



State Archives of Assyria Bulletin
Volume XV (2006)

**HOW TO REACH THE UPPER TIGRIS:
THE ROUTE THROUGH THE ṬŪR ʿABDĪN***

Karen Radner

In the 13th century BC, after the military triumph of the Assyrian kings Adad-nērārī I (1300-1270) and Shalmaneser I (1269-1241) over their weakened neighbor Mittani (called “Ḫanigalbat” by the Assyrians), the former Hurrian kingdom was swiftly integrated into the Assyrian Empire. Hence, the wide plain east of the Euphrates which is traversed by the rivers Ḫābūr and Balīḥ — the so-called Jezirah — became Assyrian, as well as the Upper Tigris region. While the Mittani and Assyrian occupation of the Jezirah is well documented thanks to the intensive archaeological research in the region, especially during the past three decades, comparable data for the Upper Tigris region has begun to emerge only recently, as this hitherto largely neglected area has become the subject of increasing archaeological activity.

There is a good reason for this new-found interest in the Upper Tigris valley — it was directly stimulated by the Turkish government’s decision to build another Tigris dam: only after those sites that were expected to be flooded as a consequence of the dam’s construction had been explored by archaeological rescue operations, the actual building project should begin. The Tigris dam project has been abandoned in the meantime, but the various excavations and surveys in the area have resulted in extremely interesting finds; I will limit myself to those two discoveries which have provided us

*. This article originated from a paper read at the Udine conference in September 2004, with the title “Passing through the Upper Tigris Region: Historical Geography and Changing Occupational Patterns”. I wish to thank F.M. Fales (Udine) for the invitation as well as his remarks on the paper. My thanks are also due to Simo Parpola (Helsinki) for permission to use the Helsinki Corpus of Neo-Assyrian Texts in the preparation of this work and to my Munich colleagues Andreas Schachner and Michael Roaf for bibliographical references.

with new textual data for the region. At **Giricano**, an 11th century Assyrian cuneiform archive was discovered in a clay vessel, giving the Assyrian name of this small rural site at the north bank of the Tigris: **Dunnu-ša-Uzibi**; the stratigraphy shows that the original Mittani settlement was taken over by the Assyrians.¹ Opposite of Giricano, at the south bank of the river, lies the impressive mound of **Ziyaret Tepe / Tepe**. Here, extensive remains from the Neo-Assyrian period have been unearthed, especially in the lower town where also an archive of 7th century Assyrian texts was discovered.² It seems virtually certain that Ziyaret Tepe can be identified with the city of **Tuṣḫu / Tuṣḫan**, well known as a major settlement in the 2nd millennium and a provincial Assyrian center in the 1st millennium BC.

The role of those sites in the historical developments of the region have been discussed elsewhere, as has the significance of the new text finds. In this paper, I want to address a basic question that concerns the Upper Tigris region's geographical position in relationship to central Assyria. How to get there?

The Upper Tigris region is never accessed by water, as the Tigris cuts deeply through the mountains north of Cizre / Jazīrat ibn ʿUmar (at the border between Iraq and Turkey) and cannot be navigated upstream; also going downstream is extremely dangerous and usually avoided. The Upper Tigris region is most directly and also most easily reached by crossing over the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn mountain range. We will investigate which routes were used and, in connection with this, we will discuss the evidence for the occupation of the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn in the age of the Assyrian Empire.

I. The Ṭūr ʿAbdīn

The range of the Tur Abdin [is] a sharp line when contemplated from the plain (with Mardin on a conspicuous promontory), as for example by Alexander's army when it marched past the "Armenian mountains" — but less impressive from the other side: a sloping plateau area approached from Diyarbakir.³

It was certainly the fact that the mountain range looks rather imposing from a southern perspective which has led to the still widespread opinion that the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn can be taken

1. See now Radner 2004.

2. See, for now, Matney *et al.* 2003, pp. 189-191, 217 fig. 13. The texts will be published by Simo Parpola in SAAB.

3. Syme 1983, p. 63.

as Mesopotamia's northern border, not only geographically but also culturally speaking. Thus, the mountain range is often identified as the northern perimeter of the Mittani empire.⁴ However, as has been already stated, new excavations in the Upper Tigris region (especially Giricano, Ziyaret Tepe and also **Üçtepe / Kurkh**⁵) have proven the Mittani occupation of the area and confirmed the Assyrian presence in the 2nd and 1st millennium BC; it is therefore necessary to consider the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn as an integral part of the Mesopotamian topography, and not as a frontier zone.

Today, the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn, a limestone mountain range with an altitude between 900 and 1400 m, is best known for its numerous monasteries and churches, forming a unique enclave in a region which has been under Islamic rule for the past twelve hundred years. While the buildings remain, the 20th century saw the departure of many Christian families,⁶ and today the area is no longer predominantly Syriac, neither in language nor religion.⁷ To quote Andrew Palmer, "Few historians of the Christian East are unaware of Ṭūr ʿAbdin, that remote limestone plateau around Midyat in south-eastern Turkey, where the Syriac liturgy is still performed in ancient churches by a dwindling enclave of Aramaean villagers and monks."⁸ While the traditional Syrian Orthodox population has been greatly depleted through migration, outside interest in the culture has increased in recent years, and with the improved accessibility and political stability of Eastern Turkey the region is becoming more and more popular with tourist groups.⁹

As Syriac (*Ṭūrōyō*), an Aramaic dialect, was the predominant language spoken in the area until quite recently, various ancient toponyms that are first attested in the Assyrian sources of the late 2nd / early 1st millennium BC have survived until today. Yet it is important to be aware of the fact that it is difficult to identify the Aramaic toponyms with the place names of the earlier 2nd millennium: most sites received new Aramaic names once an Aramaean population settled in the region, and the older names were not used anymore.

4. Thus, e.g., Heinhold-Kramer 1988, p. 81, followed by Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996, p. 33.

5. The results of the 1986-1992 seasons are published by Köröglü 1998.

6. Due to economic reasons, religious discrimination and the side effects of the Kurdish conflict.

7. The standard work documenting the Syriac Christian exodus during the 20th century is Anschütz 1984; due to its detailed presentation of the various communities it is also an extremely helpful research tool for any question concerning the topography of the region.

8. Palmer 1990, p. xiii.

9. A recent guide to the monestaries and churches of the region is a richly illustrated volume in Turkish language, with references to the earlier literature (Keser 2002). A new *Traveler's Guide to Mardin* (Maner 2006) covers this town in great detail but also most of the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn area, including Nusaybin and Hasankeyf, and moreover provides an excellent photographic record of the region.

We will see that place names such as Midyāt, Mardin, Savur / Şawrō, Kīvakh, Azakh and Kfartūthō can be identified with Aramaic toponyms already attested in the Assyrian age. Many sites, however, have been renamed by the Turkish authorities in the 20th century and, with the exodus of the Syriac speaking population, begin to be forgotten. This makes the testament of publications from the time before the foundation of the Turkish Republic all the more important; especially valuable is the pioneering work of Albert Socin (1881) which includes a map in the scale of 1 : 500.000 that combines his data with the information gathered by earlier travellers (Fig. 1). Yet the cartography of these days is sometimes less than reliable. A still useful tool is the German army's war map of Mesopotamia of 1918 (*Kriegskarte des Deutschen Heeres von Mesopotamien*) in the scale of 1 : 400.000, compiled by the Royal Prussian Topographical Survey (*Kartographische Abteilung der Königlich-Preussischen Landesaufnahme*) during the First World War; map 3^b is devoted to the Ṭūr 'Abdīn range (Fig. 2).¹⁰ While the map is very detailed it is not always accurate¹¹ and must be used with considerable caution. For the roads traversing the Ṭūr 'Abdīn, T.A. Sinclair's map in the scale of 1:1.000.000 is useful as it gives the traditional road network (Fig. 3); this has been substantially changed in the 20th century: some roads have gained much more importance due to their upgrading to highways while others have virtually disappeared, most crucially the road linking Midyāt and Nusaybin.¹² For the topographic features of the region, the Soviet strategic maps (now generally available) at the scale of 1 : 500.000 (J-37-Γ) and 1:1.000.000 (J-37) are most helpful, as well as the information gained from satellite photographs (Figs. 4a and 4b).¹³ The topographic map of Turkey compiled by O. Erol¹⁴ offers a good impression of the setup of the Ṭūr 'Abdīn which consists of several parallel mountain

10. The section reproduced here is taken from the journal *Stimme des Tur Abdin* 16 (March 1999), p. 9, and I owe my sincere thanks to Dr. Hans Hollweger of the "Initiative Christlicher Orient / Freunde des Tur Abdin" (Linz) for providing me with a copy of this publication.

11. See, e.g., the mistakes noted by Kessler 1980, pp. 41 fn. 185 and 75 fn. 306.

12. For this see Anschütz 1984, p. 12.

13. A satellite photograph of Landsat Mss band 7 from June 8th, 1975 is reproduced in black and white in Palmer 1990, p. 108 fig. 39 while the journal *Biblical Archaeologist* 48 (1985) features an enhanced Landsat 4 satellite image in color, showing the area between the Karaça Dağı and Cizre in the scale 1:600.000 (as a supplement to Weiss 1985); it is reproduced here in black and white (note that all altitudes need to be divided by the factor 3.28!). The satellite photos reproduced on pp. 26-31 of the *Syria Space Image Atlas* (ed. General Organization of Remote Sensing, Damascus 1996) show the southern parts of same region in the scale 1:200.000.

14. Published as fig. 26 (between pp. 94 and 95) in Hütteroth 1982 and as fig. 15 (in color) in Hütteroth – Höhfeld 2002, pp. 52-53.

range enclosing a high plateau (Fig. 5). Based on satellite images and his own extensive travels, Andrew Palmer¹⁵ gives a perceptive description of the area:

Seen from a satellite in orbit around the earth, Ṭur ʿAbdin resembles the coat of a tiger. The bare limestone of the ridges, against which the hill-top villages are effectively camouflaged, alternates with the red-brown stripes of the fertile wadis, snaking their way down towards the central stream which, having carved a deep canyon in the east, flows into the Tigris under the citadel of Fenek; other streams, deflected by the watershed, nose west to the Tigris below Ṣawrō and south of the Ḥirmas (Jaghjagh) at Nisibis and so, by the Khabur, to the Euphrates. Thick forests of oak in the south, producing edible acorns, are interspersed with village clearings, above which peaks of the steep and craggy escarpment form a clear barrier to south and east. The plateau is effectively walled and moated on every side. No settlement is large enough to be seen from space without a very fine lens.

The region is very short of water and the trade routes pass it by. Life there is harsh and contentious; yet the farmers do not complain about the soil and emigrants pine for the healthy air. Even on the bare projections of the mountain's limestone skeleton, fortress-like with the stepped structures of horizontal strata, several varieties of tasty berries appear on the most unpromising thorns. There is room for semi-nomadic tribes on the fringes of the wadis and the hillsides are hospitable to the vine. The desert is everywhere neighbour to the sown.

The Ṭur ʿAbdin can be accessed from three directions: from the north, coming from Diyarbakir or having crossed the Tigris at the fords at Bismil or Hasankef / Ḥesnō d-Kīfō, with relative ease over the gradually ascending foothills; from the south, over a steep and narrow route along the valley of the Ġagğag, linking Nusaybin with Midyāt and the central region of the Ṭur ʿAbdin; and from the southeast, where the gentler slopes of the basalt ranges of the eastern Ṭur ʿAbdin conveniently connect the Tigris valley and the Jezirah with the inner regions of the mountain plateau. The precipices of the western Ṭur ʿAbdin make the region virtually inaccessible from that direction, as does the rough terrain in the northeast through which the valley of the Tigris is cutting until it emerges in the Mesopotamian plain at Cizre / Jazīrat ibn ʿŪmar.

15. Palmer 1990, pp. 107-109.

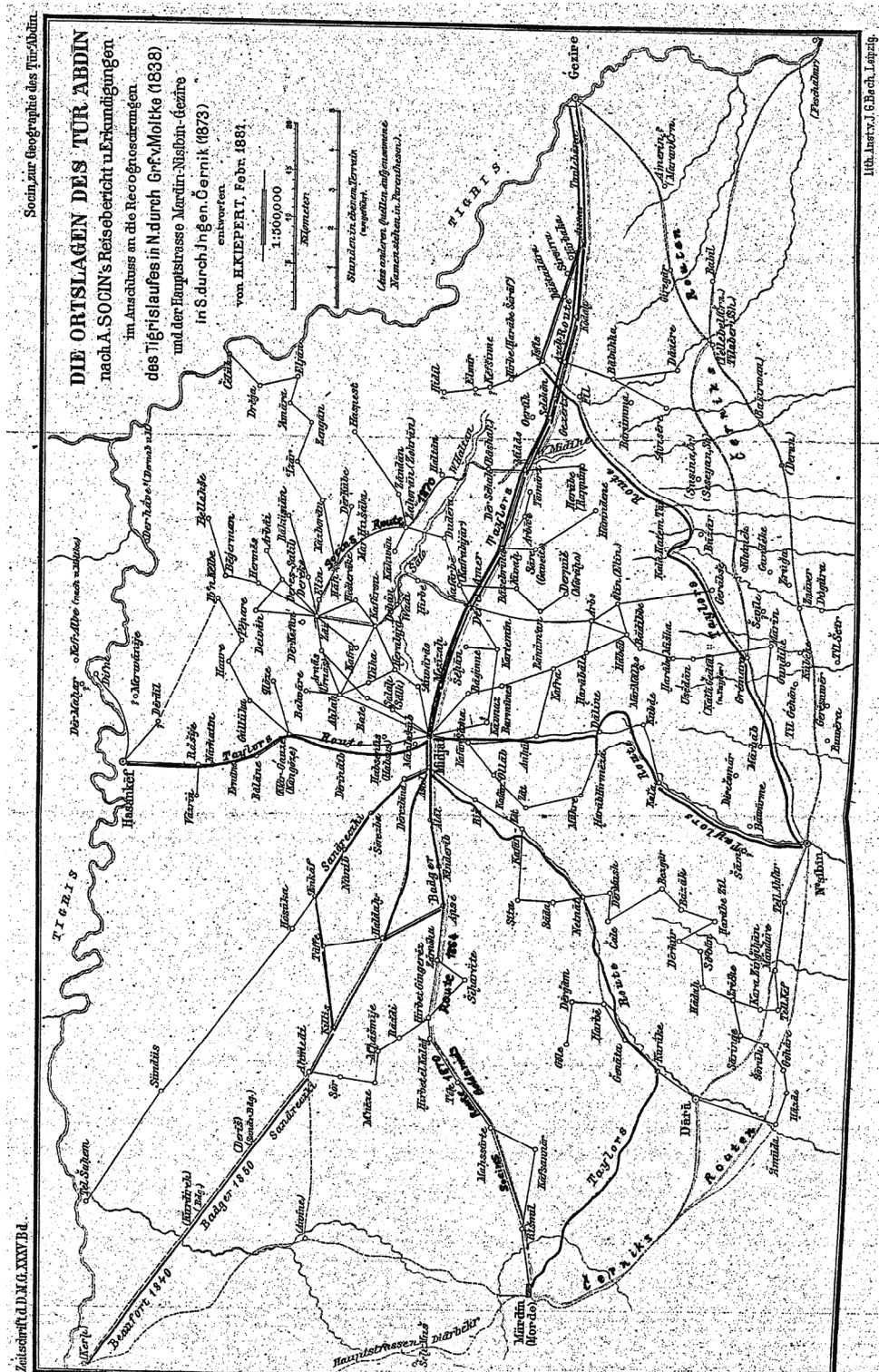


Fig. 1. Map taken from Socin 1881 (between pp. 268 and 269).

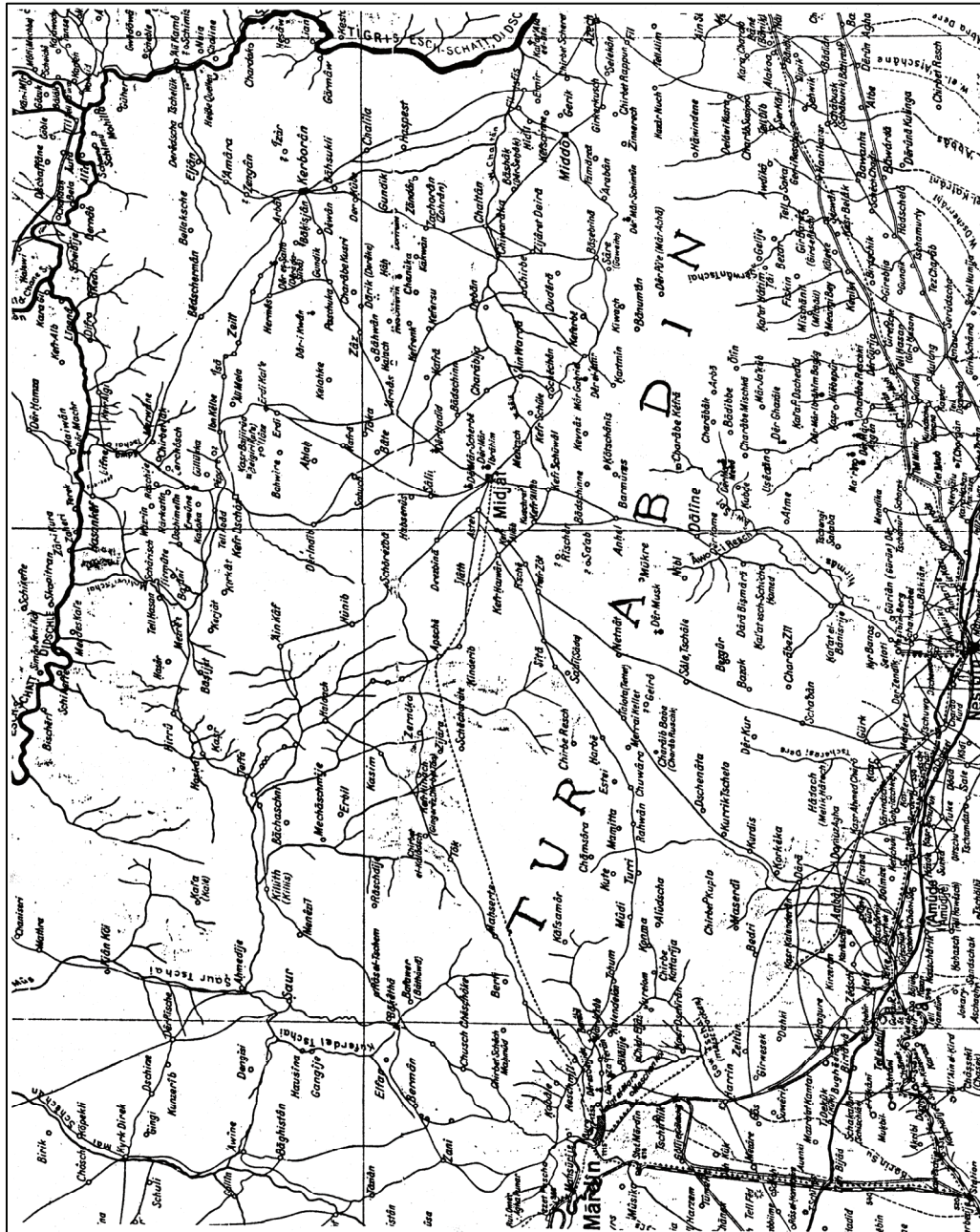


Fig. 2. Detail of map 3^b of the Kriegskarte des Deutschen Heeres von Mesopotamien (1918).

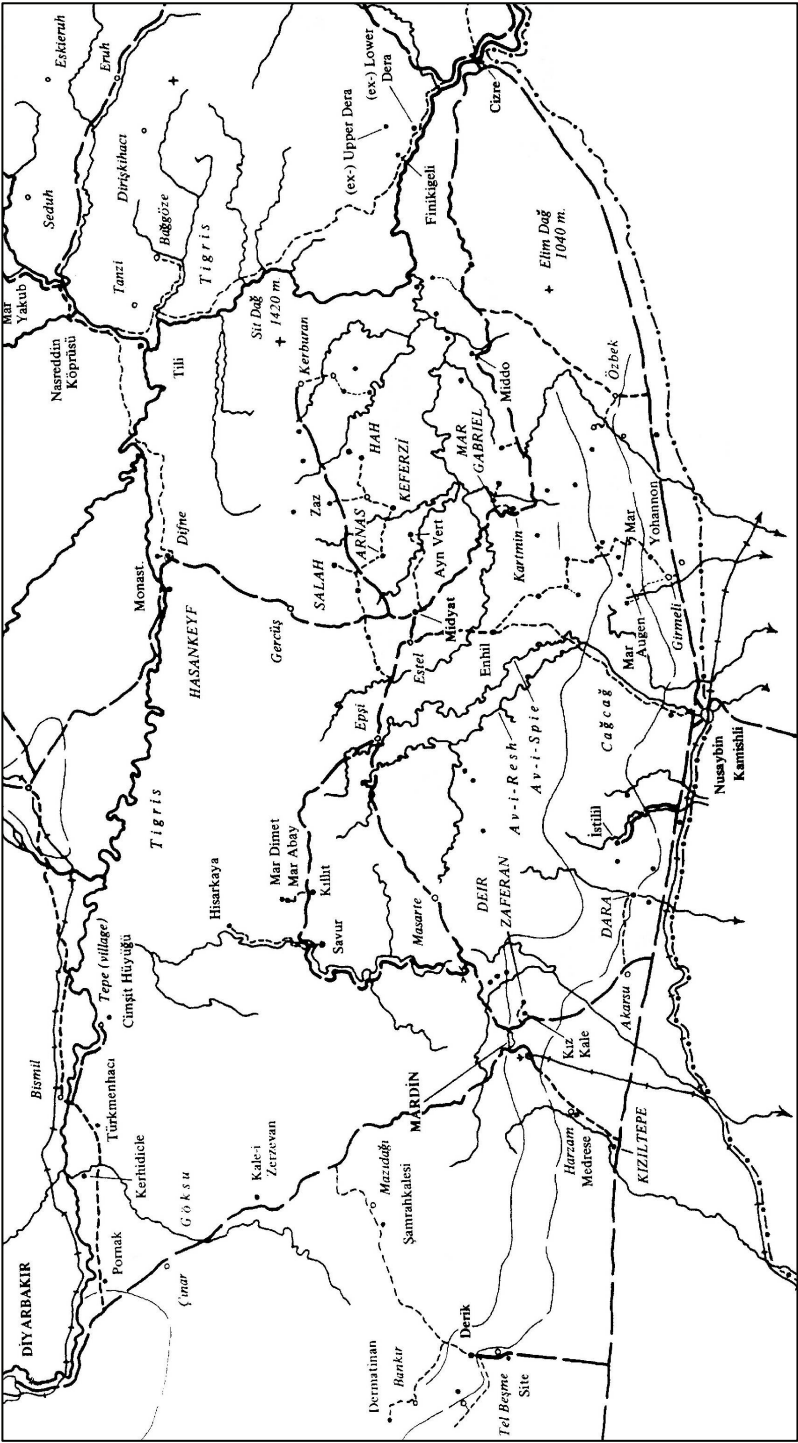


Fig. 3. Detail of the map *Chapter X. The Tigris* in Sinclair 1889 (between pp. 406 and 407).



Fig. 4a. Enhanced Landsat 4 satellite image, taken from *Biblical Archaeologist* 48 (1985). Note that all altitudes need to be divided by the factor 3,28!

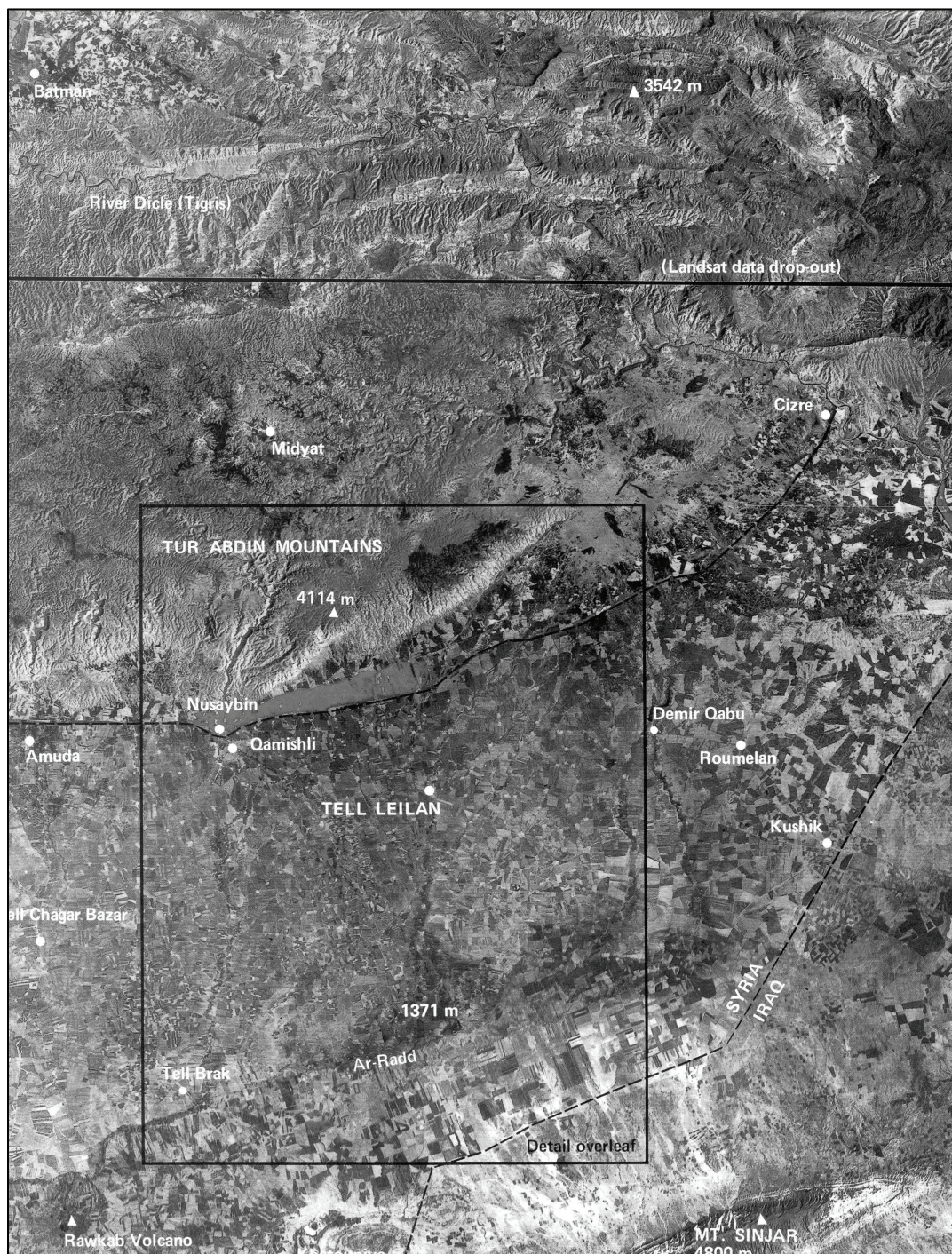


Fig. 4b. Enhanced Landsat 4 satellite image, taken from *Biblical Archaeologist* 48 (1985). Note that all altitudes need to be divided by the factor 3,28!

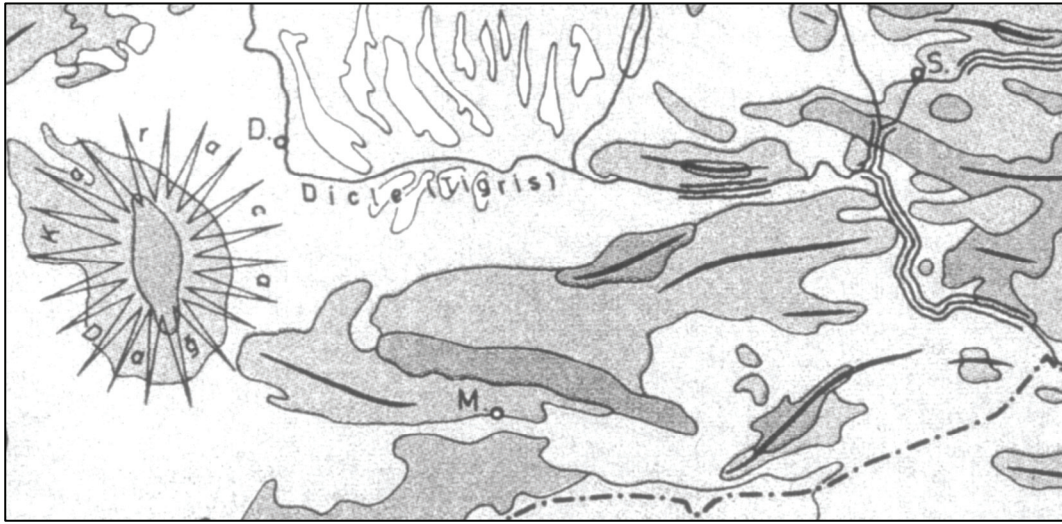


Fig. 5. Detail of the map *Die Gliederung des Reliefs* of O. Erol in Hütteroth 1982, fig. 26. D. = Diyarbakir; M. = Mardin; S. = Siirt.

II. The Assyrian name of the ẖur ʿAbdĪn: Kāšiēri / Kāšiāri

The Assyrian designated the ẖur ʿAbdĪn as **Kāšiēri**, hence adapting a locally used toponym that is also attested in the Hittite sources as **Kāšiāri** / **Gāšiāri**¹⁶ and refers to an area under Hurrian (Mittani) control. It is therefore well possible that the toponym is derived from the Hurrian language.

The earliest attestation for Kāšiēri in the Assyrian sources is found in the inscriptions of Adad-nērārī I (1300-1270) who mentions “the entirety of Kāšiēri as far as the city of Eluḥat”, alternatively “the city of Eluḥat and Kāšiēri in its totality”, among the regions of Mittani conquered by him;¹⁷ so does Shalmaneser I (1269-1241) whose enumeration corresponds closely to that of his predecessor.¹⁸ From the inscriptions of Tukultī-Ninurta I (1240-1205), we learn that “all the land of Šubria (Šubarī), the entirety of Kāšiēri as far as the land of Alzu” (see below) rebelled against Assyrian rule¹⁹

16. For attestations see RGTC 6[1], p. 189 and RGTC 6/2, pp. 70f. s.v. “Kašijara”.

17. RIMA 1 A.0.76.1, 12: *si-ḫi-ir-ti ka-ši-ie-e-ri a-di e-lu-ḫat*; A.0.76.3, 38-39: *URU.e-lu-ḫa-at ù KUR.ka-ši-ie-e-ri a-di pa-aṣ gi-im-ri-ša*.

18. RIMA 1 A.0.77.1, 82'-83': *si-ḫi-ir-ti ka-ši-a-ri a-di URU.e-lu-ḫat*.

19. RIMA 1 A.0.78.1, iii 30-32: *KUR.šu-ba-ri-i ka-la-ša si-ḫi-ir-ti KUR.ka-ši-ie-ri a-di KUR.al-zi*.

whereupon Tukultī-Ninurta marched into Kāšiēri to regain control.²⁰ The region is also mentioned in a summary of all the lands that rose against Assyria and were subsequently subdued.²¹ From the information gained from these kings' inscriptions it is clear that while the region was still predominantly Hurrian, already in the 12th century Aramaeans were active in the Ṭūr 'Abdīn region.

When Tiglatpileser I (1114-1076) in his accession year had to fight the Mušku who had invaded Katmuḥḥu, the plain southeast of the Ṭūr 'Abdīn and east of the Tigris, he "traversed the rough terrain of Kāšiēri, without waiting for his rear guard".²² As the Mušku who at that time inhabited the lands of Alzu and Purulumzu, the region south of modern Elaziğ,²³ had to cross the Kāšiēri in order to reach Katmuḥḥu, we must assume — if we want to accommodate Tiglatpileser's statement about his own crossing the Kāšiēri — that the Assyrian king had been staying in the Upper Tigris valley with part of the army and, upon hearing of the Mušku raid, used the same route through the Ṭūr 'Abdīn as they had and attacked them from the rear. This in all probability was the track from the Tigris valley to Savur to Midyāt to the Sufan Çay plain, the main connection between Central Assyria and the region of the Upper Tigris (see section III).

During the reign of Aššur-bēl-kalâ (1073-1056), Kāšiēri is mentioned among the regions where this king bred gazelles, ibex and deer,²⁴ but more importantly, the Ṭūr 'Abdīn was also the arena of a number of fights between the Assyrian army and the Aramaeans who seem to have gained considerable control not only in this area, but also on the Upper Tigris and the Middle Euphrates. From the inscription of the "Broken Obelisk" we learn about fights in the towns of Pa'ūza, Nabula, Šūru, Ḥulzu and Erišu, all of which are to be located in the Kāšiēri.

In that year, in the month of Ayyāru, on campaign against the Aramaeans, he (i.e., Aššur-bēl-kalâ) fought (them) at the town of Pa'ūzu at the foot of the Kāšiēri. In that year, in the same month, on campaign against the Aramaeans, he fought (them) at the *peak* of the town of Nabula.²⁵

20. RIMA 1 A.0.78.1, iii 39: *ana KUR.ka-ši-ie-ri e-li*.

21. RIMA 1 A.0.78.1, iv 32: *si-ḫi-ir-ti KUR.ka-ši-ie-ri*. This passage has exact parallels in a number of other inscriptions: RIMA 1 A.0.78.2, 26 // A.0.78.8, 8' // A.0.78.9, 18' // A.0.78.10, 29.

22. RIMA 2 A.0.87.1, i 72-73: *EGIR-a ul ú-qī KUR.ka-ši-ie-ra A.ŠÀ nam-ra-ši lu-u ab-bal-kit*.

23. Cf. Wittke 2004, pp. 81-91.

24. RIMA 2 A.0.89.7, iv 17: *KUR.ka-ši-ie-ri*.

25. RIMA 2 A.0.89.7, iii 8-10: *ina MU-ma ši-a-ti ina ITU.GU₄ KASKAL šá KUR.a-ri-me ina URU.pa-ú-za šá GÌR KUR.kaš₆-ie-ri im-ta-ḫa-aš ina MU-ma ši-a-ti ina ITU.KI.MIN-ma KASKAL šá KUR.a-ri-me ina ri-iš URU.na-bu-la im-ta-ḫa-aš*.

In that year, in the month of Abu, on campaign against the Aramaeans, he fought (them) at the town of Dunnu-ša-Līšur-šala-Aššur, which is in the district of Šinamu. In that year, in the same month, he vacated the town of Šūru in Ḫanigalbat (of people). He conquered the town of Ḫulzu, which is inside Kāšiēri, and the town of Erešu, which the people of Ḫabḫu held.²⁶

While Dunnu-ša-Līšur-šala-Aššur and Šinamu are located in the Upper Tigris valley,²⁷ the other settlements are situated in the ʾAbdīn, and two of these places can be identified with modern toponyms — Nabula is Girnavaz north of Nusaybin (see section VI) and Šūru is Savur (see section IV), while Erišu is likely to be the same settlement as Irsia mentioned in the 882 campaign of Assurnasirpal and should be located somewhere to the north(east) of Savur (see section III). No identification for “the town of Paʿuzu at the foot of the Kāšiēri” has been suggested so far, but from the description it is clear that the site must be situated at the southern foothills of the ʾAbdīn. About a century and a half later, the settlement is referred to in the very same way in the inscriptions of Adad-nērārī II (911-891):

In the eponymy of Dūr-māt-Aššur (= 901), I marched to the extensive land of Ḫanigalbat. Nūr-Adad of the (Aramaean) Teman tribe mustered his troops. In the city of Paʿuzu at the foot of Kāšiēri we drew up the battle lines (and) fought with each other. I defeated him from the city of Paʿuzu as far as the city of Našibīna (and) destroyed his numerous chariots.²⁸

We see Paʿuzu now in the control of a ruler of Teman, an Aramaean tribe active in the northern Ḫābūr triangle, and as the site of a battle that involved the chariotry; moreover, it is mentioned in connection with Našibīna / Nusaybin. All this suggests a location in the plain just south of the eastern ranges of the ʾAbdīn. The fights for supremacy in the region continued, and another battle was fought at Našibīna in the following year

26. RIMA 2 A.0.89.7, iii 13-17: *ina MU-ma ši-a-ti ina ITU.NE KASKAL šá KUR.a-ri-me ina URU.du-ni—šá—¹li-šur—ša-la—^da-šur šá pa-ḫa-at URU.ši-na-mu im-ta-ḫa-aš ina MU-ma ši-a-ti ina ITU.KI.MIN-ma URU.šu-^rú-ra šá KUR.ḫa-ni-gal-bat it-tas-ḫa URU.ḫu-^rul¹-za šá MURUB₄ KUR.ka-ši-ie-ri ù URU.e-ri-šá šá KUR.ḫab-ḫu.MEŠ ú-kal-[lu-ni] ik-ta-šad.*

27. Radner 2004, pp. 71, 91.

28. RIMA 2 A.0.99.2, 39-41: *ina li-me ¹BAD—KUR—^da-šur a-na KUR.ḫa-ni-gal-bat DAGAL-te lu a-lik ¹nu-ur—^dIM KUR.te-ma-na-a-a ÉRIN.ḪI.A.^rMEŠ¹-šú ^rid¹-ka-a i-na URU.pa-ʿu-zi šá GÌR KUR.kaš-ie-ri si-dir-ta lu-ú ni-iš-ku-nu it-ti a-ḫa-iš lu-ú ni-im-da-ḫi-ši iš-tu URU.pa-ʿu-zi a-di URU.na-ši-pi-na BAD₅.BAD₅-šú áš-ku-nu GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ-šú ma-ʿa-tu.MEŠ a-še-e^c.*

while the city of ʕuzirīna²⁹ was captured in 899, and for that year, Adad-nērārī II also states in his inscriptions that “the towns at the foot of Kāšīēri, which Mamli of the Te-man tribe had captured, submitted to me”.³⁰

In 886, Tukultī-Ninurta II (890-884) went on campaign against Bīt-Zamāni, the Aramaean realm on the Upper Tigris with Amedi / Diyarbakir as its capital. To get there, he crossed the Kāšīēri, starting out from the [source] of the river Supnat.³¹ As we will see, Tukultī-Ninurta used the same route as his successor Assurnasirpal II in whose inscriptions, however, the track is described with considerably more detail (for this, see section III). The last Assyrian campaign to Kāšīēri is recorded for 855 in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (858-824): “In my fifth regnal year, I ascended to Kāšīēri and captured eleven fortified cities”.³² After this, the Assyrian control over the Kāšīēri region seems to be firmly established — there is no more mention of fights (or any other activities for that matter) in the Assyrian royal inscriptions.

Outside the inscription material of the 12th to 9th century BC, attestations for the toponym Kāšīēri are quite rare, and both available sources date to the reign of Assurbanipal (668-c. 630): The schedule to a royal decree lists, among other landed property to be exempted from taxes, vineyards located in Kāšīēri,³³ while a certain “Šumma-ilāni, city ruler of Arkuḫu which is in Kāšīāri” is named in a court record from the early reign of this king;³⁴ the fact that a local dynast is attested in 7th century Ṭūr ‘Abdīn, when the region had already been part of the Assyrian empire for centuries, is a good illustration how remote and secluded parts of this mountain range were then, and they remain so to this day.

III. Assurnasirpal’s 882 and 879 campaigns through the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn

The most extensive accounts of the Kāšīēri route are found in the inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II (883-859) who crossed the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn twice, in 879 and 882; on both occa-

29. Not ʕuzirīna = Tall Billa, but the town of the same name situated in the northern ʕābūr triangle. Possibly Tall ‘Amuda.

30. RIMA 2 A.0.99.2, 46-47: URU.MEŠ-ni šá GİR KUR.kaš-ie-ri šá ʾma-am-li KUR.te-man-na-a-a iš-ba-tu GİR.2.MEŠ-ia ‘lu’ iš-ba-tu.

31. RIMA 2 A.0.100.5, 13-14: [ina SAG e-ni] ʾd.su-up-na-at a-na KUR.kaš-ie-r[i] at-ta-bal-ʾkāt’.

32. RIMA 3 A.0.102.10, ii 10-11: ina 5 BALA.MEŠ-ia ina KUR.kaš-ie-e-ri e-li 11 URU.MEŠ-ni dan-nu-ti KUR-ud, with parallels with the spelling KUR.kaš-ie-ri in RIMA 3 A.0.102.6, ii 16-17, A.0.102.8, 11’-12’, A.0.102.14, 52-53, and A.0.102.16, 26-27.

33. SAA 12, 27 r. 9’: ‘ina’ KUR.ka-a-ši-ie-e-ri.

34. Kataja 1987, p. 68, 83-1-18, 231, 4: LÚ.EN—URU [ša UR]U.ar-ku-ḫi šá ina URU.kaš-ia-a-ri.

sions his strategic goal was to reach the Upper Tigris region and reestablish the Assyrian presence there. While the reports of the 882 campaign, with the resettling of the old Assyrian city of Tušḫu on the Upper Tigris as its most prominent event, offer interesting information on the ʾTŪr ʿAbdīn area, there is no mention of the time that the Assyrian army spent in the region. In contrast to this, the accounts of the 879 campaign explicitly state that the Assyrian troops spent a total of six nights in the Kāšīēri. This time frame facilitates the identification of the mentioned toponyms greatly, and this is why we will first look at the evidence for the later campaign.

Assurnasirpal's 879 campaign is related in the "Annals" inscribed on the walls and floors of the Ninurta temple at Kalḫu³⁵ and on two free-standing stelae, the "Nimrud Monolith" erected at the entrance of the afore-mentioned shrine³⁶ and the "Kurkh Monolith" discovered at Kurkh / Üçtepe on the Upper Tigris;³⁷ the accounts given in these three texts correspond closely to each other, but vary in particulars, the Kurkh inscription being the most detailed. A campaign against Kašīēri is also mentioned in the fragmentary inscription of the "White Obelisk" from Nineveh,³⁸ but whether this monument is to be attributed to Assurnasirpal II or rather his ancestor Assurnasirpal I (1049-1031) is still open to discussion; the passage about Kašīēri is not a parallel to the later king's accounts of the campaigns of 882 and 879.

The 879 campaign has been studied in great detail by Karlheinz Kessler³⁹ and Mario Liverani,⁴⁰ and this need not be repeated here. It will suffice to summarize the information on the march route given in the Assyrian king's inscriptions and comment on the proposed identifications for the toponyms.

The Assyrian army starts out from Tillê in the land Katmuḫḫu, and subsequently enters the Kāšīēri mountains at the pass of Ištarâte.⁴¹ The first night is spent encamped at the town of Kibaki, the inhabitants having submitted without a fight, while the next day sees the attack and fall of the city of Matiātu; Assurnasirpal has an inscribed monument erected, as fighting continues in the area, namely at Bunu[...] and Maṣula. Upon leaving Matiātu, apparently after having spent two nights there (= night 2 and 3), a camp is set up at Zazabuḫa (= night 4) where the tribute from Ḫabḫu is received. The next night (= night 5) is spent at a camp in Irsia; the Assyrian army is clearly not wel-

35. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, ii 86-97.

36. RIMA 2 A.0.101.17, iii 138' - iv 38.

37. RIMA 2 A.0.101.19, 35-63.

38. RIMA 2 A.0.101.18, 18'-33'.

39. Kessler 1980, pp. 22-78.

40. Liverani 1992, pp. 57-62.

41. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, ii 88: *né-reb šá KUR.ḏINNIN.MEŠ*; A.0.101.17, iv 3: *né-reb šá URU.ḏiṣg-tár.MEŠ-te*.

come there as the city has to be burnt to the ground — subsequently, tribute from Šūra is delivered to Irsia. The next camp (= night 6) is erected in a nameless place within Kāšīēri and the next day the town of Madaranzu and two other settlements are conquered. With this, the passing of the Kāšīēri mountains has been completed and the army has reached the land of Na^ciri, i.e. the Upper Tigris region.⁴²

This information results in the following route:

	ROUTE	VICINITY	IDENTIFICATION
	Tillê in Katmuḥḥu		Sufan Çay plain
Kāšīēri	pass of Iṣtarāte		pass at Ba Sebrina / Haberli
	Kibaki		Kīvakh
	Matiātu	Bunnu[...] and Maṣula	Midyāt
	Zazabuḥa	Ḥabḥu	Zāz ??
	Irsia	Šūra	Šūra = Savur
	Madaranzu		
	Na ^c iri		Upper Tigris region

The route from the Sufan Çay plain into the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn crosses the ridge of the Dibek Dağı (see section V) by using the pass near Ba Sebrina / Basbirin⁴³ / Haberli.⁴⁴ It has been suggested that this pass is to be identified with the Assyrian “Pass of Iṣtarāte”, and this seems likely.⁴⁵ This first stage of Assurnasirpal’s march, over the pass of Iṣtarāte⁴⁶ to Matiātu,⁴⁷ is repeated by his successor Shalmaneser III (858-824) in the year 845.⁴⁸ The pass of Ba Sebrina is also used by the road between Idil / Azakh and Midyāt which

42. For this part of the campaign see Radner – Schachner 2001, pp. 761-765.

43. Ba Sebrina / Basbirin (etc.) < Bēth Svirinā, the name of a Syrian Orthodox monastery, see Socin 1881, p. 259, and Sinclair 1989, p. 329.

44. Anschütz 1984, pp. 80-83.

45. Despite Liverani 1992, pp. 57-58 who states that “the pass could be located everywhere [along the Kāšīēri route], and be rather a linear than a punctual concept”.

46. RIMA 3 A.0.102.8, 43': KUR.*né-reb šá* URU.^dINNIN.MEŠ-*te*; A.0.102.6, iii 21 (and parallels): KUR.*né-re-be ša* ^dINNIN.MEŠ.

47. In contrast to the Assurnasirpal inscription which always use the determinative URU for Matiātu, the toponym is always written without determinative in Shalmaneser’s inscriptions, as *mat-ia-a-tu/-ti*, *mat-ie-e-ti* or *mat-ti-ia-te*. For this cf. the writings for Mazāmua.

48. RIMA 3 A.0.102.6, iii 21-23; A.0.102.8, 43'f.; A.0.102.10, iii 10-13; A.0.102.16, 85'-87'. Without mention of the pass in A.0.102.14, 90-91.

passes by the village of **Kīvakh**,⁴⁹ the identification with **Kibaki**, already proposed by Emil Forrer,⁵⁰ can easily be accepted. The next station, **Matīātu** = **Midyāt**,⁵¹ is also unproblematic, but thereafter things get more complicated. The only toponym which can be identified with confidence is **Šūra** = **Savur** / **Şaur** / **Şawrō** / **Sauras**,⁵² but the Assyrian troops did not reach this city which is connected with Midyāt by a road in north-western direction — they did so, however, on their march back to central Assyria.⁵³ Instead, they took a northern route towards the Tigris which ultimately led them to **Tuṣ-ḫu** / **Ziyaret Tepe**. The question is whether they reached the Tigris at Hasankeyf, using the direct route to the north from Midyāt, or whether they took a more western route, most probably along the Savur Çay. In light of the fact that the Assyrians spent another three nights in the ʾTūr ʿAbdīn, the second option is far more plausible and generally accepted — also in light of the fact that the track coming from Savur over the ʾTūr ʿAbdīn foothills was the traditional route to the Tigris.⁵⁴ It is worthwhile to note that Assurnasirpal's accounts of the trip stress that it was necessary to cut through the mountainous terrain with iron axes and copper picks for easier passage of the troops and chariotry; the first stage of the march until Midyāt should have been not too difficult, but after that the march seems to have served as a reconnaissance mission (note the night spent in an area for which no name could be given). While it is possible to trace the steps of the Assyrians quite precisely for the first part of their journey through the ʾTūr ʿAbdīn, the identification of place names from the second half of their march is problematic, and I refer the reader to the extensive discussion of Kessler and Liverani.⁵⁵ Note that the toponyms Zazabuḫa⁵⁶ and Madaranzu are hitherto only attested in Assurnasirpal's inscriptions while Irsia is likely to be identical with the town of Eriša in Aššur-bēl-kalā's "Broken Obelisk" (see section II).

49. Anschütz 1984, p. 126; Sinclair 1989, p. 328.

50. Forrer 1920, p. 18 ("Kiwaḫ").

51. Anschütz 1984, pp. 61-71; Sinclair 1989, pp. 240, 315-317.

52. Anschütz 1984, pp. 114f.; Sinclair 1989, pp. 321-322.

53. RIMA 2 A.0.101.19, 102-103.

54. Cf. Sinclair 1989, pp. 286, 311, 375.

55. Kessler 1980, pp. 51-56, 67-69, 78 (map); Liverani 1992, pp. 58-60, fig. 6 (map).

56. The identification of Zazabuḫa with the village of Zāz, situated ca. 20 km north of Midyāt (Anschütz 1984, pp. 75-76, Sinclair 1989, pp. 319, 431) has been already been suggested in 1898 by E. Sachau on the basis of the similarity of the names (see Kessler 1980, pp. 53-54 with earlier literature), but although this is possible, it remains to be proven, see Liverani 1992, p. 58.

It is interesting to compare this account with that of the 882 campaign which is related in the “Annals” and the stela from the Ninurta temple in Kalḫu.⁵⁷ Except for the mention of the toponym Kāšīēri, no other place name of the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn region is featured in both accounts. This remarkable fact is already true for the starting point of the campaign, the Sufan Çay region: while the 882 account mentions the Supnat source, the 879 report speaks of Tillê in Katmuḫḫu — it is, however, the same region that is designated in both cases: the Supnat source can safely be identified with the source of the Sufan Çay at Babil, situated ca. 25 km south-west of Cizre at the Turkish side of the border with Syria.⁵⁸ There, Assurnasirpal receives tribute from Izalla (see section V) and then begins his march over Kāšīēri, waging war at the towns of Kinabu, Damdam-musa, Mariru and Tēla (fortified with three ramparts). After a stopover at Tušḫu on the Tigris, the Assyrian army returns to Kāšīēri / Nērbu and finds the country in turmoil: clearly motivated by the experiences of the recent Assyrian visit, the inhabitants of nine cities have left their homes and retreated to the mountain fortress of Išpilibria⁵⁹ — rebellion to the Assyrian mind, and a siege and subsequent conquest follow. Afterwards, the Assyrian army enters the pass of Buliāni and follows the river Luqia, ultimately reaching the town of Ardupa; all three toponyms are only attested here. The settlement in this region are designated as belonging to the land Ḫabḫu⁶⁰ — the region from where tribute is delivered to Assurnasirpal in 879 in the town of Zazabuḫa. It would seem likely to identify the Luqia with the Tigris tributary Cehennem Deresi / Wadi Salo whose headwaters originate in the region around Midyāt: following this watercourse out of the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn would bring the army to the Tigris just north of Cizre, from where the Assyrian mainland could easily be reached by following the Tigris downstream. The eastern outskirts of the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn bordering onto the Tigris are, however, otherwise not used as a march route as it is an extremely rough terrain (distinguished from the more easily accessible Kāšīēri as Ḫabḫu, a toponym which is typically used for impenetrable mountain regions⁶¹) — again, Assurnasirpal’s choice of return track seems to have been motivated by an interest to further explore the region; to go back via Midyāt and Tillê would have by far been the easier way.

57. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, i 101 - ii 2 and ii 15-23 (return trip); A.0.101.17, ii 3f. and ii 48-76 (return trip).

58. Kessler 1980, pp. 34-35.

59. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, ii 16 // A.0.101.17, ii 52-53: URU.iš-pi-li-ib-ri-a URU dan-nu-ti-šú-nu ù KUR-ú mar-su “The town of Išpilibria, their fortress and a rugged mountain”.

60. For Ḫabḫu as a region adjoining Kāšīēri see Fuchs 2002, pp. 77-78.

61. As convincingly argued by Fuchs 2002, pp. 86-92.

In the 879 account, the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn region is repeatedly designated as Nērbu, specifically as “Nērbu in the midst of Kāšīēri”⁶² or “Nērbu at the foot of Mount Uḫira”.⁶³ Nērbu, meaning “pass” both in Aramaic and Assyrian, may well be the local designation of the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn plateau — quite fitting for a region that is the most important passage between the Upper Tigris and Mesopotamia; in the Assyrian sources, the toponym is only attested in Assurnasirpal’s inscriptions where it is used, apart from the 879 accounts, in the royal titulary, summarizing the extent of his conquest as “from the Supnat source to Inner Nērbu”.⁶⁴

Despite the fact that Assurnasirpal crossed the same region in 882 and 879, the landscape is described in very different ways: with the exception of the very general terms Kāšīēri and Ḫabḫu, there are no toponyms that occur in both accounts, even though there must have been some overlaps in the terrain covered, especially in the first stages of the march to the north. This suggests more than anything that different authors were responsible for compiling the two campaign accounts and alerts us to the easily ignored fact that the way how a particular landscape or route is described is always highly subjective.⁶⁵

IV. The main sites of the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn: Midyāt, Mardin and Savur

While **Matiātu** = **Midyāt**⁶⁶ is exclusively mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III, the other modern day center of the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn, **Mar-diānê** = **Mardin**,⁶⁷ situated prominently on a mountain ridge overseeing the entire Jezirah, is not at all attested in the inscription corpus, and our only reference from the Neo-Assyrian period stems from a legal document that seems to mention [a road leading to] Mardiānê.⁶⁸ Its absence from the inscription corpus is easily explained by the fact that the site is situated off the route Sufan Çay – Midyāt – Savur – Upper Tigris which the Assyrians preferred to use when crossing the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn. It also has to be remembered that prior to the construction of the modern road linking Nusaybin with Mardin

62. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, ii 15-16 // A.0.101.17, ii 49-50: KUR.*ne-er-bu šá šà* KUR.*kaš-ie-ri*.

63. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, i 112: KUR.*ne-er-bu šá* GİR KUR.*ú-ḫi-ra*. Mount Uḫira is only attested here.

64. Cifola 1995, pp. 108-110.

65. Compare this to the accounts of the campaigns of Tiglatpileser III (747-725) and Sargon II (721-705) to the Zagros: despite the fact that they often covered the same area, the toponymy used to describe their exploits differs considerably, see Radner 2003, p. 49.

66. For Midyāt see Anschütz 1984, pp. 61-71, and Sinclair 1989, pp. 315-317.

67. For Mardin see Anschütz 1984, pp. 143-150, and Sinclair 1989, pp. 201-214.

68. SAA 14 42, 29, r. 1: URU.*mar-di-ia-a-né-e*.

and Diyarbakir, Mardin's position was always slightly off the major traffic and trade routes.⁶⁹

Šūra = **Savur** / **Šaur** / **Šawrō** / **Sauras**, on the other hand, is attested both in Assyrian royal inscriptions and in archival texts. The earliest mention occurs in the inscriptions of Adad-nērārī I (1300-1270) as one of the Mittani cities subdued by him.⁷⁰ The toponym being a fairly common one (meaning “fortress” in Aramaic), the city can be further specified as “Šūra of Ḥanigalbat”, as is done in the inscriptions of Aššur-bēl-kalā (1073-1056)⁷¹ and of Assurnasirpal II (883-859).⁷² We are probably correct in identifying the town of Šūra, from whence the crown prince Sennacherib had trees for the royal orchards shipped to central Assyria during the reign of Sargon II (721-705), with this settlement.⁷³ Less certain but still possible is the identification with Šūra in three 7th century legal documents.⁷⁴

V. **Izalla** / **Azalla** = **Ṭūro d-Malbash** / **Melabas** = **Dibek Daği**

The Assyrian toponym **Izalla** / **Azalla** lives on in the **Izala** of the classical sources (most importantly, Theophylact II.I.3-4) and Syriac **Izlō** (or **Ṭūrā d-Izlō**). It forms part of the **Ṭūr ‘Abdīn** range, and is conventionally located west of Mardin in the Assyriological literature;⁷⁵ one of the main incentives for doing so were the remarks of Albert Socin concerning the Syriac sources which, however, are somewhat ambiguous: according to Assemani, the mountain range is close to Nusaybin while according to Bar Hebraeus the designation **Izlā** / **Izlō** refers to the “rough mountains of Mardin”.⁷⁶

69. Cf. Sinclair 1989, p. 387.

70. RIMA 1 A.0.76.1, 9 and A.0.76.3, 28: URU.šu-ri.

71. RIMA 2 A.0.89.7, iii 15: URU.šu-r¹-[ra] šá KUR.ḥa-ni-gal-bat.

72. RIMA 2 A.0.101.19: 102: URU.šu-ú-ra šá KUR.ḥa-ni-gal-bat.

73. SAA 5 281, 10: URU.šu-u-r[i].

74. SAA 6 146, 4: (a field) *ina* URU.šu-ra (adjoining a road to URU.dan-na-a-ni); SAA 6 226, 6-7: (a field in the town of URU.ḥa-ta-a, adjoining) AMA šá URU.šu-r[i] (and) KASKAL šá URU.šu-r[i] (fields in URU.ḥa-ta-a are bought by the same man in SAA 6 223 and 224); SAA 14 197, r. 8: 2 URU.šu-ra-a.a (as witnesses).

75. Most recently Zadok 1989, p. 164 (with survey over the earlier literature); Liverani 1992, pp. 34-35; Parpola – Porter 2001, p. 3: D3.

76. Socin 1881, p. 238 (used, e.g., by Zadok 1989, p. 164): “In den älteren Notizen über den **Ṭūr** habe ich keinen sicheren Bericht über den Umfang dieses Gebietes gefunden. Ueber den Umfang des Masiusgebirges kann ich mir aus den Berichten der Classiker nichts anderes abstrahiren, als dass Kiepert Recht hat, wenn er dasselbe vollständig mit dem **Ṭūr** identificirt. Darnach wären alle Karten, welche jene Benennungen ganz oder auch theilweise auf das Karagebirge ausdehnen, zu emendiren. Was

However, the current understanding of the Syriac sources identifies **Izlō** with the south-eastern escarpment between Nusaybin and ʾIdil / Asakh,⁷⁷ marked as Dibek Daği in modern maps. This encompasses a geographically distinct area where the limestone is coated by a layer of basalt stemming from the long extinct volcano of Elim Dağ.⁷⁸ In Syriac, this range is called **Ṭūro d-Malbash**, “Clothed Mountain” (attested as *Melabas* in the classical sources), a designation which refers to the way the basalt layer covers the limestone.⁷⁹ That volcanic stones, including pumice (very porous, frothlike volcanic glass), are common in this area helps to explain why the Neo-Assyrian sources speak of specific “stones from Izalla” that are used to touch up precious temple property; according to one source they are specifically used to polish (*kapāru*) silver,⁸⁰ which suggests an identification with pumice, a material that has long been used as an abrasive in cleaning, polishing, and scouring compounds.⁸¹

But already the earliest Assyrian reference to the geographic setting of Izalla indicates the region of the Ṭūro d-Malbash: when Assurnasirpal II (883-859) stayed at the source of the river Supnat in 882 in order to have his monument erected next to those of his ancestors (Tiglatpileser I and Tukulti-Ninurta II), he received tribute from Izalla, namely cattle, sheep and wine;⁸² he then continued his campaign with a march over the

die Ausdehnung des Gebirges Izla oder Izala hingegen betrifft, so bezweifle ich, dass sich dieselbe genau mit der des Ṭūr deckt (vgl. Ritter XI, 150; Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syrischen Acten persischer Märtyrer*, Leipzig 1880, p. 167). In den von Assemani excerpierten Schriftstellern wird Izla gewöhnlich als in der Nähe von Nisibis gelegen aufgeführt; in Bar Hebraeus’ Kirchengeschichte Th. I, p. 87 (*Chronicum ecclesiasticum* ed. Abbeloos et Lamy. 3 tomi. Lovanii 1872-77) wird aus einem Buche Kaschkol angeführt, dass das rauhe Gebirge von Märdin, Izlā genannt, unzugänglicher, rauher und dürre als alle anderen Gebirge des Erdkreises sei. In dieser Beschreibung erkennen wir allerdings den Ṭūr wieder (vgl. Prym u. Socin, [Der neu-aramäische] D[ialect] d[es] Ṭ[ūr] ʾA[bdīn] I, p. III; II, p. 384 Anm. zu 132, 12).“

77. Sinclair 1989, p. 342; Palmer 1990, p. xix.

78. The altitude of Elim Dağ is given variously as 1059 m and 1040 m; cf. Sinclair 1989, pp. 314-315 (map). The general area is marked as “Plateau basaltique” in Dilleman 1962, fig. II.

79. Palmer 1990, p. xix.

80. “Write to the palace that they should bring stones from Izalla to polish! We should polish the silver Throne of Destiny and the door of Ištar *tašmē!*” (SAA 1 141, 3' - r. 3: *ina É.GAL šu-pur NA₄.a-ba-na-ti ša KUR.i-zal-li ša ka-pa-ri lu-bi-lu-u-ni BARAG—NAM.MEŠ KÙ.BABBAR ù GIŠ.IG dINNIN—GIŠ.TUK ina šà-bi ni-ik-pur*; letter from the reign of Sargon II). Stones from Izalla (SAA 7 63, iii 2: *NA₄.MEŠ ša KUR.i-z[al-la]*) are also mentioned in an undated administrative record listing objects and expenditures needed to repair (*ana batqī*) temple property.

81. See, e.g., *Encyclopaedia Britannica* VIII (1976¹⁵), p. 300 s.v. “pumice”.

82. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, i 106: *ina U₄-me-šú-ma ma-da-tu šá KUR.i-za-la GU₄.MEŠ UDU.MEŠ GEŠTIN.MEŠ at-ta-ḫar*.

Kāšiēri mountains (see section III). As we have seen, the Supnat source is to be identified with the source of the Sufan Çay at Babil, and Izalla should be located in its general vicinity: indeed, Babil is situated just south of the basalt fields of the Tūro d-Malbash.

The Assurnasirpal reference — the only to be found in a royal inscription — designates Izalla as a provider of wine; this again fits well with the fact that the Tūro d-Malbash is situated in that area of the Near East where the wild grapevine *Vitis vinifera* subsp. *sylvestris* is local — a characteristic that applies of course to the entire Tūr ‘Abdīn range,⁸³ but the basalt layer covering the Tūro d-Malbash provides especially good conditions for viticulture,⁸⁴ and until today, there are good vineyards in the region.⁸⁵ More than any other toponym, Izalla is used as a synonym for wine in the Neo-Assyrian period, comparable to modern appellations such as Bordeaux or Burgundy. Hence, “wine from Izalla” heads the section devoted to wine in the “Practical Vocabulary of Nineveh”,⁸⁶ and the terms “vessels from Izalla”⁸⁷ and “vessels of wine from Izalla”⁸⁸ are used without difference in archival texts.⁸⁹ That wine from Izalla is mentioned in the record of a private trading operation from Assur⁹⁰ must be taken as evidence that the region could easily be reached by river traffic as this was the usual mode of transport; the wine was filled in wineskins that were then used to construct rafts, together with the building wood that constituted the second major import commodity. In addition to the benefit of easy and cost-efficient transportation, the wine was permanently cooled and thereby protected from decay by the waters of the Tigris.

Further support for a localization in the area east of Nusaybin comes from those references that combine the toponym with sites in the north-eastern part of the Ḥābūr triangle and further downstream: in a geographical list, the entry for Izalla is followed by Sangara / Jebel Sinjār;⁹¹ foreign delegates from Azalla, Qatna (Old Babylonian Qat-

83. See the distribution map of Zohary 1996, p. 24 (map 2.1).

84. See the map marking regions with exceptionally productive wine producing areas in Hütteroth 1982, p. 162 fig. 54 = Hütteroth – Höhfeld 2002, p. 108 fig. 47.

85. Cf. Socin 1881, p. 245, and Anschütz 1984, pp. 14, 105.

86. PVN iia 9': GEŠTIN ša KUR.i-zal-li (ADD 777 + 2R 44, 3; edition: Landsberger – Gurney 1957-58, p. 340).

87. BM 121206 (copy: van Driel 1969, p. 85) r. x 29': [DUG.Š]AB KUR.i-zal; SAA 7 184, 1: DUG.ŠAB KUR.i-zal-li; SAA 7 185, 1: [DUG.Š]AB KUR.i-zal-li; SAA 12 80, 10: DUG.ŠAB KUR.i-zal (wine from Izalla is also mentioned in l. 6 of this text: 10 ANŠE ša KUR.i-zal).

88. KAV 174, 21: DUG.ŠAB GEŠTIN i-zal; Ass. 10805e, 1-2: 38 DUG GEŠTIN.MEŠ ša KUR.i-zal-li (kept in the Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin; current museum number unknown, cf. Radner 1999, p. 158).

89. Cf. Postgate 1976-80, p. 226 no. 4 for the Neo-Babylonian references.

90. VAT 9608, 8: 3 GÍN GEŠTIN TA* KUR².a-zal (edition: Radner 1999, pp. 157f.).

91. SAA 11 1, i 23: [KUR].i-zal-lu.

ṭunān) and Šadikanni (Tall Ağağa on the Middle Hābūr) are mentioned in a geographical order, from the headwaters of the Hābūr downstream, in an appointment text from the reign of Assurnasirpal II (883-859);⁹² and finally “28 villages in Azalla” are listed together with Sangara, Lāqê and Qaṭna and Dūr-Katlimmu / Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad, all well-known toponyms of the Hābūr area, in a land grant of Adad-nērārī III (810-783) in favor of the governor of Rašappa.⁹³

The vineyards of Izalla are also attested in legal documents and administrative records. Hence, we know that the royal chariot driver Rēmānī-Adad bought property in Izalla on two occasions: one of the two contracts is too fragmentary to determine the character of the property,⁹⁴ but the other document concerns two vineyards in Izalla,⁹⁵ bought in 666: the location of these vineyards is specified as being in the town of **Ispallurê**,⁹⁶ and we have already encountered this site under the slightly different name **Išpilibria**⁹⁷ as the mountain retreat to which the inhabitants of nine ʾAbdīn (Nērbu) settlements fled in the expectation of the Assyrian army’s return from the Upper Tigris in 879 (see section III); another attestation for the town can be found in broken context in an administrative text from Tall Billa.⁹⁸ The town of Ispallurê is also known to be a wine-producing site in Izalla from a long list of landed property and its inhabitants that served as an appendix to a land grant; the text SAA 12 50 enumerates farmland and vineyards in Izalla,⁹⁹ namely fields in the towns of Andulu,¹⁰⁰ Asiḥu¹⁰¹ and Kašpu¹⁰²

92. SAA 12 83, r. 18-19: *lu-u KUR.a-za-la-a-a lu-u KUR.qaṭ-na-a-a lu-u KUR.di-kan-na-a-a*.

93. RIMA 3 A.0.104.7, 18: 28 *URU.kap-ra-ni-šú ina KUR.a-za-al-li*.

94. SAA 14 479, 2': [*ina*] *KUR.ì-zal-[la]*.

95. SAA 6 314,13: *ina KUR.i-za-li*.

96. SAA 6 314,14: *ina URU.is-pal-lu-r[e-e]*.

97. That the royal inscriptions, using the Standard Babylonian form of the Akkadian language, write /š/ where a Neo-Assyrian text has /s/ is typical for toponyms and other foreign terms: The difference in orthography reflects the fact that in Neo-Assyrian <s> and <š> have changed their places in the phoneme field, see Hämeen-Anttila 2000, pp. 9-10.

98. Billa 86, 8' (copy: Finkelstein 1953, p. 175): 'URU.iš¹-pa-[l]u-re. For an edition of the text see Postgate 1974, pp. 353f.

99. SAA 12 50, 33: PAB *ina KUR.ì-zal-li*.

100. SAA 12 50: 18: *URU.an-du-li* (*hapax*).

101. SAA 12 50, 19: *URU.a-si-ḥi*.

102. SAA 12 50, 24: [U]RU.ka-áš-pi (*hapax*).

and vineyards in Iadā'i,¹⁰³ Barzanista,¹⁰⁴ Til-Zānī,¹⁰⁵ Absiyāya¹⁰⁶ and lastly Ispallurê.¹⁰⁷ Two more towns in Izalla are attested in a personnel list, namely Abilāte and Qablit,¹⁰⁸ both of which are unattested otherwise.

Some of the Izalla settlements in SAA 12 50 are known from elsewhere, most importantly the town of **Asiḥu**. It is likely that Asiḥu should be identified with the modern town of **İdil** which used to be known under its Syriac name **Azakh / Azekh / Hazakh** until the 20th century;¹⁰⁹ it is situated in the eastern part of the Ṭūr 'Abdīn, on the route between Cizre and Midyāt.¹¹⁰ The Neo-Assyrian presence at İdil / Azakh is documented in the shape of a decorated basalt block found in this region¹¹¹ which originally formed part of the gateway to a monumental building and can be dated stylistically to the late 8th or 7th century.¹¹² Crucial for the identification of Asiḥu with Azakh¹¹³ is not only the similarity of the ancient and the Syriac name but especially the fact that the town is mentioned as URU.*a-siḥ* in a Neo-Assyrian contract fragment found as a stray find at Gir-

103. SAA 12 50, 26: URU.*ia-da-i-i* (*hapax*), if not = Matiātu.

104. SAA 12 50, 28: URU.*bar-za-ni-is-ta*. Despite the similarity of the names and the general agreement on the identification in the secondary literature ever since Forrer 1918, p. 22, this place cannot be identified with the town of Barzaništun (URU.*bar-za-ni-iš-tu-un*) in the inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II (RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 104; A.0.101.22, 3'). Barzaništun is clearly considered a part of Na'iri, i.e. the Upper Tigris region, according to one source (RIMA 2 A.0.101.22, 3') and is to be located in Bīt-Zamāni, on the route Ergani—Maden—Diyarbakir (RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 104), somewhere in the plain southeast of Maden and northwest of Diyarbakir. There is no way that this evidence can be combined with a location in Izalla, even when Izalla is sought in the western outskirts of the Ṭūr 'Abdīn. It remains unclear with which of the two towns the reference for URU.*bar-za-ni-iš-[ta/tu-un]* in a Sargon II letter (SAA 5 97, r. 7') is to be connected: the settlement is named together with the town of Dūr-Šamaš as a garrison of Itu'eān mercenary troops; as the author of this letter writes from Kummē in the mountain lands east of the Tigris, this offers no clue for the identification with either town.

105. SAA 12 50, 29: URU.DU₆—*za-ni-i* (*hapax*).

106. SAA 12 50, 31: URU.*ab-si-ia-a-a* (*hapax*).

107. SAA 12 50, 32: URU.*is-pal-lu-re-e*.

108. SAA 11 133, i 5: PAB 3 URU.*a-bi-la-t[e]* *ina* KUR.*i-zal*; i 28: PAB 2 URU.*qab-lit* KUR.*i-zal*.

109. Anschütz 1984, p. 105; Sinclair 1989, p. 351.

110. Anschütz 1984, pp. 102-106.

111. The monument was purchased by the Archaeological Museum of Diyarbakir (inv. no. 963) in the 1960ies (Schachner – Schachner 2003, p. 222 fn. 10).

112. Publication: Schachner – Schachner 2003.

113. I am, however, not proposing an identification of Syriac Azakh = Neo-Assyrian Asiḥu with the Old Babylonian city of *a-ši-ḥi-im*.KI, as attested in the Mari letter ARM 1 26, an equation advocated by Lewy 1952, p. 2. Already Falkner 1957-58, p. 37, argued that the toponyms should be differentiated. Durand 1997, p. 115 locates Ašiḥum at the southeastern foothills of the Jebel Sinjār.

navaz (see section VI).¹¹⁴ The earliest attestation for Asihu dates to the reign of Adad-nērārī III (810-783) and is found in an administrative note from the governor's archive at Guzāna / Tall Halaf.¹¹⁵ Asihu is also attested in several texts from Ma'allanāte, a city in Northern Syria of uncertain location that produced a 7th century cuneiform archive now kept in Brussels.¹¹⁶ In one of these texts, a man from Asihu acts as a witness¹¹⁷ while according to another a man named Qarhâ sells land adjoining a road to Asihu to Ḥarrānāyu, the archive holder.¹¹⁸ Because of the mention of Qarhâ and other persons known from the Brussels texts¹¹⁹ and of both the towns of Ma'allanāte and Asihu in the unpublished fragment of a land sale kept in the museum of Kayseri, this tablet — although said to be a surface find from Eğriköy near Yeçil Hisar¹²⁰ — must surely originate from the same archive as the Brussels texts and should not be taken as evidence for the Neo-Assyrian occupation of the Kayseri area;¹²¹ it would even seem likely that the fragment joins the one text from Brussels. We gather from the Kayseri fragment that Qarhâ son of Adda-raḥimi from Asihu¹²² sold a field in Ma'allanāte,¹²³ adjoining the road from Ma'allanāte to [Asihu³].¹²⁴ From these attestations it seems quite likely that a road linked Ma'allanāte and Asihu, a road which followed in all likelihood the same route that lead Assurnasirpal's army from the Sufan Çay plain into the ʾTūr ʾAbdīn (see section III). Furthermore, if we identify Asihu with Azakh, then it is plausible to equate **Andulu**, mentioned just before Asihu in SAA 12 50, with **Hedil**, situated 12 km to the west of Azakh.¹²⁵

Finally, we know that Izalla was the site of a battle in the time of the collapse of the Assyrian empire: according to a chronicle text, Nabopolassar of Babylon (626-605) was on his way to come to the rescue of his garrison at Ḥarrān which was beleaguered by

114. Gir. 78/294, r. 2' (copy: Donbaz 1988, p. 25).

115. Weidner 1940, no. 69, 7'-8': 2 DUMU.MEŠ MÍ.nu-qu-x[x x] ša URU.a-si-ḥi.

116. While some texts have been published or at least quoted in some length in preliminary publications (cf. Pedersén 1998, p. 181 fn. 59 for references), the full edition of the archive announced by Edward Lipiński and Paul Garelli since the 1970ies has not yet appeared.

117. O 3663, r. 3'-4': [Id]15—šal-lim—PAB.MEŠ URU.a-si-ḥi-a-a.

118. O 3662, 4'-5': SUḪUR KASKAL [URU.m]a-ʿa-la-na-te ša a-na URU.a-si-ḥi [ta-lak-u-ni].

119. Cf. E. Lipiński in PNA 3/I, 2002, p. 1008 s.v. "Qarhâ 5".

120. According to Donbaz 1988, p. 6. I am grateful to Karl Hecker for providing me with his copy of the text.

121. Contrary to my assumption in Radner 1997a, p. 17.

122. Kayseri 71/155-2, 2: [TA* šÀ UR]U.a-si-ḥi.

123. Kayseri 71/155-2, 5: [ina URU.ma-ʿ]a-la-na-a-te.

124. Kayseri 71/155-2, 7-8: [SUḪUR KASKAL URU.m]a-ʿa-la-na-te ša a-na [URU.a-si-ḥi t]a-lak-u-n[i].

125. Anschütz 1984, pp. 125 f.; Sinclair 1989, p. 330.

Egyptian troops in 609 when he had to fight in Izalla ([KUR].^ri'-za-al-la): the Babylonian had to go up (*elû*) to reach the towns in the mountains (URU.ME šá KUR.ME) which were ultimately conquered and burnt to the ground.¹²⁶

Izalla needs to be sharply distinguished from two (almost) synonymous sites. The first of these, called either **Azallu** or **Zallu**, but never Izalla, is situated in close proximity to Ḫarrān and Ḫuzirīna / Sultantepe, *i.e.* in the area of the Balīḫ headwaters.¹²⁷ The geographic setting of Azallu / Zallu is most obvious in the inscription of Bēlu-lū-balaṭ, the commander-in-chief during the reign of Šamši-Adad V (823-811) who bears the titles “commander-in-chief, great herald, administrator of temples, commander of vast troops, governor of Tabitu, Ḫarrān, Ḫuzirīna, Dūru, Qepāni, Zallu and Balīḫu”.¹²⁸ This location is supported by the accounts of Assurnasirpal’s 9th and 10th campaigns: according to the report of the 9th campaign, undertaken sometimes between 875 and 867, the Assyrian army marched, after crossing the Tigris, to Bīt-Baḫiāni (region of Gu-zāna / Tall Halaf) on to Azallu¹²⁹ — where Adda-‘immē the Zallean (KUR.zal-la-a-ia) paid tribute¹³⁰ — on to Bīt-Adini (region of Til-Barsip / Tall Ahmar) and then, after crossing the Euphrates, to Carchemish.¹³¹ The first part of the 10th campaign, undertaken in 866, covered more or less the same terrain, but in the inscription account the itinerary is presented in a different fashion:¹³² after crossing the Tigris, the country Qipānu is mentioned as the first stopover of the army, followed by the city of Ḫuzirīna where Itti^c the Zallean (KUR.zal-la-a-ia) paid tribute,¹³³ as did the rulers of Ašša and Kummuhu; the next stage described is the crossing of the Euphrates. Due to Azalla’s connection with Bīt-Baḫiāni in the account of the 9th campaign we can safely assume that the mention of another Zallean ruler, who is further specified as belonging to the Baḫiānu tribe,¹³⁴ in the list of foreign princes bearing tribute to Assurnasirpal II in the year 882 also refers to the sovereign of the western Azalla.

Yet another site is also called **Azalla**, but again never Izalla; it is not a country, but a settlement which is hitherto only attested in the accounts of the 9th campaign of Assurbanipal (668-c. 630), a military operation against the Arabs. Azalla is a settlement “in

126. Grayson 1975, p. 96: Chronicle 3, 70-71.

127. The references discussed here are the ones discussed by Postgate 1976-80, p. 226 no. 2 and no. 3.

128. RIMA 3 A.0.102.2002.

129. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 59: KUR.a-zal-li; 60: URU.a-zal-li.

130. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 59.

131. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 56-65.

132. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 92-96.

133. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 94.

134. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, ii 22: KUR.zal-la-a-a DUMU—ba-ḫi-a-ni; A.0.101.17, ii 72: KUR.zal-la-a-ia [DU]MU—ba-ḫi-^ra-ni’.

the desert, a remote place where there are neither field animals nor do the birds nest”.¹³⁵ Azalla must be an oasis in the Syrian desert as Damascus can be reached from there¹³⁶ and the Assyrian troops are able to quench their thirst with its water.¹³⁷

VI. The cuneiform texts from the ṬŪr ʿAbdīn

Until quite recently, no cuneiform texts from the Neo-Assyrian period were known from the ṬŪr ʿAbdīn region. As already Albert Socin reports that he was offered Assyrian cylinder seals found in the village of Middo, situated east of Azakh, in 1870¹³⁸ and as also in more recent years various such objects have come to light in the ṬŪr ʿAbdīn,¹³⁹ we must assume that the dearth of clay tablets — objects closely associated with seals in the Ancient Near Eastern scribal practice — is not due to a lack of remains from that period but because there were never any excavations undertaken in the area. Also the inscribed monument erected by Assurnasirpal II in 879 at Matīātu / Midyāt (see section III) remains to be found.

The lack of cuneiform texts was to an extent remedied by the results of the excavations conducted by A. and H. Erkanal at the mound of **Girnavaz** / **Ger Nawwās**,¹⁴⁰ situated just north of Nusaybin.¹⁴¹ In 1984, two Neo-Assyrian documents were excavated at this site, and one of them provides us with the ancient name of the settlement, **Nabul**.¹⁴²

135. Prism A, viii 108-109: URU.a-za-al-la ina mad-bar áš-ru ru-u/ú-qu a-šar ú-ma-am EDIN la ib-ba-áš-šu/sú-u ù MUŠEN AN-e la i-šak-ka/kan-nu qin-nu (edition: Borger 1996, pp. 65, 247).

136. Prism A, viii 120 - ix 8 (edition: Borger 1996, pp. 65, 247).

137. Prism A, viii 119 (edition: Borger 1996, pp. 65, 247).

138. Socin 1881, p. 246: “Am folgenden Morgen brachte man mir einige hier gefundene assyrische Zylinder und griechische Münzen”. Cf. also Socin 1881, pp. 249f. on the archaeological enterprises of the priest of the village of Zāz who practiced the “Sandkunst”, i.e. the art to retrieve treasures hidden in the ground.

139. Note the 2nd millennium cylinder seal from the mound of Şerşe Höyük near Gercüş (Erkanal-Öktü 1979) and the five Neo-Assyrian cylinder seals from Girnavaz and environs (Erkanal 1985). For a brief archaeological survey of the Mardin region see Erkanal – Erkanal 1989.

140. The first element of the toponym is the Kurdish word for “tell, settlement mound” (cf. Giricano, Gre Dimse, Gercüş etc.), which is why the site can also be mentioned as Tell Nawwās or Kefr Nawwās in the secondary literature.

141. For the excavations see Erkanal 1988 and Harmankaya – Erdoğan 2002 s.v. “Girnavaz” (with earlier literature); see also Sinclair 1989, pp. 345, 433 (the site is mislabelled as “Girvanaz” on the map on p. 343).

142. Thus elegantly solving the question of its identification, for which see Kessler 1978-79 who already made reference in this context to the then unexplored mound of “Ger Nawās” (p. 103).

The document in question concerns the sale of a vineyard in Nabul¹⁴³ that is situated next to a “strong river” (ĪD *dan-nu*) and the royal road (KASKAL—MAN). The river can certainly be identified with the Ġagğag, known to the Assyrians as Ĥarmiš¹⁴⁴ and called Ĥirmas in Syriac.¹⁴⁵ Nabul is certainly the same settlement as Nabur, the site of a vineyard which is sold in 683,¹⁴⁶ and Nabula, one of the Mittani cities conquered by Adad-nērārī I (1300-1270),¹⁴⁷ where Aššur-bēl-kalâ (1073-1056) later fought the Aramaeans¹⁴⁸ and which rebelled against Shalmaneser III (858—824) at the end of his reign.¹⁴⁹

Another fragmentary land sale text from Girnavaz, unearthed during the excavations of 1986, stipulates a fine to be paid to the god Adad of **Urakka**, should the contract be broken;¹⁵⁰ due to the convention that nearby sanctuaries are favored in such penalty clauses, we can safely assume that Urakka should be located not too far from Nabul: moreover, the two cities occur together as towns that rose in rebellion against Shalmaneser III (858-824).¹⁵¹ That Adad was worshipped in Urakka together with his consort Šala is also known from two god lists from Assur,¹⁵² and the same penalty clause is featured in a slave sale contract found at Nineveh which, however, offers no further information to the transaction’s geographical setting.¹⁵³ That Urakka is to be located in the general vicinity of the city of Našibīna / Nusaybin (in the north of which Nabul is situated) is known from a fragmentary land grant that mentions first Našibīna and then “the royal road that leads from Urakka to the river [...]”,¹⁵⁴ followed by a broken remark naming the governor of Našibīna. The identification of Urakka with the city of Urkiš, attested in 3rd and 2nd millennium sources, has been advocated;¹⁵⁵ but as Urkiš

143. Gir. 84/84, 10 (copy: Donbaz 1988, pp. 20f.): [UR]U.*na-bul*.

144. RIMA 2 A.0.101.1, iii 2: ĪD.*ḥar-miš*; RIMA 2 A.0.101.21, 10': ĪD.*ḥar-miš*.

145. Palmer 1990, p. 107.

146. SAA 6 90, 9: PAB 17 ZI.MEŠ GIŠ.SAR *ina* URU.*na-bu-ur*.

147. RIMA 1 A.0.76.1, 10; A.0.76.3, 28: URU.*na-bu-la*.

148. RIMA 2 A.0.89.7, iii 10: URU.*na-bu-la*.

149. RIMA 3 A.0.103.1, i 47: URU.*na-bu-lu*.

150. Gir. 86/23, 17' (copy: Donbaz 1988, p. 23): ^dIM *a-šib* URU.*ú-rak-ka*.

151. RIMA 3 A.0.103.1, i 47: URU.*na-bu-lu* URU.*ka-ḥat* URU.*aš-šur* URU.*ú-rak-ka*.

152. PKTA 10-11, r. 16 (Menzel 1981, II T 112 no. 53): *ki-i ina* URU.*ú-rak-ka* MIN ^dIM ^dša-*la* MIN and the parallel text KAR 215 (+) r. v 1'-2' (Menzel 1981, II T 78 no. 37): [*ki*]-^ri' *a-na* URU.^rú'-[*rak-ka* (KI.)MIN] ^rd^rIM ^dša-*la* [(KI.)MIN].

153. SAA 6 96, 19: ^di[M] *a-šib* URU.*ú-rak-ka*.

154. SAA 12 2, r. 5: KASKAL—LUGAL *ša* TA URU.*ú-rak-ka a-na* UGU í[D. *x x* DU-*u-ni*]. The most likely restoration for the river name would be í[D.*ḥar-miš*] = Ġagğag, as this is the river on which Našibīna is situated.

155. Kessler 1980, pp. 224-225, suggesting an identification of Urkiš / Urakka with Tall 'Amūda.

can now be safely identified with Tall Mozān, the complete lack of Neo-Assyrian strata at that site makes the equation somewhat problematic.¹⁵⁶ Be that as it may, Urakka must certainly be located in the northern part of the Ḥābūr triangle, in relative proximity to Nusaybin and Girnavaz.

Another recently published text find from “**Šariza** mound in the vicinity of Mardin”,¹⁵⁷ that is **Tell Širiz / Elbeyli**,¹⁵⁸ yields yet another new place name, **Kapar-Tatû**;¹⁵⁹ this is given as the location of a donkey that is the object of a legal settlement. Kapar-Tatû can certainly be equated with **Kfartūthō / Kafartūthā / Kefertūt / Koçlu**,¹⁶⁰ situated on the eastern bank of the river Gumüş Çay, ca. 15 km south of Kiziltepe and ca. 20 km north of the Turkish-Syrian border.¹⁶¹ It is known as the seat of a bishop from 5th century Syriac sources¹⁶² and as the site of a battle between the last Umayyad caliph Marwan II and the rebel leader al-Daḥḥāk ben Qays al-Shaybānī in 746;¹⁶³ the philosopher Tābit ben Qurra (= Thebit Benchorat)¹⁶⁴ went into exile there when he had to leave his home town Ḥarrān in 872.

And finally, a Neo-Assyrian contract was found at “**Erzen / Erzan / Arzaniya** in the vicinity of Mardin”.¹⁶⁵ I have not been able to ascertain the exact location of this site, but it must not be confused with Arzan / Arzōn by the Garzan Su, formerly the seat of a Syriac patriarch under the authority of the metropolite of Nisibis / Nusaybin.¹⁶⁶ This fragmentary slave sale makes mention of one toponym, **Eḫiman / Eḫiniš** (the name’s realization is uncertain): in case that the contract is broken the guilty party is to pay a fine to the god Ninurta of Eḫiman / Eḫiniš,¹⁶⁷ and just like with the document from Girnavaz we must assume that the shrine and hence the city should be located somewhere

156. Schwemer 2001, pp. 618-619, conveniently sums up the debate.

157. According to Donbaz 1988, p. 12 (regrettably, without a map). I have been so far unable to locate the site Šariza on any map, ancient or recent.

158. For Elbeyli as the new Turkish name of Tell Širiz / Šariza see T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı 1978, p. 594.

159. Šariza 146, 4 (copy: Donbaz 1988, p. 24): URU.ŠE—*ta-tu-ú*.

160. For Koçlu as the new Turkish name of Kfartūthō / Kafartūthā / Kefertūt see T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı 1978, p. 594.

161. For the geographical position of “Kefertūt” see Wiedemann 1920-21, p. 191 fn. 5 = Wiedemann 1970, p. 550 fn. 5 (“etwa unter 37° Breite und etwas östlich von 40° Länge”) and Ay 1995, p. 27 (site no. 8 on the map) and Fritz 1966 (map of the region from Diyarbakir to Mardin).

162. Palmer 1990, pp. 154-155; 158.

163. Nach al-Mas‘ūdī, *Murūdj*, vi, 62; see Hawting 2000, p. 101 and Vecchia Vaglieri 1965.

164. Wiedemann 1920-21, p. 191 = Wiedemann 1970, p. 550; Tubach 1986, p. 154 (with literature).

165. Donbaz 1988, p. 15 (regrettably, without a map).

166. Cf. Palmer 1990, pp. 154, 171, and Garsaion 2001, p. 1170. For the ruins of Arzan see Sinclair 1989, pp. 297-299, 430.

167. Gir. 75/157-2 r. 4' (copy: Donbaz 1988, p. 26): [ʿM]Aš a-šib URU.e-ḫi-MAN.

nearby. As the inhabitants of this town were claimed as his subordinates by the governor of Ḫalzi-adbāri during the reign of Sargon II (821-805),¹⁶⁸ the city should be located somewhere in the periphery of the province of Ḫalzi-adbāri, the “Basalt district”. Unfortunately, the location of this province is not certain either, but if we follow J.N. Postgate’s suggestion to equate it with the region southwest of the Jebel Sinjār¹⁶⁹ then we must look for Eḫiman / Eḫiniš somewhere in the Ḫābūr triangle. This assumption is supported by the fact that another legal document mentioning the city betrays links with the Ḫābūr region, as two of the witnesses bear names with the highly unusual element “Ḫābūr”. The text, which documents the exchange of an irrigated field in Būrāte (*hapax*) for a garden (possibly a vineyard) in [...], mentions Eḫiman / Eḫiniš twice, as the home town of a witness¹⁷⁰ and as the place where the grain tax was to be paid.¹⁷¹

While the new texts from Girnavaz and the Mardin region have provided us with a number of toponyms — Nabul, Urakka, Kapar-Tātû and Eḫiman / Eḫiniš, none of these settlements is actually located in the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn: rather than being situated in the mountain range itself, they are to be found in the plain adjoining to the south, and this makes identifying them more challenging; we are fortunate in being able to propose locations for two of them, Nabul and Kapar-Tātû. It is important to note that beyond the area where the Syriac language and culture has helped to preserve the ancient Aramaic toponymy, going back to the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, the old place names have rarely been retained and identifications on the basis of etymology are generally quite problematic. The changing toponymy is, of course, also an indication that the population has changed again and again — in contrast to the Ṭūr ‘Abdīn region which, typically for a mountain region, has served as a retreat area.

168. SAA 5 81, 11: *ina UGU-ḫi URU.E-ḫi-MAN-a-a* (copy: Radner 1997b, p. 29).

169. Postgate 1995, p. 12.

170. Finkel 1989, p. 67, r. 6': IGI 'AD-GIN URU.E-ḫi-MAN-a-a. The tablet was formerly part of the Erlenmeyer collection and sold by Christie's in 1988.

171. Finkel 1989, p. 67, r. 12'-14': *ina šÀ-bi URU.E-ḫi-MAN i-mad-du-du*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anschütz H. 1984, *Die syrischen Christen vom Tur ʿAbdin. Eine altchristliche Bevölkerungsgruppe zwischen Beharrung, Stagnation und Auflösung* (Das östliche Christentum NF 34), Würzburg.
- Ay E. 1995, “Girharrin Höyüğü’nün arkeolojik değerlendirilmesi”, in A. Erkanal *et al.* (eds.), *In memoriam İ. Metin Akyurt Bahattin Devam Anı Kitabı*, Istanbul pp. 13–32.
- Borger R. 1996, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, Wiesbaden.
- Cancik-Kirschbaum E.C. 1996, *Die mittellassyrischen Briefe aus Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad* (Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad/Dūr-Katlimmu 4. Texte 1), Berlin.
- Cifola B. 1995, *Analysis of Variants in the Assyrian Royal Titulary from the Origins to Tiglath-Pileser III*, Naples.
- Dillemann L. 1962, *Haute Mésopotamie orientale et pays adjacents. Contribution à la géographie historique de la région du V^e s. avant l’ère chrétienne au VI^e s. de cette ère* (Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 72), Paris.
- Donbaz V. 1988, “Some Neo-Assyrian Contracts from Girnavaz and Vicinity”, SAAB 2, pp. 3–30.
- van Driel G. 1969, *The Cult of Aššur*, Leiden.
- Durand J.-M. 1997, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari I* (Littératures anciennes du Proche Orient 16), Paris.
- Erkanal-Öktü A. 1979, “Ein Rollsiegel aus der Nähe von Gercüş”, ZA 69, pp. 234–243.
- Erkanal A. 1985, “Mardin yöresinden Yeni Assur Dönemi mühürleri”, III. *Araştırma sonuçları toplantısı*, pp. 379–388.
- Erkanal A. – Erkanal H. 1989, “Archaeologischer Überblick über die Provinz Mardin”, in K. Emre *et al.* (eds.), *Anatolia and the Ancient Near East. Studies in Honor of Tahsin Özgüç*: Ankara, pp. 129–134.
- Erkanal H. 1988, “Girnavaz”, MDOG 120, pp. 139–152.
- Falkner M. 1957–58, “Studien zur Geographie des alten Mesopotamiens”, AfO 18, pp. 1–37.
- Finkel I.J. 1989, “A Neo-Assyrian Exchange Contract”, SAAB 3, pp. 65–68.
- Forrer E. 1920, *Die Provinzeinteilung des assyrischen Reiches*, Leipzig.
- Fritz F. 1966, *Codex Kultur-Atlas Türkei* 8, Gundholzen.
- Fuchs A. 2000, “Māt Ḥabḫi”, in J. Marzahn – H. Neumann (eds.), *Assyriologica et Semitica. Festschrift für Joachim Oelsner* (AOAT 252), Münster, pp. 73–94.
- Garsoian N. 2001, “Persien: Die Kirche des Ostens”, in L. Pietri (ed.), *Der lateinische Westen und der byzantinische Osten (431–642)* (Die Geschichte des Christentums 3), Freiburg – Basel – Wien, pp. 1161–1186.
- Grayson A.K. 1975, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Texts from Cuneiform Sources 5), Locust Valley.
- Hämeen-Anttila J. 2000, *A Sketch of Neo-Assyrian Grammar* (SAAS 13), Helsinki.
- Harmankaya S. – Erdoğan B. 2002, *Türkiye Arkeolojik Yerleşmeleri 4a: İlk Tunç*, Istanbul.

- Hawting G.R. 2000, *The First Dynasty of Islam. The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661—750*, London – New York (2nd ed.).
- Heinhold-Kramer S. 1988, “Zu Salmanassars I. Eroberungen im Hurritergebiet”, *AfO* 35, pp. 79-104.
- Hütteroth W.-D. 1982, *Türkei (Wissenschaftliche Länderkunden 21)*, Darmstadt.
- Hütteroth W.-D. – Höhfeld V. 2002, *Türkei. Geographie, Geschichte, Wirtschaft, Politik*, Darmstadt.
- Kataja L. 1987, “A Neo-Assyrian Document on two Cases of River Ordeal”, *SAAB* 1, pp. 65-68.
- Keser E. 2002, *Tur Abdin. Süryani Ortodoks Dini Mimarisi*, Istanbul.
- Kessler K. 1978-79, “Nawala und Nabula”, *AfO* 26, pp. 99-103.
- 1980, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Topographie Nordmesopotamiens nach keilschriftlichen Quellen des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.* (TAVO Bh. B 26), Wiesbaden.
- Köröglu K. 1996, *Üçtepe I (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları V/45)*, Ankara.
- Landsberger B. – Gurney O.R. 1957-58, “Practical Vocabulary of Assur”, *AfO* 18, pp. 328-341.
- Lewy J. 1952, “Studies in the Historic Geography of the Ancient Near East”, *OrNS* 21, pp. 1-12.
- Liverani M. 1992, *Studies on the Annals of Ashurnasirpal II. Topographical Analysis (Quaderni di Geografica Storica 4)*, Rome.
- Maner Ç. 2006, *A Traveler's Guide to Mardin*, Istanbul.
- Matney T. – MacGinnis J. – McDonald H. – Nicoll K. – Rainville L. – Roaf M. – Smith M.L. – Stein D. 2003, “Archaeological Investigations at Ziyaret Tepe, 2002”, *Anatolica* 29, pp. 175-221.
- Menzel B. 1981, *Assyrische Tempel (Studia Pohl Series Maior 10)*, Rome.
- Palmer A. 1990, *Monk and Mason on the Tigris Frontier. The Early History of Tur 'Abdin (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 39)*, Cambridge.
- Parpola S. – Porter M. 2001, *The Helsinki Atlas of the Near East in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, Helsinki.
- Pedersén O. 1998, *Archives and Libraries in the Ancient Near East, 1500—300 B.C.*, Bethesda.
- Postgate J.N. 1974, *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire (Studia Pohl Series Maior 3)*, Rome.
- 1976-80, “Izalla”, *RIA* 5, pp. 225-226.
- 1995, “Assyria: The Home Provinces”, in M. Liverani (ed.), *Neo-Assyrian Geography (Quaderni di Geografica Storica 5)*, Roma, pp. 1-17.
- Radner K. 1997a, *Die neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden als Quelle für Mensch und Umwelt (State Archives of Assyria Studies 6)*, Helsinki.
- 1997b, “Erntearbeiter und Wein. Neuassyrische Urkunden und Briefe im Louvre”, *SAAB* 11, pp. 3-29.
- 1999, *Ein neuassyrisches Privatarhiv der Tempelgoldschmiede von Assur (Studien zu den Assur-Texten 1)*, Saarbrücken.

- 2003, “An Assyrian View on the Medes”, in G.B. Lanfranchi – M. Roaf – R. Rollinger (eds.), *Continuity of Empire (?): Assyria, Media, Persia (History of the Ancient Near East / Monographs 5)*, Padova, pp. 37-64.
- 2004, *Das mittellassyrische Tontafelarchiv von Giricano / Dunnu-ša-Uzibi (Ausgrabungen in Giricano 1 = Subartu 14)*, Turnhout.
- Radner K. – Schachner A. 2001, “From Tušhan to Amidi. Topographical Questions concerning the Upper Tigris Region in the Assyrian Period”, in N. Tuna – J. Öztürk – J. Velibeyoglu (eds.), *Salvage Project of the Archaeological Heritage of the Ilisu and Carchemish Dam Reservoirs. Activities in 1999*, Ankara, pp. 729-776.
- Schachner A. – Schachner Ş. 2003, “Ein neu-assyrischer Reliefblock aus dem östlichen Kašyari-Gebirge”, *BaM* 34, pp. 221-231.
- Schwemer D. 2001, *Die Wettergottgestalten Mesopotamiens und Nordsyriens im Zeitalter der Keilschriftkulturen*, Wiesbaden.
- Sinclair T.A. 1989, *Eastern Turkey. An Architectural and Archaeological Survey III*, London.
- Socin A. 1881, “Zur Geographie des ʾTūr ʾAbdīn”, *ZDMG* 35, pp. 237-269.
- Syme R. 1983, “Tigranocerta. A Problem Misconceived”, in S. Mitchell (ed.), *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia. Proceedings of a Colloquium held at University College, Swansea, in April 1981 (British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara Monograph 5 = BAR International Series 156)*, Oxford, pp. 61-70.
- T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı 1978, *Türkiye Mülki Idare Bölümleri, Belediyeler, Köyler*, Ankara.
- Tubach J. 1986, *Im Schatten des Sonnengottes. Der Sonnenkult in Edessa, Harrān und Ḥaṭrā am Vorabend der christlichen Mission*, Wiesbaden.
- Veccia Vaglieri L. 1965, “al-Dahḥāk b. Qays al Shaybānī”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2, p. 90.
- Weidner E.F. 1940, “Das Archiv des Mannu-kī-Aššur”, in J. Friedrich – G.R. Meyer – A. Ungnad – E.F. Weidner, *Die Inschriften vom Tell Halaf. Keilschrifttexte und aramäische Urkunden aus einer assyrischen Provinzhauptstadt (AfO Bh. 6)*, Berlin, pp. 8-46.
- Weiss H. 1985, “Tell Leilan on the Habur Plains of Syria”, *Biblical Archaeologist* 48, pp. 5-34.
- Wiedemann E. 1920/21, “Beiträge zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften. LXIX. Über Tābit ben Qurra, sein Leben und Wirken”, *Sitzungsberichte der Physikalisch-Medizinischen Sozietät zu Erlangen* 52/53, pp. 189-219.
- “Beiträge zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften. LXIX. Über Tābit ben Qurra, sein Leben und Wirken”, in E. Wiedemann, *Aufsätze zur arabischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte II. (Collectanea VI/2)*, Hildesheim – New York [reprint of Wiedemann 1920/21], pp. 548-578.
- Wittke A.-M. 2004, *Mušker und Phryger. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Anatoliens vom 12. bis zum 7. Jh. v. Chr. (TAVO Bh. B 99)*, Wiesbaden.
- Zadok R. 1989, “Notes on the Historical Geography of Mesopotamia and Northern Syria”, *Abr-Nahrain* 27, pp. 154-169.
- Zohary D. 1996, “The Domestication of the Grapevine *Vitis Vinifera* L. in the Near East”, in P.E. McGovern – S.J. Fleming – S.H. Katz (eds.), *The Origins and Ancient History of Wine. (Food and Nutrition in History and Anthropology 11)*, Amsterdam, pp. 23-30.

