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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1–27 JAMIE NOVOTNY, The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V: An At-a-glance Akkadian Glossary of the RINAP 1 Corpus
- 29–86 JAMIE NOVOTNY, The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon: An At-a-glance Akkadian Glossary of the RINAP 4 Corpus
- 87–152 EVA CANCIK-KIRSCHBAUM, J. CALE JOHNSON, Middle Assyrian Calendrics
- 153–174 NATALIE M. MAY, The Comeback of *talīmu*: A Case of the Invention of A Word-meaning by Neo-Assyrian Scribes
- 175–202 FABRICE DE BACKER, Scale-Armours in the Neo-Assyrian Period: A Survey
- 203–237 NICOLAS GILLMANN, Les bas-reliefs neo-assyriens : une nouvelle tentative d'interpretation
- 239–265 NATHAN MORELLO, Public and Private Archives from Fort Shalmaneser
- 267–278 STEFAN ZAWADZKI, *Ummān-manda* Revisited
- 279–328 SALVATORE GASPA, A Bibliography of Neo-Assyrian Studies (2007–2012)

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**PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ARCHIVES FROM FORT SHALMANESER \***

Nathan Morello

The collection of administrative texts from the building known as Fort Shalmaneser in Nimrud/Kalḫu (187 tablets<sup>1</sup>) was published in two monographs, one by J. V. Kinnier Wilson in 1972 (*The Nimrud Wine Lists*) and the other by J. N. Postgate and S. Dalley in 1984 (*The Tablets of Fort Shalmaneser*). A further group of ten texts from the same site, which had however made their way to Copenhagen, was published by F. M. Fales in 1987.<sup>2</sup>

In the following pages, these texts will be divided in two main groups based on their chronology — 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century — that broadly correspond to their distribution over the fort's area and to their general subject-matter. The 8<sup>th</sup>-century texts gravitate around a main official residence in the fort's northern wing (quadrants NW and NE) and are related to the Assyrian war policies of the years of Tiglath-pileser III (745–725) and Sargon II (722–705); a time in which Kalḫu was the capital of the empire and Fort Shalmaneser served as its *ekal mašarti* or “Review Palace”. The texts dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, instead, were assembled in the central-southern zone of the fort (quadrant SE and area S); they comprise letters, contracts and legal texts related to public and private non-military issues, going back to a system of households (*bētu*).

An aspect that was only partly faced in previous studies is how to identify and separate clearly the archives retrieved in the fort.<sup>3</sup> This article will be concerned with the

\* This article is the expanded version of the paper I presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting on Administration in the Ancient Near East “Administering the Daily Matters” (Verona, October 22–24, 2009) organized by Prof. Simonetta Ponchia. I am grateful to Prof. Ponchia for inviting me to the workshop and to Prof. Frederick Mario Fales for his kind general remarks and his correction of the English text.

1. The typologies of the administrative texts included here are: letters, sale contracts, loan contracts, legal texts, labels, receipts and lists.
2. Fales 1987.
3. Postgate and Dalley (TFS: 4–25) clearly distinguished as part of an archive only the *rab ekalli*'s texts, while others are simply gathered as “groups” (the *šakintu* group, the “encrusted” group, the “miscellaneous” texts, the “Babylonian dockets”, the administrative records, the horse lists, and the

attempt to establish an accurate definition of each archive. Following O. Pedersén, an “archive” is “a collection of texts, each text documenting a message or a statement, for example, letters, legal, economic, and administrative documents”. Alongside this definition, account will be taken of three further definitions of an archive in relation to its archaeological context as proposed by Castel: “living”, when the texts have been discovered *in situ* and in an occupational level that was not subsequently disturbed (a possibility that occurs only once in Fort Shalmaneser), “dead”, when the occupational level had been variously disturbed, and “silent”, when the context of deposition of the texts is irretrievable.<sup>4</sup> Another important distinction for this study will be that given by K. Veenhof between “archive”, a deposit of documents no more in use, explicitly preserved for the sake of historical memory, and “*fonds d’archive*”, a collection of documents accumulated by a person or an institution on a specific issue for a limited time.<sup>5</sup>

The archives will be identified through a general pattern of the spread of the texts themselves, from “centres” (the rooms in which the majority of the texts of the archive was found) to “peripheries”.<sup>6</sup> The texts will be considered as gravitating at various distances around a “centre”, usually without crossing major physical “boundaries”, such as between one quadrant and the next. In some cases where this “cross-over” occurs, an explanation will be attempted.

### **The eighth century texts: the *masennu*'s archive and the administration of war**

The administrative texts from Fort Shalmaneser that can be dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC are 104, divided in five main typologies: wine lists (62), horse lists (26), “administrative records” (8), sale contracts (5) and “Babylonian dockets” (3). They were found mainly in the northern wing of the fort, formed by the two large NW and NE courtyards. The

wine lists fragments — which are to be added to the wine lists of Kinnier Wilson’s NWL). In O. Pedersén’s study on the ancient Near East archives and libraries, all the texts from Fort Shalmaneser are divided in five different archives (Pedersén 1998: 145f.), based on their chronology and on their concentration in rooms: two archives dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Kalḫu 1 and 2) and formed by the texts found in the rooms NE 47–50 (it should be noted, anyway, that no texts were found in NE 47) and SW 6, and three archives from the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Kalḫu 3–5), constituted by the texts discovered in the *rab ekalli*’s residence (mostly SE1 and 10), in the rooms SE 14–15 and in room S 10 (above all).

4. Castel 1995; Fales 2003: 197.

5. Veenhof 1986: 7; see also Fales 2003: 197.

6. Following an approach to the issue similar to that used by G. Hermann for her study of the ivories of Fort Shalmaneser, account will be also taken of the spreading factor tied to a hypothetical “looter’s aim”, that “was to remove the valuable overlays” so that “energy would not have been wasted on unnecessary transfers of bulky material from room to room. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that ivories or tablets “would have been thrown down either where they were found, or nearby” (Hermann 1992: 2).

area of greatest concentration of texts (79) gravitates around rooms NE 50, NE 51–55, NW 1–3 and NE 48–49.

Room NE 50 was identified by Mallowan and Oates as a workshop devoted to the repairing of valuable objects, which maintained its functions until the last days of Assyrian domination.<sup>7</sup> Here were found 24 texts: 13 “administrative records” — as classified by Postgate and Dalley — and 11 horse lists. Rooms NE 51–55, NW 1–3 constituted one of the main official residence of the fort, with a private courtyard and an upper floor which was (most probably) wider than the lower one.<sup>8</sup> Following Mallowan, the tablets found in the adjacent room NE 50 could have fallen from this upper floor, and the same may be said for the texts found in the workshop NE 55 and in the bathroom NW 3, i.e. three horse lists.<sup>9</sup> Rooms NE 48–49 appear to have been offices related to the goods entering the fort through the main gate NE 46.<sup>10</sup> Here were found 51 wine lists and 4 horse lists.

From this “epicentre” the distribution of the texts spreads in more distant zones. Six more tablets were found in rooms NW 20, 21 and 7 (all workshops that were converted into storerooms in the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>) and in room NE 2 (part of the *rab ekalli*’s residence). Close to room NE 2 another consistent group of 11 wine lists was discovered in the wine cellar SW 6. Going further, we find a group of sale contracts in room NE 38 and three more texts scattered in rooms SW 37, SE 8 and C1.

*The “administrative records”, a public archive under the control of the masennu*

Room NE 50 yielded eight texts (classified as “administrative records” by Postgate and Dalley), in which the presence of an office responsible for the reception and the reallocation of goods under the form of *ilku*-taxes or *nāmurtu*-donatives of various kinds is apparent.<sup>12</sup> In four texts out of eight<sup>13</sup> Kinnier Wilson identified an official named

7. Mallowan 1966: 401f.

8. Mallowan 1966: 402.

9. TFS 109–111.

10. Oates 1962: 19.

11. Oates & Oates 2001: 155.

12. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 16.

13. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 16. I would suggest that five texts out of the 13 classified by Postgate and Dalley as “administrative records” (TFS 84, 86–97) should be considered as belonging to other groups. The arguments dealt in those texts are sometime different, and one of the main reasons to gather them in an unique group was that they have all been found in room NE 50. More specifically, the texts TFS 86, 96 and 97 can be considered as horse lists, as this appears to be the nature of the texts, and the texts TFS 84 and 92 will be analysed later as part of the archives of the *rab ekalli* and of the *šakintu*, for matters related to their chronology (they are both dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century), their prosopographical connections and the subject they deal with.

*masennu/(a)barakku*,<sup>14</sup> who was responsible for administering payments. Kinnier Wilson translated the term *masennu/(a)barakku* as “treasurer”, based on his conviction that room NE 50 was to be identified with the treasury of the fort.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, Malloy and Oates identified room NE 50 with a workshop, and Postgate preferred for the professional term the translation “steward”.<sup>16</sup>

At present, thanks to new studies based on the textual re-editions of the *State Archives of Assyria*, it has become clear that the definitions given by Kinnier Wilson and Postgate were not necessarily in mutual contrast, but that their range was too restrictive. The *masennu*, far from being a simple administrator (steward or treasurer), was the Chief Treasurer, one of the *rabūte* or “King’s Magnates”, high royal officials with duties and privileges which gave them power only inferior to that of the king himself. The *masennu* supervised the major construction works in the empire as, e.g., the foundation of the new capital Dūr-Šarrukīn during the reign of Sargon II.<sup>17</sup> He also administered the transportation and the use of precious metals<sup>18</sup> and stones and was responsible for the reception of *ilku*-payments.<sup>19</sup> In addition to his duties as treasurer, he was in charge of a large province on the border with Urartu, located on the north-east of the plain of Alqoš, with capital in Kibšuna (RIMA 3, 179: 9). Among his (few) military tasks, there was one, very important for the sake of our analysis, in tight relation with the *ekal mašarti*: the *masennu* was, in point of fact, the official in charge of organizing the musters of the royal army in the Review Palace.<sup>20</sup>

During the reign of Sargon II,<sup>21</sup> to which the administrative records seem to be dated (see Appendix), the office of *masennu* was held by Ṭāb-šār-Aššur (at least from 717 to 714).<sup>22</sup> He is known as the author of more than 40 letters to the king,<sup>23</sup> and for having been quoted in Sargon II’s *Letter to the God Aššur*.<sup>24</sup> As B. Parker has pointed out, at a

14. The logogram IGI.DUB (often written IGI.UM) was previously read *(a)barakku*. For the new, correct, reading see Whiting 1994: 7 fn. 14, and Mattila 2000: 13 fn. 1. Such reading is confirmed by its alphabetic Aramaic version *mšn* linked to the name of *ddy* (Dādī), Chief Treasurer in a text from Tell Šeḥ Hamad (Fales 2001: 301).

15. Kinnier Wilson 1972: 105. This author also supposed that the goods which entered in the deposits of the *masennu* were stored in some room in quadrant SW.

16. Postgate 1974: *passim*.

17. Mattila 2000: 26f.

18. Tablets TFS 93–95 are also connected to metals.

19. Mattila 2000: 161f.

20. Fales 2001: 54f.

21. The role of the *masennu* is attested since 883 with Aia-ḫālu, during the kingship of Assurnasirpal II (KAV 135), see Mattila 2000: 13.

22. Mattila 2000: 15.

23. SAA I 41–74 and SAA V 282–290.

24. TCL 3, 427.

certain point during the reign of Sargon II, Ṭāb-šār-Aššur could have been replaced by Aššur-dūr-pānīja.<sup>25</sup> For the administrative records of Fort Shalmaneser, we may accordingly presume that Ṭāb-šār-Aššur (or Aššur-dūr-pānīja), or his deputy, was the *masennu* quoted in the texts.<sup>26</sup> The so-called “administrative records” could therefore have been part of a public archive under the direct responsibility of the *masennu*. As the tablets were all found in the workshop NE 50, they cannot be identified as a “living” archive. Nevertheless, it may be assumed that they were found not far away from their original place of deposition; a suggestion for the latter leads to the adjacent residence of a high official, NE 51–55, NW 1–3, and specifically to the rooms in the upper floor of this building. The residence represented one of the main cores of the fort at the time and — it may be suggested — corresponded to the (at least temporary) dwelling of the *masennu* himself and of his deputy. From this post, close to the main entrances to the fort and facing the large courtyards designed for the care of the army, the official would have had full control over all the activities for which he was responsible.

#### *Horse lists*

The horse lists<sup>27</sup> are a group of 23 administrative tablets which records numbers of equids, chariots and soldiers gathered for the grand musters (*batqu* or *bitqu*<sup>28</sup>) of the army that periodically took place in Fort Shalmaneser, at least during the 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> To these 23 tablets, three further texts (TFS 86, 96 and 97), assigned by Postgate and Dalley to the group of “administrative records”, may be added for reasons of content and style.<sup>30</sup> The texts appear generally written rather haphazardly, possibly due to the fact that they were drafted during the reviews themselves. The tablets were found in four rooms of the NE quadrant — NE 2, 48, 50 and 55, with a bigger concentration in NE 50 — and in four rooms of quadrant NW (NW 3, 7, 20 and 21).

25. See Parker 1998: 180.

26. In texts TFS 87 and 90 also a vice-*masennu* of (or for) Arba'il is attested. Dalley suggested that “possibly the chief *abarakku* (*masennu*) was in command of several deputies, each of whom was responsible for a different district” (Postgate & Dalley 1984: 148).

27. TFS 85, 98–118.

28. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 20.

29. The analysis of these texts has been of great importance for the study of the consistence of the army and of the dynamics linked to the different aspects of the military organization, like recruitment, division of the corps and many others that do not need to be taken up again here. See, for example, Postgate & Dalley 1984: 27–43, and, more recently, Deszö 2006.

30. TFS 86 and 97 are dated to the years of Tiglath-pileser III (see Appendix); the first deals most probably with horses like TFS 105 and the second is an inventory of chariots; similarly TFS 96 (dated by prosopographical connections to the reign of Sargon II — see Appendix) is an inventory of chariots and part of chariots, carelessly written like the majority of the horse lists.

A point worth noting is that none of these horse lists makes explicit reference to Kalḫu or to its *ekal mašarti*. Three lists refer to a muster, but one of them (TFS 103) specifies that it took place in Borsippa, while in the other two (TFS 108a and 109) the place-names cannot be made out. In an inventory (TFS 96) an *ekal mašarti* of an unspecified city is the place whence the driving-platform of a chariot is derived. Kalḫu is named as the place of origin/reference of six individuals named in a list (TFS 118), although six more persons are connected to Nineveh; finally, in a further inventory (TFS 97) a chariot is connected to Kalḫu.

On the other hand, the large courtyards which form the quadrant NW and NE, and the archaeological materials discovered therein, strongly suggest a relation between the texts and the general functions of this part of the fort.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, if the majority of the musters took place in Kalḫu, as the capital of the empire, it may be presumed that no reference to the toponym was considered necessary by the compilers of the lists. In fact, when a place name is recorded, we may suppose that the tablet referred to a special muster occurring outside of Fort Shalmaneser, as in the case of Borsippa in TFS 103, which was used as outpost for the royal army during one of Sargon's campaigns against Babylon (710–708).<sup>32</sup>

In sum, the horse lists seem to have formed a collection of documents with no particular archival aim, but which were accumulated by an institution — most probably under the control of the *masennu* — for the specific purpose of the review of the royal army during the military campaigns of Sargon II. They may be thus classified as a *fonds d'archive*, according to the terminology discussed above.<sup>33</sup>

### *Wine lists*

The Wine Lists discovered at Fort Shalmaneser record entries of wine (measured in *qas*) followed by beneficiaries in various social and professional categories, under the supervision of an official, the *rab karāni*.<sup>34</sup> The Wine Lists were retrieved in two completely different, and mutually distant, contexts. A first group of these texts was retrieved in room SW 6, a wine cellar adjacent, but not directly connected, to the residence of the *rab ekalli*.<sup>35</sup> This makes the group the sole “living” archive of the fort, as demonstrated

31. Mallowan 1966: 378.

32. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 198.

33. If this were the case, a similar *fonds d'archive* could be assigned to the group of 85 tablets also dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century and discovered in area C1/V13 of the site of Tell Halaf/Guzana, see Pedersén 1998: 172.

34. See NWL 4–8, 11 and 21.

35. Mallowan 1966: 407–409. As has been pointed out by Fales, there is no apparent connection between the texts, mainly dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and this official, attested in the fort only for the 7<sup>th</sup>



by the strong connections between the context of the documents and the function of the room itself. Quite far from the first, the second group of texts was found scattered in two adjacent offices (NE 48 and 49) in quadrant NE, close to the northern gate of the fort. From the archaeological report, it seems obvious that these texts were not discovered *in situ*: as reported by Mallowan, they were “found in packed debris which had been used to rise the level of the floor when the chambers were reoccupied and enlarged by exposing the old inner face of the 9<sup>th</sup> century north wall, after 612 BC”.<sup>36</sup> These texts are thus certainly form a “dead” archive. There is no intimation, moreover, that the two groups of texts belonged to contextually different archives.

The problem of the functions of the wine lists has been investigated by Kinnier Wilson, Parpola and Fales. While the first two agree on the hypothesis that these lists recorded distribution of wine to the most important members of the royal household, either compiled daily (Kinnier Wilson) or once a year (Parpola), Fales suggested that the wine lists recorded quantities of wine given out during “a ceremonial occasion of sorts — a “feast” in which a distribution of wine by and large to all the personnel of court, army, and administration present in Nimrud took place”.<sup>37</sup> This feast could have coincided with the vast military musters testified by the horse lists.

#### *Babylonian dockets*

Three little oval shaped tablets, TFS 79–81, are administrative records coming from the south of Babylon (near Dūr-Iakīn), and dated to the years 712, 711 and 710. On the basis of parallel exemplars, Fales suggested that they record operations of census operated on the Chaldean population that was brought to Assyria in captivity during the military campaigns conducted by Sargon II in the region.<sup>38</sup> The texts have been found in three completely different places: room NE 2, Courtyard SE (in front of SE 8) and C1, in the area S. While no explanation for this scattering of the texts is apparent, their historical context makes it probable that they were somehow connected to the other war-administrative texts, even though they were certainly not written in the fort.

(Fales 1994: 366).

36. Mallowan 1966: 400. In NE 48 the texts were found on two different levels (NE 48 II and III). Note that the detailed findspot of each text was not divulged in the archaeological reports or in the first edition of the tablets. See Parpola 1976: 165.

37. Fales 1994: 370.

38. Fales 1988: 55–57. For different interpretations, see Oppert 1870: 307f. and Durand 1979: 245–260.

*Private archives*

Five sale documents (TFS 65–69) found in rooms NE 38 and SW 37 are the only texts of this kind to be dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century. They record the purchase of landed holdings of various types by different individuals. Prosopographical data do, in point of fact, link the texts to one another (cf. Appendix) and to a wine list (TFS 121),<sup>39</sup> despite this, however, no clue on their possible archival grouping is apparent. Regarding their archaeological context, it may be noted that TFS 66–68 were found “just above the floor”;<sup>40</sup> this state of deposition might suggest that, at a certain point, the texts were moved from their original location to be placed in room NE 38 — probably a residence of sorts, and therefore a place also suitable for archival purposes. Could the original location have been room SW 37? It does not seem likely, since this room was a storeroom and workshop for valuable objects.<sup>41</sup> The retrieval of one of the sale documents (TFS 69) in this location is therefore totally unexplainable.

**Private and public archives of the seventh century**

The texts that can be dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century are 83: 34 loan contracts, 20 sale contracts, 11 legal texts, 10 administrative dockets and 8 letters.<sup>42</sup> They were found mainly in the central and in the southern zones of the fort (quadrant SE and area S) and in three groups of rooms in particular: 1) the *rab ekalli*’s residence formed by rooms SE 1–3, 10–12 and NE 1–2 (25 texts); 2) a common military residence, formed by rooms SE 14–15 (19 texts); and 3) the *šakintu*’s quarter, with a centre of discoveries in room S 10 and in the adjacent rooms (S 2, 73, Corridor D and E) (18 texts). Some other texts dated to the same period were found scattered in different places: an administrative docket (TFS 78), a letter (TFS 4) and two loan contracts (TFS 11–12) were discovered in rooms SE 4 and SE 8. A legal text (TFS 70) was retrieved in S 38; a loan contract (TFS 71) was found in S 48;<sup>43</sup> a letter and a loan contract (TFS 84 and 92) were found in room NE 50. Finally, an administrative docket (TFS 74) was found in T 25.<sup>44</sup>

From the point of view of the archaeological context, it may be pointed out that the data for the 7<sup>th</sup> century attest a visible shift of functions of the majority of rooms in NW and NE quadrants. Workshops designed for the manufacture and repair of military

39. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15, 124–130.

40. *Ibid.*, 126–128.

41. Oates 1961: 5.

42. Other 7<sup>th</sup> century texts found in Fort Shalmaneser are 14 royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon and 6 texts of varied nature.

43. The tablet was not available for study by Postgate and Dalley, see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 132.

44. TFS 70, 71, 74 and 75 are classified as “miscellaneous texts” by Postgate and Dalley, see *ibid.*, 15; for TFS 75 no certain place of discovery is recorded.

equipment (NW 18, 19, 21, 22) were converted to storerooms for less valuable products; the northern gate NE 46 was narrowed so as to prevent the passage of vehicles on wheels, and the inner gate between quadrants NW and NE was closed and guarded by means of a double entry.<sup>45</sup> The creation of the bathroom NE 58 added to the workshop NE 59 and its consequent conversion into a residence, close to the inner gate and suitable for guards, seems to be related to these changes in the layout of the quadrants.<sup>46</sup>

These changes might be ascribed to the period of abandonment suffered by the fort after the moving of the capital from Kalḫu, first to Dūr-Šarrukīn, under Sargon II, and then to Nineveh, under Sennacherib. This could also be the period in which the main throne room T 1 could have been de-functionalized and abandoned to be replaced — during the reign of Esarhaddon (689–669) — by the smaller hall S5.<sup>47</sup> Possibly at the same time some important changes took place in the SE quadrant, where the military barracks seem to have undergone a change in function; in their midst, the entrance of room SE 3 was enlarged, and against its north jamb a limestone block was placed, probably as a seat for personnel guarding the *rab ekalli*'s residence.<sup>48</sup>

As to the nature of the 7<sup>th</sup>-century archives, no group of texts can be definitely identified as a “living” archive, for the tablets were never found *in situ*, but always scattered between two or more rooms and often in fills at various heights above the floors.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, three areas of specific textual concentration are clearly visible in the above-mentioned groups of rooms and, except for rooms SE 14–15, their possible functions (the residence of a high official and the residential quarter for the queen's entourage) appear decidedly suitable for the purpose of archival activity. In point of fact, as will be seen in the next paragraphs, the texts dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century may be divided into two main public archives, one of the *rab ekalli* and the other of the *šakintu*, plus a group of private archives (found in rooms SE 14–15) belonging to personnel connected to these high members of the court.

#### *The archive of the rab ekalli*

The archive of the *rab ekalli*, or palace manager, includes the texts found in the *rab ekalli*'s residence and in room SE 4 and 8. Among them there are 5 letters, 11 loan contracts, 3 legal texts concerning persons and 6 administrative dockets. All the texts are related to the public administration of the fort, even when they seem to record a

45. Oates & Oates 2001: 151–158.

46. Mallowan 1966: 402.

47. Oates & Oates 2001: 185.

48. Oates & Oates 2001: 164.

49. See Oates 1959: 109f., 120. The view often suggested in the archaeological reports is that the texts fell from an upper floor.

private transaction. As has been shown by S. Ponchia, the eight corn-loans of this archive,<sup>50</sup> even though written in the form of loan contracts between private individuals, constitute, in fact, fiscal contributions in which the technical vocabulary of the credit procedure is used to establish the form and means of payments and the destinations of the fiscal incomes.<sup>51</sup>

A similar line of thought may be applied to the other loan contracts of the archive, as representing — under the legal guise of private transactions — assignments by the administrative authority to its subordinates. In point of fact, all the parties in the deeds belong to the fort's administrative staff, and the goods that are “lent” are usually provided to perform different kind of activities, which we may presume to have represented the true scope of the contracts. In TFS 10 two *minas* of silver are given by the *rab ekalli* Emūqī-Aššūr<sup>52</sup> to the deputy Qurdi-Asalluḫi, in order to provide feed for some birds; in TFS 6 (to which are linked letters TFS 4 and 5) the debt of 14 *yariāte*-textiles, due by Šēpē-šarri to the *rab ekalli* Isseme-ilī, might be interpreted as an order to attend to the manufacturing of the textiles; in TFS 17 Asqudu son of Qurdi-ilani — a man “regularly associated with the Review Palace”<sup>53</sup> — is the “debtor” of a breeding ram owed to Abu-erība, and is urged to give back the animal together with its offspring.<sup>54</sup>

As for the letters, TFS 4 and 5 are related to the duty of the above-mentioned Šēpē-šarri to “deliver” the *yariāte*-textiles to the *rab ekalli* (cf. also TFS 6). TFS 2 and 3 are both addressed to a *rab ekalli* (resp., Isseme-ilī and an unknown individual): in the first letter a building is said to have been made — possibly as a specific duty of the sender, Manni — and in the second the sender Tartimanni (whom we will find later as *rab ekalli* himself)<sup>55</sup>, defends himself from the accusation of having embezzled some vessels from the house of a scribe. Finally, letter TFS 1 records a claim for the release of a prisoner assigned to the levy of the *ekal mašarti*.<sup>56</sup> Also the three legal texts of this archive (TFS 7–9), which formally record the release of three different men from the condition of pledge due to a debt incurred with the *rab ekalli*,<sup>57</sup> may be interpreted, following a suggestion by R. Jas, as “restricted redemptions” “used for renting the service of slaves for whom the owner temporarily had no work”.<sup>58</sup>

50. TFS 11–16, 18.

51. Ponchia 1990: 49. For an analysis on the subject of hired labour in the Neo-Assyrian Empire, see Radner 2007 with previous bibliography.

52. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 6.

53. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 70.

54. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 70.

55. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 6.

56. See also Postgate 1974: 59–62, 403f.

57. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 58.

58. Jas 1996: 79.

Three further texts come from rooms that are not in the proximity of the *rab ekalli*'s residence, but may have been part of the same archive. They are the letter TFS 84 from room NE 50, the legal text TFS 70, found in S 38, and the administrative docket TFS 77, found in a dump close to room SE 14. In TFS 84 the *rab ekalli* Ubru-Nabû writes to Šamaš-nûri telling him to give to the envoy who delivers the letter a “wheel(?) for a good chariot”. Furthermore, he gives to the addressee 15 *minas* of iron, of which one-half is destined to one Nabû-šarru-ušur and the other half to the *hazannu* of Kalḫu. From another text, belonging to the archive of the *šakintu* (TFS 31), we know that also Nabû-šarru-ušur had held the office of *hazannu* of Kalḫu. Thus on one hand this letter attests the continuity of functions of the complex of rooms formed by the laboratory NE 50 and by the official residence (NW 1–3, NE 51–55) formerly occupied by the *masennu*, and on the other hand it sheds some light on the duties of the *rab ekalli* in connection with some aspects of military administration. The latter point comes to the fore also in the administrative dockets TFS 21–23.<sup>59</sup>

In the legal text TFS 70 the same administrative background that characterizes the texts of the *rab ekalli*'s archive may be found.<sup>60</sup> The *rab ekalli* himself is quoted — although his name is not recorded — and one of the witnesses is Aššur-mātu-taqqin, who was eponym in the post-canonical phase (theoretical date: 626), and who is also quoted in TFS 1. In TFS 77, as in TFS 70, an unnamed *rab ekalli* is mentioned. This text also mentions Nabû-šumu-lēšir, who might be one of the witnesses of the loan contract TFS 6 and the sender of the letter TFS 28, belonging to the *šakintu*'s archive.

#### *The šakintu's archive*

The *šakintu*'s archive bears witness to the presence in Fort Shalmaneser of an administrative office directly related to the *bēt isāte*, “house of women” or harem, of the palace. These were the private quarters primarily reserved for women which were situated not only in the capital, but in royal palaces all over the country.<sup>61</sup> Architecturally, they appear to have been well separated from the rest of the palace, as in the case of Fort Shalmaneser where a guard chamber and heavily bolted and barred doors avoided free access to the formal reception rooms.<sup>62</sup> The ruling queen (who had her own residence located in the area S of the fort since the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>63</sup>) was at the head of each harem, but

59. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 74. They also suggest (74f.) that the *rab ekalli* would have been responsible for managing the provisions and lodgings for the troops stationed in the palace.

60. See also Jas 1996: 87.

61. Parpola 2012: 617.

62. Oates & Oates 2001: 61–67 and 186–190.

63. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 1 and 41.

did not personally run them.<sup>64</sup> This was the task of the *šakintu*, or manageress, who dwelt in the harem and administrated its many activities assisted by a deputy, the *šani-tu*.<sup>65</sup> The texts of the archive, found at the entrance of the women's quarters, clarify the amount of work and responsibilities of this official in one of the main harems of the empire.

The archive includes 15 texts found in room S 10 (8 loan contracts, 3 sale contracts, 3 legal texts and one letter), and three texts found in room S 73 and in corridors E and D (a loan contract, a sale contract and a legal text). In my opinion, also a corn-loan contract found in room NE 50 (TFS 92), and a silver-loan contract found in the courtyard S 2 (TFS 73) belong to this archive.<sup>66</sup> To the same archive seven tablets belonging to the Copenhagen collection published by Fales (TFSC 1, 2, 5, 7–10) may be also added.<sup>67</sup>

A feature that distinguishes the archive of the *šakintu* from that of the *rab ekalli* is the fact that not all the texts appear clearly related to the activities of this female official. The texts can in fact be divided in two halves: one formed by texts in which the *šakintu*'s business is explicitly attested, and one in which the sole clear relation between the texts and the archive seems to be represented by personal names in a prosopographical perspective.<sup>68</sup>

Among the texts explicitly related to the activities of the *šakintu* there are seven sale documents in which the queen formally buys young people (six young women and a young man), through the office of the *šakintu*.<sup>69</sup> In one case (TFS 36) a daughter is said to be sold for her upbringing.<sup>70</sup> In four loan contracts of silver (TFS 38–40; TFSC 10) important members of the queen's *bētu* loan quantities of silver to other people. In TFS 38, the woman Mullissu-šēzibinni — professional status uncertain — loans 29 ½ shekels of silver. The female scribe of the queen is the creditor of two further contracts,

64. The queen had also her own household (or *bētu*) separated from the harem. For a comprehensive analysis of the role of the queen in the Assyrian empire and of the many functions of the harem see now Parpola 2012; see also Teppo 2007 and 2012.

65. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 11f. In the texts from the fort we have also evidence of assistance from the personal female scribe of the queen (TFS 39 and 40).

66. This on the basis of prosopographical connections between the texts and the archive (see Appendix).

67. For TFS 92 see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 6; TFS 73 and TFSC 5 are two parts of the same tablet (see Fales 1987: 21f., for the “long-distance” join): their prosopography, in connection with the position of S 2, clearly ties them to the *šakintu*'s archive: Adi-ilu-iqbûni appears also in TFS 37, 43 and 48; Balāssu in TFS 44 and TFSC, 7; Ba'u-iddin in TFS 62; Gabbāru in TFS 10, 19 and 33; Sukki-Issār in TFS 7, 30, 52, 61 and TFSC, 2; Zittāia in TFS 7, 29, 61 and TFSC, 10.

68. The texts directly related to the activities of the *šakintu* are: TFS 29, 30, 33–36, 38–40 and TFSC 1, 2 and 9; the texts that are not directly related are: TFS 28, 31, 32, 37, 41–45, 92 and TFSC 5, 7, 8, 10.

69. TFS 33–36, TFSC 1, 2, 9.

70. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 89.

in which the temple of Mullissu is involved (TFS 39–40); and the *šanitu* Kabalāia is the creditor of 10 shekels of silver, in a contract (TFSC 10) in which the *rab ekalli* Tartimanni appears as witness. Two further legal texts bear witness to the power of the *šakintu*'s office of defending the rights of the queen's household: in TFS 29 a court case between the *šanitu* and the *rab ekalli* for the rights over a slave who fled, ends with an evident benefit for the woman,<sup>71</sup> and in TFS 30 a fine of 10 shekels of silver and a slave is paid to the *šakintu*.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, twelve loan contracts, one letter and one legal text record transactions between people certainly belonging or at least related to the *bēt isāte*, that seem to deal with private business, except for the loan contract TFS 44, which appears to have the same administrative background encountered in the texts of the *rab ekalli*'s archive, but with no evident relation with any of the two administrations.

#### *Private archives*

The group of texts retrieved in rooms SE 14–15 was catalogued by Postgate and Dalley under the title "encrusted group" (TFS 46–64).<sup>73</sup> Against Mallowan's identification of SE 14–19 as "barracks and baths designed for the king's bodyguard",<sup>74</sup> the two scholars pointed out that the texts do not confirm this view, although "at this late period the rooms may have changed their function".<sup>75</sup> Moreover, they noted the absence of military personnel in the texts and pointed out the relation between the people mentioned and the two administrations of the *rab ekalli* and the *šakintu*. In my opinion, this group of texts corresponds to a group of private archives of varying dimensions, going back to members of the administration employed in the fort. It must be noted that none of the 19 texts appears related to official activities; they merely represent transactions between individuals in their private business functions, whatever their role in the different administrative departments.

In any case, the prosopographical connections between the "encrusted group" and the two official archive may be charted as follows:

71. See also Jas 1996: 34f.

72. Jas 1996: 122.

73. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 14.

74. Mallowan 1966: 379.

75. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15.

<i>Name</i>	<i>“Encrusted group”</i>	<i>Rab ekalli’s archive</i>	<i>Šakintu’s archive</i>
Adi-ilu-iqbûni	TFS 48		TFS 37, 43
Bau-iddin	TFS 62		TFS 73
Dūr-makī-Ninurta	TFS 60	TFS 9	TFS 44
Kanūnāia ( <i>limmu</i> )	TFS 58	TFS 11	TFS 33
Liqēpu	TFS 63		TFSC 10
Mannu-kī-Issār	TFS 60		TFS 40
Nabû-aḥu-iddin	TFS 52		TFS 31, 33, 38, 45
Nabû-šarru-ušur	TFS 49	TFS 10, 84	TFS 31
Nabû-taqqinanni	TFS 61	TFS 8	
Nabû’a	TFS 47	TFS 16, 25	TFS 41
Nergal-šēzibanni	TFS 50	TFS 25	
Ninurta-aḥu-iddin	TFS 46		TFS 29, 34, 36, 39, 40
Ninurta-iqbi	TFS 61	TFS 20	TFS 36
Nūrti	TFS 52, 54, 60, 63		TFS 35
Qibīt-Issār	TFS 48, 57		TFS 33
Sāsī	TFS 46, 51	TFS 34(?)	
Sukkāia	TFS 52	TFS 12	TFS 35
Sukki-Issār	TFS 52, 61	TFS 7	TFS 30, 73
Šēpē-Ninurta	TFS 54, 60		TFS 39
Šulmu-aḥḥē <sup>76</sup>	TFS 58	TFS 18	
Šulmu-šarri	TFS 55		TFS 36
Tartimanni [ <i>rab ekalli</i> ]	TFS 51	TFS 3	TFS 30, 31, 39, 40
Urad-Issār [ <i>rab ekalli</i> ]	TFS 49, 61	TFS 9	TFS 42
Zēru-ukīn	TFS 55	TFS 7, 9	
Zittāia	TFS 61	TFS 7, 9	TFS 29, 73

Prosopographical connections between the “encrusted group”  
and the archives of the *rab ekalli* and the *šakintu*.

Among these texts there are eleven sale documents in which people and estates are purchased, four loan contracts of silver, three legal texts and one letter. An interesting case is TFS 50, in which a woman (Bēlti-x-li) is said to buy a male-slave from another man. Postgate and Dalley suggested that the woman “must presumably have been resident in the palace for the deed of sale”<sup>77</sup> but there is no evidence that the woman could not

76. Šulmu-aḥḥē appears twice in the text, once as the owner of a house which is sold and another time as a witness. Postgate and Dalley suggest that the two names could belong to two different men (Postgate & Dalley 1984: 118).

77. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 108.



have belonged to the queen's household.<sup>78</sup>

### Conclusions

Summing up, the 8<sup>th</sup> century archives located in general in the northern wing of the palace belong to the same historical context, related to the grand musters of the royal army that took place in Fort Shalmaneser, at least until the capital was moved from Kalḫu, first to Dūr-Šarrukīn, and then to Nineveh. In this century, Fort Shalmaneser appears to fulfil the description of an *ekal mašarti* as given by Esarhaddon in one of his inscriptions from Nineveh: a building for “the preparation of the camp (equipment), the mustering of the stallions, chariots, harness, equipment of war and the spoil of enemies”.<sup>79</sup> This was the palace into which all the imperial forces would have been convoyed to be reviewed at least once a year, and the area of NW and NE quadrants functioned as the administrative core of the fort. The most important official that results from the texts is the *masennu*, the King's Magnate who was both the empire's treasurer and the official in charge for the organization of the musters and who would have kept his archive in the residence NE 51–55, NW 1–3. Even though he is actually attested only in the administrative records found in room NE 50, it is presumable that he was the official behind the drafting of the horse lists. Furthermore, even if a responsible for the wine distribution, the *rab karāni*, is attested, we may presume that, to the extent that he archive of the wine lists was related to the musters of the army, as has been suggested, the *masennu* would have been also in this case the official of reference. A general connection, then, may also be derived between the *masennu* and the three “Babylonian dockets”, in which are concerned people taken in captivity during the military campaigns.

The scenario of Fort Shalmaneser during the 7<sup>th</sup> century appears very different from that of one hundred years before. Archaeological changes in the fort's layout and new areas of textual concentration seem to suggest an important shift of Fort Shalmaneser's administrative core, from the northern wing to the central-southern area formed by quadrant SE and area S. After the decline of the fort's functions as the main arsenal and review palace of the empire in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, its society appears to flourish once more with the reconstruction made by Esarhaddon, but with very different features. The 7<sup>th</sup> century is characterized by the presence of two important public archives, related to the administration of the fort and to the “house of women”, one located in the residence of the *rab ekalli* and the other in the quarter where dwelt the queen and one of her admin-

78. S. (Teppe) Svärd (Helsinki), personal communication.

79. Heidel 1956 cf. RINAP 4: 22, no. 1, 42–44. See also Oates & Oates 2001: 145.

istrators, the *šakintu*. The two administrations prove to have been permeable to the passage of subordinates from one to another, most of all as witnesses, but also as parties of transactions of various kinds. Moreover, the people belonging to both administrations kept their personal documents in the fort, sometimes together with the public archive of the household they belonged to (as in the case of the *šakintu*), sometimes in separate rooms possibly designated for their conservation. It is worth noting how some rooms of the Governor Palace, in the acropolis of the city, were similarly used to preserve private archives belonged to members of the administrative entourage, and how those archives are all datable to the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>80</sup> — i.e. at least fifty years before the dating of the texts found in SE 14–15.

Finding private and public archives together, especially when they seem to belong to the same people, shouldn't be seen as striking. The studies over private and public archives made in the last thirty years have proved how people who were subordinated to a *bētu* would have kept their own private archives within the walls of the same palaces where they worked and that were property of the *bētu* itself.<sup>81</sup> This kind of attitude would seem to have been functional for both the subordinate and the *bētu*. As for the household of the king, for example, on one hand the single member was eligible for grants of properties exempted from taxation, and on the other hand, once the member died, the *bētu* could have retaken possession of the real estate and manage it according to its interests.<sup>82</sup> A similar situation can be hypothesized for the case of Fort Shalmaneser, in which members of at least two different households kept their private documents either in the archives of their household or very close to them. Deeds that were written, guaranteed and witnessed in the same administrative context.

#### APPENDIX

##### CHRONOLOGY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEXTS FROM FORT SHALMANESER

###### *Eighth-century texts*

Of the 104 administrative texts from Fort Shalmaneser that can be dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, only 14 are actually dated with the eponymous system (8 wine lists, 2 horse lists, 3 “Babylonian dockets”<sup>83</sup> and 1 sale contract). The majority of the texts (76 in number) can be approximately dated on the basis of historical and prosopographical elements,

80. Postgate 1973: 12–18. See also Pedersén 1998: 151 and Fales 2003: 208–210.

81. See, for example Radner 1997, Fales 1987a, and van Driel in Jas 1996: 10.

82. Fales 2001: 104–107.

83. Dated to the reigns of Merodach-Baladan.

while 16 texts (all wine lists fragments) yield no clues as to their dating. The texts can be chronologically divided in six groups: 1) first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century; 2) mid-8<sup>th</sup> century; 3) years 745–727; 4) years 722–705; 5) years 710–708; and 6) unknown.<sup>84</sup>

1. *First half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century*: NWL 1–7, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, 27, 30, 33; TFS 119, 120, 124, 135, 141, 144, 145, 147, 148.

25 wine lists can be dated around the first half of the century: NWL 14 and TFS 124 are two parts of the same tablet,<sup>85</sup> dated to the eponymous of <sup>mdr</sup>MAŠ<sup>l</sup> –DU<sup>l</sup> –<sup>r</sup>ŠEŠ<sup>r</sup> (Ninurta-mukīn-aḫi?),<sup>86</sup> 789 BC. The prosopographical links between NWL 4, 7, 33 and TFS 141 suggest a dating between 789 and 784 (or until 765);<sup>87</sup> NWL 3 joins TFS 145 and is dated to the eponymous year of Marduk-šarru-ušur (784);<sup>88</sup> NWL 1, 2, 12, 18, 22, 23, 30 and TFS 119, 120 and 144 seem to be datable to years 784, 774 and 775;<sup>89</sup> TFS 147 is dated to 781, the eponymous year of Shalmaneser IV (782–773);<sup>90</sup> the only element that suggests a dating for TFS 148 is the presence of the same toponym (Ialuna) of TFS 147;<sup>91</sup> NWL 5 and 27 are two parts of the same tablet dated to the eponymous year of Bēl-lēšir (778);<sup>92</sup> NWL 6, 11, 19 and 20 have been dated by Parpola between 778 and 774.<sup>93</sup>

84. The studies on the chronology of the tablets of Fort Shalmaneser are in Kinnier Wilson 1972 and in Postgate & Dalley 1984. A specific study on the chronology of the wine lists, largely followed here, is in Parpola 1976.

85. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 240.

86. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 241, “this reading can not be considered definite”.

87. In NWL 4 and 7 appear four names corresponding to as many eponyms covering a period of about 22 years: Šil-Issār (787), Adad-uballit (785), Mannu-kī-Adad (773) and Ninurta-mukīn-nīšē (765); three name that are still visible in NWL 33 (Bēl-āli, Qiqī and Šil-Issār) appear also in NWL 4 and in NWL 3, dated to the eponym of Marduk-šarru-ušur (784). As for TFS 141, Parpola believes this text to be linked to NWL 3 and 33 dated between 787 and 784 (Parpola 1976: 173).

88. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 255f.

89. In NWL 1 the presence of Mannu-kī-Adad among the beneficiaries connects the text to NWL 4 (787–765) and other three names (Nergal-aḫu-iddina, Nergal-šumu-iddina and Kiqillānu) appear also in NWL 3 (784); in NWL 2 the three names of beneficiaries of wine (Nergal-aḫu-iddina, Šulmu-šarri and Ubru-aḫḫē) in NWL 2 appear also in NWL 1, 3 and 18; Šulmu-libši is named in NWL 22 as well as in NWL 3 and 18; for dating NWL 12, 18 and 23 see Parpola 1976: 170; for TFS 119 see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 236f.; for TFS 144 see *ibid.*, 253f.; in NWL 30 and TFS 120 (a join: *ibid.*, 238) appear the names of Šil-Marduk and Ninurta-mukīn-nīšē, present also in NWL 3 and 4.

90. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 257.

91. Oates suggested (in Mallowan 1966: 640, fn. 20) that Ialuna could be located in the Aqra region, east of Nineveh (see also Parpola 1970: 184 and Kinnier Wilson 1972: 111, fn. 33). More recently, Fales has convincingly argued that the territory of Ialuna, together with those of Ḫamedī/Ḫamudu and Sirgana, all attested from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to the “standard” territorial endowment of the governors of Kalḫu and “should have comprised lands lying not too far from the city itself, viz. around the Tigris basin, or possibly between the Tigris and the Khabur.” (Fales 2012: 121).

92. Kinnier Wilson 1972: 2, 133–134 and 152.

2. *Mid- 8<sup>th</sup> century*: TFS 65–69, 121

To this group belong five sale contracts and a wine list. TFS 65–69 are the only sale contracts found in Fort Shalmaneser to be dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century: TFS 68 is dated to the eponymous year of Šamaš-kēnu-dugul (749, reign of Adad-nīrāri V), while TFS 65–67, 69 and the wine list TFS 121 can be dated to the same period on the basis of prosopographical connections (between TFS 68, TFS 65–67 and 121), provenance (TFS 65–69) and typology of the texts (TFS 65–67, 69).<sup>94</sup>

3. *Years 745–727*: NWL 8–10, 13, 15–17, 19, 21, 25, 28, 29, 31; TFS 86, 97, 122, 134–136, 143.

19 wine lists and two horse lists seem to belong to the years of reign of Tiglath-pileser III. TFS 136 was dated approximately to Tiglath-pileser's reign because of the presence in the text of the city of Sarragitu, attested only in this period.<sup>95</sup> The two horse lists TFS 86 and 97 can be dated to a period that spans from Tiglath-pileser III to Sargon II, but the reign of the first monarch is to be preferred.<sup>96</sup> Also TFS 143 could be dated to the same period, due to the possible presence in the text of the envoy of Moab.<sup>97</sup> On prosopographical grounds, Parpola dates the tablets formed by the five fragments NWL 15, 21, 25, 28 and 31 between 735 and 732.<sup>98</sup> NWL 8 presents an eponymous dating at 735 (Aššur-šallimanni);<sup>99</sup> while NWL 10 and 29, two parts of a single tablet, are datable also to years 735–732 for prosopographical reasons;<sup>100</sup> the same can be said for TFS 122 and NWL 16, 16B and 19.<sup>101</sup> NWL 9 is dated to the year of Nabû-šarru-ušur (732);<sup>102</sup> and finally TFS 135, which bears some geographical names from the Palestinian area, could be attributed to the campaigns held in this region either by Tiglath-pileser III in 734 or by Sargon II in 720 and 713/12.<sup>103</sup>

93. Parpola 1976: 169f.

94. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15, 124–130.

95. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15, 247–248.

96. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15, 142–144 and 165–166. Note that TFS 86, 134 and NWL 13 share the presence of a man called Nūrīya.

97. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 15, 23, 253. But see Fales 1994: 366 fn. 29: “As a matter of fact, I fail to see that ‘the Moabite’ is mentioned at all in TFS 143, 9’-13’”.

98. Parpola 1976: 169f.

99. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 22.

100. Parpola 1976: 170.

101. Parpola 1976: 169f.

102. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 22.

103. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 246f.

4. *Years 722–705*: TFS 79–81, 93–96, 102, 109–112, 114–117, 125, 133.

Ten horse lists, two wine lists, eight administrative records and three “Babylonian dockets” can be dated to the reign of Sargon II. TFS 125 and 133 are mutually connected due to the presence in both of Nabû-šumu-lēšir and a quotation of Dūr-Šarrukīn;<sup>104</sup> the eight administrative records TFS 87–91 and 93–95 seem to be attributable to the same period, on prosopographical grounds and for the mention of the temple of Ezida, located in the acropolis of Kalḫu, which was rebuilt by Sargon.<sup>105</sup> Texts TFS 96, 111, 115–117 are attributable to the reign of Sargon for prosopographical reasons.<sup>106</sup> TFS 109–110 (a single tablet) may be dated to the eponymous year of Tāb-šil-Ešarra (716).<sup>107</sup> TFS 102, 112 and 114 are related on prosopographical grounds and may be dated to the last ten years of Sargon’s reign.<sup>108</sup> Finally, the three so-called “Babylonian dockets” are dated to the tenth, eleventh and twelfth year of reign of Merodach-baladan (712–710).<sup>109</sup>

5. *Years 710–708*: TFS 85, 98–99, 100, 101, 103–108, 108A, 113, 118.

14 horse lists, which are interconnected on prosopographical grounds, might be dated to the period of the great military campaigns conducted by Sargon against Babylon in 710–708.<sup>110</sup> TFS 103–106 could be part of a single list dating between 709 and 708, for the mention of a muster which took place in Borsippa in 709.<sup>111</sup>

6. *Unknown*: NWL 24, 32; TFS 123, 126–132, 138–140, 142, 146, 149.

16 wine lists are impossible to date for their exceedingly fragmentary state. They have been placed here for their typological similarities with the other wine lists that seem all to belong to the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

104. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 245.

105. In TFS 87 appears Abu-lēšir, who is to be found also in the horse lists TFS 99 and 108; TFS 88–89, which Kinnier Wilson considers two parts of the same tablet (NWL 160) have no prosopographical connection, but the resemblance with TFS 87 and the presence of the *masennu* induces me to date them to this period. TFS 91 is similar to TFS 88–89. For TFS 90, 93–95 see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 158–163.

106. In TFS 96 we find Adda-ḫāti, who appears also in TFS 99, thus suggesting the period of Sargon. For TFS 111, 115–117 see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 226–227 and 233–234.

107. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 220–224.

108. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 189–195, 227–229 and 232.

109. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 137–138.

110. For TFS 85 see Postgate & Dalley 1984: 141f.; for TFS 98, *ibid.*, 167; for TFS 99, *ibid.*, 167–189; for TFS 100, *ibid.*, 179–182; for TFS 101, *ibid.*, 182–187; for TFS 107, *ibid.*, 202–205; for TFS 108/108A, *ibid.*, 205–219; for TFS 113, *ibid.*, 230f.; for TFS 118, *ibid.*, 235; for TFS 103, *ibid.*, 195–200.

111. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 199f.

*Seventh-century texts*

As is well known, from the point of view of the chronology, the 7<sup>th</sup> century is difficult to analyze due to the “post-canonical” issue. Among the existing studies on the possible eponymous succession between years 648 and 612, the one by J. Reade has been used here, since it is the only one to quote the *limmu* of Bēl-šaddû’a (630), who is attested in one of the texts found in the fort (TFS 10).<sup>112</sup>

The 7<sup>th</sup> century texts from Fort Shalmaneser can therefore be divided in two groups, one for the “canonical” period (10 texts) and one for the “post-canonical” period (71 texts). Of the 93 administrative texts analysed here, 44 — almost half of the total — are actually dated: 2 “canonical” and 42 “post-canonical”.

1. *Texts from the “canonical” period (700–648)*: TFS 21–23, 50, 56–58, 63, 74, 76

In TFS 74 a toponym (Karunuri) and a name (Sīn-bēlu-ušur) might refer to a period between the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon (705–669).<sup>113</sup> TFS 76 is dated to the eponymous year of Mannu-kī-Adad (683). Postgate and Dalley dated TFS 21–23 to the period of Esarhaddon (680–669).<sup>114</sup> TFS 56–57 are datable to the eponymous year of Mār-larīm (668),<sup>115</sup> and the same can be supposed for TFS 50 and 58, on prosopographical grounds.<sup>116</sup> TFS 63 is dated to the eponymous year of Aššūr-ilā’i<sup>7</sup> (653).<sup>117</sup>

2. *Texts from the “post-canonical” period (648–616)*<sup>118</sup>

a) *Years 645–641*: TFS 16, 18, 25, 31, 35, 37, 41, 47, 50, 54, 58

Nabû-da’-inanni, governor of Quê (645): TFS 54.

TFS 18 is a loan contract which presents two names to be found in TFS 58 — dated to the eponymous year of Mār-larīm (668) — and in TFS 31, dated to the eponymous year of Šalam-šarri-iqbi (623).<sup>119</sup> TFS 25 can be similarly dated to a period between 668 (Mār-larīm) and 621 (Bēl-aḥu-ušur), on the basis of prosopographical connections with

112. Other attempts to establish the post-canonical eponymic succession are Falkner 1954–56, a pioneering study unequalled until more recent works: Whiting 1994, Reade 1998 (the one adopted in this article) and Simo Parpola and Karen Radner in Radner 1998: XVIII–XXI.

113. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 135.

114. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 74f.

115. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 115f.

116. Giraia appears in TFS 57 and 58; Mannu-kī-aḥḥē in TFS 57 and 50.

117. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 123.

118. In this paragraph the texts are presented grouped in periods of approximately five-years each. Dated texts are listed under the name of the corresponding eponym, with an indication of Reade’s hypothetical dating. The texts whose dating was reconstructed are presented alongside the datable ones. Sometimes, due to the uncertainty of their dating, some tablets can be listed in more than one group.

119. The names are Šulmu-aḥḥē and Zabāya.

TFS 50 (and thus also TFS 16, 35, 37 and 47) and TFS 41.<sup>120</sup>

b) *Years 640–636*: TFS 13–16, 29, 32, 34–37, 39, 40, 42, 44, 46, 84, 92; TFSC: 9, 10

Aššūr-gārū'a-nēre, *rab šāqê* (640): TFS 37.

Mušallim-Aššūr, governor of Aliḫi (637): TFS 13–16.

Aššūr-gimillu-tēre, *masennu rabû* / *rab ašlāk* (636): TFS 32, 34.

TFS 84 is a letter written by Ubru-Nabû; a man with the same name is attested as the *rab ekalli* of Fort Shalmaneser during the eponymic years of Bulluṭu (639), Aššūr-gimillu-tēre (636) and Zababa-eriba (635).<sup>121</sup> Ubru-Nabû appears also in the sale contract TFSC 1<sup>122</sup> and in the loan contract TFS 42. In the latter another *rab ekalli*, Urad-Issār, who held the office during the year of Nabû-tappūtī-alik (616), is also present; for this reason the text has been dated between the eponymic years of the two men (639–616). The sale contract TFSC 9 is very similar to TFS 34, and it can be dated to same period. TFS 35 presents the name of Nabû-aḫu-ušur, who could have been the *rab ekalli* of Fort Shalmaneser during the eponymous years of Aššūr-gimillu-tēre (636) and Bēl-aḫu-ušur (621). In TFS 92, a loan contract, we have the name of Mannu-kī-Arba'il, who witnesses the legal text TFS 32 (636) and the loan contract TFS 44 (619). The letter TFS 46 is marked by the presence of Ninurta-aḫu-iddina, who appears in other six texts (TFS 29, 34, 36, 39, 40 and TFSC 10); all may be dated between Aššūr-gimillu-tēre (636) and Sīn-ālik-pāni (617).

c) *Years 635–631*: TFS 8, 43, 55, 73; TFSC 2, 4, 5, 7

Sīn-šarru-ušur, governor of Hindānu (634): TFS 8, 55.

Marduk-šarru-ušur, governor of Que (631): TFS 43.

Texts TFS 73 and TFSC 5 are two parts (tablet and envelope) of the same loan contract,<sup>123</sup> on the basis of prosopographical connections between the six names that appear here as well as in sixteen further tablets, the text can be dated to a period between Marduk-šarru-ušur (631) and Sīn-ālik-pāni (617).<sup>124</sup> Related to this tablet is TFSC 7, for the presence of the name Balāssu. The pair of witnesses Sukki-Issār/Rēmūt-ilāni that appear in the sale contract TFSC 2, are to be found also in the loan contract TFSC 4, dated to the eponymous year of Sīn-ālik-pāni (617).

120. The names are Nergal-šēzibanni and Nabû'a.

121. Postgate & Dalley 1984: 6.

122. Fales 1987: 18.

123. Fales 1987: 21f.

124. Adi-ilu-iqbūni appears also in TFS 37, 43 and 48; Balāssu in TFS 44 and TFSC, 7; Bau-iddin in TFS 62; Gabbaru in TFS 10, 19 and 33; Sukki-Issār in TFS 7, 30, 52, 61 and TFSC, 2; Zittāia in TFS 7, 29, 61 and TFSC, 10.

d) Years 630–626: TFS 1, 2, 4–6, 10–12, 20, 28, 29, 33, 36, 53, 61, 70, 77; TFSC 8

Bēl-šaddū'a (630): TFS 10.

Adad-na'di (629?):<sup>125</sup> TFS 36, 53.

Nabû-sagîbi, *rab ālāni* (629): TFS 70.

Sîn-šarrussu-ka''in, *tupšar ekalli* (628, months I–X): TFS 29.

Kanūnāiu, governor of Dūr-Šarrukīn (627): TFS 11, 33.

Aššūr-mātu-taqqin, governor of Bummū (Upumme) (626): TFS 6, 12.

In the administrative record TFS 20 there could be the name of Ninurta-iqbi, who appears also in the sale contract TFS 36 (629?), and in TFS 61 (617). In the letter TFS 2 Isseme-ilī could be the same man who is *rab ekalli* of the fort in TFS 5 and 6, during the eponymous years of Sîn-šarru-ušur (628), Sîn-šarrussu-ka''in (628, Araḥsamna) and Aššūr-mātu-taqqin (626). TFSC 8 is a loan contract that may be dated to the same year of TFS 33 (627) for the presence of Bēlet-taddina. The letters TFS 4 and 5 seem to be related to TFS 6, and for this reason they have been dated to the same year. On prosopographical grounds, the same dating may be suggested for TFS 1, 77 and 28 (two letters and an administrative record).<sup>126</sup>

e) Years 625–621: TFS 3, 17, 30, 31, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 59

Aššūr-rēmāni, *rab ša rēši ša mār šarri* (625): TFS 30, 48.

Nabû-šarru-ušur, *tupšar ekalli* (624): TFS 45, 49, 51, 59.

Nūr-šalam-kaspi?<sup>127</sup> (624?):<sup>127</sup> TFS 17.

Šalam-šarri-iqbi, *turtānu šumēli* (of Kummuh) (623): TFS 31.

Bēl-aḥu-ušur, *ša pān ekalli* (621): TFS 41.

In the sale document TFS 47 the purchaser is the same as the one of TFS 30 and 48, Ubru-Allāia. Tartimāni is the sender of letter TFS 3 and the *rab ekalli* of the fort for the years of Aššūr-rēmāni (625), Šalam-šarri-iqbi (623) and Sîn-ālik-pāni (617). On the other hand the language used by Tartimāni might indicate that he had not yet come into office when he wrote the letter, which therefore should be dated to a previous period.

125. This eponym is listed in the reconstruction made by Falkner, but neither in the one by Reade, who, for the year 629, suggests Nabû-sagîbi (corresponding to Falkner's 628), nor in the one by Parpola and Radner, who for that year indicate Nabû-šarru-ušur (corresponding to 626, following Falkner, and to 624, following Reade).

126. Nabû-šumu-lēšir is present in TFS 6, 28 and 7. In TFS 1 Aššūr-mātu-taqqin himself is named.

127. This eponym appears only in Falkner's list. Reade suggests Nabû-šarru-ušur for this year (corresponding to Falkner's 626, or 628 according to Parpola and Radner), while Parpola and Radner prefer Kanūnāiu (missing in Falkner and corresponding to 627 in Reade).



f) Years 620–616: TFS 7, 9, 38–40, 44, 52, 60–62, 64, 71–72, 75, 78; TFSC 3, 4, 6.

Sa'īlī, *rab muḥatimme* (620): TFS 7.

Bēl-iqbī, governor of Tušhan/Bīt Zamāni (619): TFS 44.

Iqbī-ilāni (618): TFSC 10; TFS 52.

Sīn-ālik-pāni, *ša muḥḥi bītāni* (617): TFS 38, 39, 40, 61; TFSC 4.

Nabû-tappūtī-alik, *rab ša rēši* (616): TFS 9; 60; 64.

Sīn-šarru-iškun, eponym of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of his reign (616); TFS 62.

To these tablets should be added five further texts, whose dating is impossible to retrieve. They include an administrative record (?) (TFS 78) a sale document (TFSC 3) and four loan contracts (TFS 71–72 and TFSC 6).

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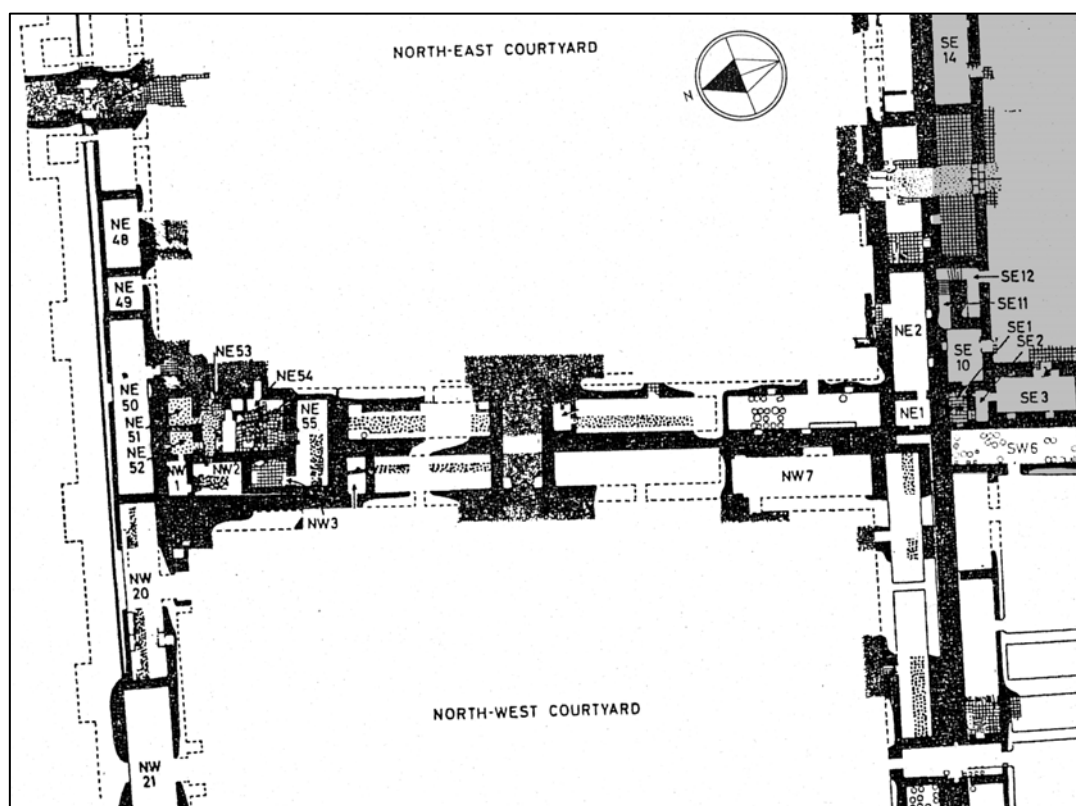
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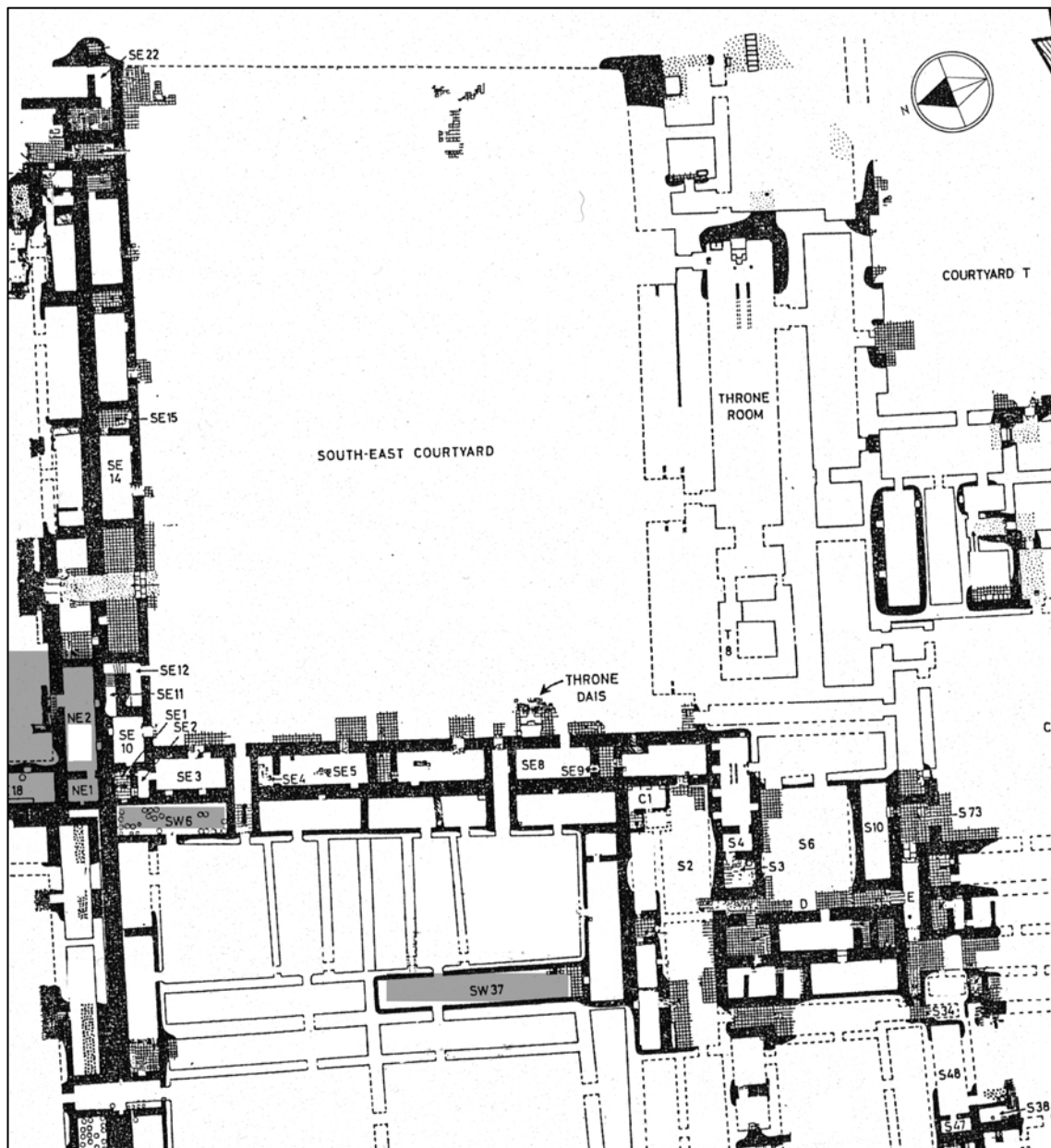
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The rooms of provenance of the 8<sup>th</sup> century texts.  
 In grey: the rooms with texts dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century (from Oates & Oates 2001).



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