tribe<sup>189</sup>.

On the other hand, the weakness of the Assyrian grip on the land of Laqē in the same period may explain how it was possible that names of Laqaeen towns were inscribed on slabs found at Ḥamā and dating precisely from the mid-8th century<sup>190</sup>. The land of Laqē was probably not incorporated fully into the Assyrian provincial system before the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. Under Sargon II, reference is found to saplings brought from the land of Laqē for the work at Dūr-Šarrukēn<sup>191</sup>, and a tablet of the Ḥarrān Census mentions a village of Laqē, *Kapar-Laqē* (URU.ŠE-<sup>m</sup>*La-qe-e*), possibly settled by deportees from the land of Laqē<sup>192</sup>. “Scribes from Nēmed-Ištar and Laqē, servants of the king”, are mentioned in a letter addressed to Sargon II<sup>193</sup>, where “Laqaeen” may qualify Assyrian scribes active in the land of Laqē or local scribes working for the Assyrian administration. A Laqaeen chieftain fighting against the Assyrians is recorded later in a letter addressed in 649 B.C. by Bēlibni to king Ashurbanipal. He mentions a certain <sup>m</sup>*La-qé-e mār* <sup>f(?)</sup>*Ḥal-*

<sup>188</sup> RIMB II, text S.0.1002.1, p. 293, lines 29-43a; text S.0.1002.2, p. 296-297, lines 1-29a; text S.0.1002.3, p. 302, lines 1’-24’; text S.0.1002.4, p. 305-306, lines 1’-15’; text S.0.1002.5, p. 308, lines 1’-16’; text S.0.1002.6, p. 309-310, lines 1’-26’; text S.0.1002.7, p. 312, lines 1’-11’; text S.0.1002.8, p. 313-314, lines 1’-15’a. The names of the four wells allude to drinking: *Šu-mu-ú-a* derives from the common Semitic root *šm’*, “to be thirsty”; *Ma-qí-ru* corresponds to Ugaritic *mqr* and Hebrew *māqōr*, “source”; *Qal-la-bu* is related to Arabic *qalīb*, “well”, originally one fed by an intermittent spring, as it seems, since *qallāb* means “changeable”; *Su-ri-bu* derives from the Semitic root *šrb*, Arabic *šariba*, “to drink”.

<sup>189</sup> Nippur IV, Nos. 6, 17.22-23; 13, 10.

<sup>190</sup> See above, p. 101, and below, p. 276-278.

<sup>191</sup> SAA I, 226, r. 7.

<sup>192</sup> SAA XI, 207, r. II, 3’.

<sup>193</sup> SAA I, 204, 12-16.



*la-al-la-*<sup>194</sup>, who was taking part in a coalition formed by Nabū-bēl-šumāti from the Sealand to free the country from the Assyrians. The fate of the chieftain and of his tribesmen fighting at the Babylonian-Elamite border is unknown. His apparent matronymic demonstrates that the old Laqaean traditions were still alive. The name <sup>f(?)</sup>*Hal-la-al-la-* should be related most likely to Arabic *Ḥalīla*, “sweetheart”<sup>195</sup>. After that Laqē seems to pass from history except for the mention of Λακείτη κώμη at Dura Europos, in the first century B.C.<sup>196</sup>.

<sup>194</sup> *ABL* 520 = *SLA* 43, 15.

<sup>195</sup> Its masculine equivalent *Ḥalīl* is well represented in ancient North-Arabian anthroponomy (HARDING, *Arabian Names*, p. 228) and occurs already as <sup>m</sup>*Ḥa-al-li-li-i*, with the suffix *-i*, in the 5th century B.C.: H.V. HILPRECHT - A.T. CLAY, *BE IX*, Philadelphia 1898, No. 109, 1; cf. ZADOK, *WSB*, p. 231-232.

<sup>196</sup> See above, p. 95 with n. 119.