

Faculty of Arts  
University of Helsinki

# **THE 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS' DURING THE NEO-ASSYRIAN PERIOD**

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

To be presented for public discussion with the permission of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Helsinki, in Juhlasali (49), Kielikeskus, on the 19th of April, 2021 at a quarter past 1 o'clock.

Helsinki 2021

ISBN 978-951-51-7191-7 (pbk.)  
ISBN 978-951-51-7192-4 (PDF)

Unigrafia  
Helsinki 2021

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# ABSTRACT

During the Neo-Assyrian period (approximately 934–612 BCE, based in modern Iraq) the annals and royal inscriptions of several kings mention women with a curious title: ‘Queen of the Arabs’. These women have been included in previous discussions regarding Assyrian interaction with the ‘Arabs’, but a full investigation into their roles as rulers has been lacking. This is what this dissertation seeks to answer: what were the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ during the Neo-Assyrian period?

The reason for no prior traditional Assyriological research into these women is due to a very small number of texts. As Assyriology has traditionally been a text-based discipline, a corpus of just twenty-eight texts has not been seen as ‘worthy’ of a full investigation. This dissertation goes beyond the traditional approach, by incorporating gender theory and comparative methodology. A key heuristic tool in this dissertation is Michael Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power. This has identified three key areas where we can clearly see the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’: military, economic, and religious roles.

The most important finding was that the process of researching about ‘Arabs’ meant contending with two layers of misinterpretation. The first of which is the misunderstandings of modern scholars allowing modern stereotypes influence how they write about ‘Arabs’. The second is that the ancient sources themselves do not seem to know who or what they refer to when they discuss the ‘Arabs’.

This has resulted in a discussion based on these women as individuals, not as a group. We do not know if they all ruled the same population group, and so they may have all been rulers of different cultures. We see Samsi, Te’elḥunu, and Adiyē in positions of military leadership, and Samsi was potentially even present on the battlefield. Zabibê, Samsi, and Tabū’a all exhibited the ability to control either resources or access to the networks that transported these resources. And finally, Te’elḥunu likely had a religious role of some sort as part of her leadership duties, but we do not know what that was. None of these women appear in all of the chapters, and as such should be discussed as individuals

For my Grandma, Jackie, who passed away whilst I wrote this dissertation, and  
who would have been very proud.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Anyone writing a doctoral dissertation knows it is difficult, and this one certainly had its hurdles. Luckily, I had many people's support. I want to begin by thanking the late and great Alasdair Livingstone, who introduced me to the ancient Near East and the topic of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. Without him, I would not have the passion for the subject, and I would certainly not be where I am now. I would also like to thank Cale Johnson, who during a particularly difficult period of my dissertation was able to support and encourage me. Finally, Saana Svärd has been invaluable for the completion of this work, and has given me the confidence to continue researching the ancient Near East.

There have been many moments where I was worried this dissertation would not be completed, and I would like to thank my parents, Simon and Beverley, for encouraging me, and whose only worry has been my success. I hope this particular worry can now be laid to rest but, knowing them, they will find something else to worry about very soon.

My sisters Fiona and Lorna have been just as supportive, and in times of intense stress they have never doubted me, and I would like to thank them for believing in me when I found it difficult to do so.

Finally, my intense thanks go to Erik, my long-suffering fiancé. He witnessed my doubts in person, and he always helped me find a way through the most difficult periods.

# CONTENTS

1.1. BACKGROUND .....	14
1.1.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....	15
1.1.2. PREVIOUS WORK ON ‘ARABS’ AND THE ‘QUEENS OF THE ARABS’ .....	21
1.2. GENDER THEORY .....	24
1.3. COMPARATIVE APPROACH .....	28
1.4. DEFINITIONS .....	29
1.4.1. TITLES OF ASSYRIAN KINGS AND ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN .....	33
1.4.2. IATI E AND THE ASSYRIAN PERCEPTION OF THE STATUS OF ŠARRATU .....	38
1.4.3. HOW DID THE ASSYRIANS CLASSIFY THE ‘ARABS’? .....	41
1.5. MANN’S ‘IEMP’ MODEL OF POWER AND THE SCOPE OF THIS DISSERTATION .....	44
2.1. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE.....	51
2.1.1. ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS .....	51
2.1.2. ADMINISTRATIVE LETTERS.....	66
2.2. PALACE RELIEFS.....	68
2.2.1. RELIEF 1: SAMSI, ‘QUEEN OF THE ARABS’, BRINGING CAMELS TO ASSYRIA .....	71
2.2.2. RELIEF 2: SAMSI, ‘QUEEN OF THE ARABS’, FLEEING THE BATTLEFIELD .....	75
2.3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE ARABIAN PENINSULA.....	78
2.3.1. ADUMMATU .....	80
2.3.2. TAYMA .....	80
2.4. SUMMARY .....	82
3.1. NEO-ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN .....	86
3.1.1. SAMMU-RĀMAT .....	86

3.1.2. MILITARY UNITS OF THE 'WOMAN OF THE PALACE' .....	89
3.2. 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS' .....	90
3.2.1. SAMSI .....	91
3.2.2. TE'ELḪUNU .....	105
3.2.3. IAPA' AND BASLU .....	112
3.2.4. ADIYE.....	118
3.3. SUMMARY .....	129
4.1. THE WEALTH OF ARABIA .....	133
4.1.1. AROMATICS .....	135
4.1.2. DROMEDARIES.....	137
4.2. TRADE ROUTES .....	143
4.3. 'ARAB' AND ASSYRIAN INTERACTIONS ON THE BORDER .....	151
4.4. METHODS OF CONTROLLING THE TRADE THROUGH THE ARABIAN PENINSULA .....	153
4.5. THE 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS' .....	157
4.5.1. ZABIBÊ .....	157
4.5.2. SAMSI.....	161
4.5.3. TABŪ'A .....	168
4.6. SUMMARY .....	174
5.1. APKALLATU OR TE'ELḪUNU?.....	177
5.2. 'ARAB' GODS AND DIVINE IMAGES .....	181
5.3. ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF ROYALTY AND RELIGIOUS ROLES .....	188
5.3.1. THE ASSYRIAN KINGS .....	189
5.3.2. NEO-ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN AND RELIGION .....	195
5.3.3. ARABIAN ALTERNATIVES .....	199
5.4. SUMMARY .....	205
6.1. A CRITICAL LOOK AT MANN .....	207

6.2. KEY RESEARCH RESULTS .....	210
6.2.1. ASSYRIAN MISCONCEPTIONS AND THEIR DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF 'ARAB' SOCIETY .....	210
6.2.2. MODERN MISCONCEPTIONS AND THEIR IMPACT .....	211
6.2.3. THE NEED FOR INDIVIDUALITY, NOT GENERALISATIONS .....	213
6.3. CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARIES .....	213
6.3.1. TIGLATH-PILESER III: ZABIBÊ AND SAMSI .....	213
6.3.2. SARGON II: SAMSI .....	214
6.3.3. SENNACHERIB: IATI'E, AND TE'ELĤUNU .....	215
6.3.4. ESARHADDON: TE'ELĤUNU, TABŪ'A, IAPA' AND BASLU .....	215
6.3.5. ASSURBANIPAL: TE'ELĤUNU AND ADIYE .....	216
6.4. SUMMARY AND FUTURE RESEARCH .....	217
A.1. TABLE OF TEXTS ACCORDING TO PUBLICATION .....	220
A.2. TABLE OF TEXTS ACCORDING TO 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS' .....	224
A.3. TRANSLITERATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS .....	234
A.3.1. 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS': .....	235
A.3.2. TEXTS RELATING TO ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN: .....	266
A.3.3. TEXTS RELATING TO 'ARAB' SOCIETY: .....	269

## TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Extent of Assyrian Empire.. [Map] Roaf 1990: 179.....	16
Figure 2: Map of the Arabian Peninsula.[Map] Magee 2014: 260.....	18
Figure 3: Line drawing of a palace relief depicting a dromedary camel used as a beast of burden in a non-'Arab' context – Sennacherib’s third campaign. [Line Drawing] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner 1998: pl. 143. P. 73-74. ....	69
Figure 4: 'Arabs' on a dromedary in stereotypical dress. [Palace Relief] Barnett 1976: pl.XXXIII. ....	70
Figure 5: An ‘Arab’ woman leading dromedary camel before the Assyrian king. [Palace Relief] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXIV. ....	72
Figure 6: Deported woman from the Zagros region, wearing a long, fringed garment with their head covered, in a relief of Sennacherib. [Palace Relief] Albenda 1983: 85.....	73
Figure 7 Line drawing by Layard depicting Samsi fleeing the battlefield. [Line Drawing] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII.....	75
Figure 8: Example of a ‘cushion’ saddle from Tell Halaf. [Relief] Bulliet 1990: 82. ....	76
Figure 9: Depiction of an ‘Arab’ soldier riding with no saddle on a dromedary camel. [Palace Relief] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XIV. ....	77
Figure 10: Jebel al-Druz. [Map] Taken from: <a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Jabal+al-Druze/@32.6639613,36.5326507,109439m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1sox1519877a2ac4d28d:oxb8837f97d5fc648a!8m2!3d32.666667!4d36.733333">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Jabal+al-Druze/@32.6639613,36.5326507,109439m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1sox1519877a2ac4d28d:oxb8837f97d5fc648a!8m2!3d32.666667!4d36.733333</a> , accessed 10th October 2017. ....	96
Figure 11: Proposed route to Jebel al-Druz. [Map] Map taken from Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8. Arrows added by myself.....	97
Figure 12: Line drawing by Layard depicting Samsi fleeing the battlefield. [Line Drawing of palace relie] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII. ....	100
Figure 13: Possible routes Samsi may have used to flee from the battle. [Annotated map] Map taken from Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8, modified by author. ....	102
Figure 14: Possible route Te’elḥunu took to retreat to Adummatu. [Annotated map] Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8, modified by author. ....	107

Figure 15: Liverani's suggested route of Esarhaddon to Bāzu. [Map] Liverani 1999-2000: 74. .... 114

Figure 16: Title formula of the rulers in the list that includes Iapa' and Baslu. 117

Figure 17: Assyrian palace relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured 'Arab' women. [Palace relief] BM 124927. Photo © Eleanor Bennett. Taken courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. .... 121

Figure 18: Layout of Assurbanipal's North Palace, with Room L highlighted. [Annotated floorplan] Barnett 1976: 28. ....123

Figure 19: Layout of reliefs in Room L as suggested by Dubovsky. BM 124927 is highlighted. [Annotated floorplan] Dubovsky 2009: 395. ....123

Figure 20: The forced abortion scene. BM 124927. [Palace relief] Photo © Eleanor Bennett. Taken courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. ....126

Figure 21: Schematic drawing of a South Arabian saddle, drawn by Bulliet. [Line drawing] Bulliet 1990: 74. .... 140

Figure 22: Example of a depiction of a 'cushion saddle'. [Photo of figurine] Bulliet 1990: 86. .... 141

Figure 23: Map of important overland trade centres, with a suggested reconstruction by Byrne. In addition, the two oasis towns under discussion have been circled and annotated. [Annotated map] Byrne 2003: 13. ....143

Figure 24: Alternative reconstruction of the overland trade routes across the Arabian Peninsula. Note the different routes suggested in the Northwest of the region. Adummatu (here labelled al Jawf) and Tayma have been circled and annotated by myself. [Annotated map] Pott 1988: 138. ....144

Figure 25: Method one of trade through the Arabian Peninsula, where the resources were taken by one trader to a northern nexus point which could take the items on to other important markets like Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Levant. ....146

Figure 26: Method two of trade through the Arabian Peninsula, where resources are taken via a series of traders travelling North in 'stages', where it would then end up in the markets of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Levant. ....146

Figure 27: Egyptianised scarab seal from Qaryat al-Faw. [Scarab seal] Al-Ansari 2010: 350. pl. 185. ....149

Figure 28: Bronze plaque depicting Naqī'a and an unknown Sargonid king. [Bronze plaque and line drawing] Macgregor 2012: 109. ....195

Figure 29: Al-Hambra cube with Egyptian-style bull, Mesopotamian human figure, and a winged disc. [Stone cube] Hausleiter 2010: 254. .... 201

Figure 30: One of the modern interpretations of the 'Queen of Sheba'. Romare Bearden (1970) She-Ba. [Collage] Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, USA. .... 286

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of the most common abbreviations found in this dissertation. All others follow the conventions as found in RIA.

AOAT	Alten Orients und des Alten Testaments.
CAD	Chicago Assyrian Dictionary
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
HANE	History of the Ancient Near East
JANEH	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
PNA	The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Assyrian Periods
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RIA	Reallexikon der Assyriologies und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAAB	State Archives of Assyria Bulletin
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Series

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The ‘Queens of the Arabs’, or *šarrat KUR.aribi*, were a remarkable group of women who have so far received little scholarly attention.<sup>1</sup> These women operated as rulers in their own right within Arabian society, where they led armies in battle against the Neo-Assyrian kings, were in charge of economic retinues, and at least one woman occupied a religious role. There is no other woman explicitly described in relation to a physically violent scene, let alone foreign female rulers acting as a leader on the battlefield. Even more remarkable is that there are attestations of ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in Assyrian sources for almost one hundred years, and ‘Arab’ society repeatedly and consistently allowed for women to attain positions of leadership alongside men. Yet there is often a blasé treatment in the texts and reliefs by the Assyrian scribes and artists depicting the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. The Assyrian sources are peppered with fundamental misunderstandings of names, places, and even who the ‘Arabs’ were. Many of these issues are unlikely to ever be fully resolved, but I will analyse what little evidence there is for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and suggest the likely nature of the roles the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ held in Arabian society.

This dissertation will identify the key roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’: military, economic, and religious. I will ascertain what the ‘Arabs’ expected from the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and how this manifested in the Assyrian sources. The sources used as a basis for this research are discussed in chapter two, where I will examine the methodological problems of the material in this dissertation and demonstrate how a holistic approach that includes Assyrian texts, palace reliefs, and Arabian archaeological evidence will overcome these issues. The transliterations and translations of the Assyrian texts can be found in Appendix A. The technical details for the palace reliefs used in this dissertation can be found in Appendix B. After I have discussed the evidence, chapter three will examine the role for which there is the most evidence: the military roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This role is perhaps the most surprising to Assyriologists, as women in the Neo-Assyrian records were not generally directly depicted in scenes of military physical violence. Yet the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were described in the same manner as male foreign rulers in military narratives, and so it cannot be assumed that the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ did not exhibit similar roles on the battlefield. Chapter four will address the economic roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and I will demonstrate that they were in control of the resources of the populations they ruled, and were able to use these to leverage political interactions with the Assyrians. Chapter five will address the religious role of Te’elḥunu – who is the

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<sup>1</sup> We also see this written as *šarrat LÚ.aribi*. See section 1.4.3 for a discussion regarding this variation.

only ‘Queen of the Arabs’ who has evidence for a religious role.<sup>2</sup> There is very little evidence for what this role entailed, and so I will present several models from Assyria and the Arabian Peninsula to illustrate what Te’elḥunu’s religious role might have included. In addition to these findings, the conclusion chapter (chapter six) will identify three themes that recur throughout this research: Assyrian and modern misunderstandings of the ‘Arabs’ and their impact on Assyriological research; and the need to discuss these women as individuals, not as a homogenous group.

This chapter will examine the difficulties in analysing the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and I will explain the methods I will use to confront these problems. In order to combat this, I will present the historical context in order to aid the assessment of the wider role these ‘Queens of the Arabs’ played in inter-regional politics and economics (section 1.1). Following this will be a discussion of gender theory (section 1.2), which will be used to analyse how the gender of these women played a role in their interactions with the Assyrians. In addition, I will use a comparative approach (section 1.3) to illustrate just how different these women were to what the Assyrian kings expected from foreign women. Studying these women is not straightforward – even their titles are problematic, as the terms ‘queen’ and ‘Arab’ are hard to define (see section 1.4). In the Assyrian sources there is even confusion as to where exactly these women ruled, which is compounded by modern interpretations and misconceptions (as discussed in section 1.4, and 1.4.3). I will define the terms I will be using in this dissertation in order to aid the discussion of the precise nature of the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. I will finish by explaining the use of Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power as a framework of analysis for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ (discussed in section 1.5).

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

The surviving texts that included the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were from the Assyrian perspective. The skewed nature of the evidence requires a brief look at the history of the Neo-Assyrian period in order to provide context for the interactions between the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the Assyrians. The eleventh and tenth centuries BCE, before the Neo-Assyrian Empire, are commonly seen as a period of weakness, as the territories of Assyria were greatly reduced.<sup>3</sup> In the ninth century, aggressive military campaigns from Assyrian kings were carried out with the aim of retaking territory and consolidating Assyrian power.<sup>4</sup> The first mention of ‘Arabs’ is in the annals of Shalmeneser III (858-824), where Gindibu’ the ‘Arab’

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<sup>2</sup> All names in this dissertation follow spellings as given in PNA.

<sup>3</sup> Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 1. Unless specifically stated, all dates in this thesis will be in BCE.

<sup>4</sup> Liverani 2014a: 475; Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 1.

was mentioned in a list of leaders involved in the battle of Qarqar in 853.<sup>5</sup> Eph'al suggested that Gindibu' was not under the hegemony of Damascus, and the scale of the number of camels he provided to the king of Damascus spoke to his elevated status in the region.<sup>6</sup> The next mention of an 'Arab' in the Assyrian texts is in the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III (744-727 BCE), and this was the first 'Queen of the Arabs' – Zabibê.<sup>7</sup> As this is the first mention of the 'Queens of the Arabs', I will begin providing historical background from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, rather than from the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian period as a whole.

### 1.1.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The 'Queens of the Arabs' Zabibê and Samsi were mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III, who campaigned in every direction and in almost every regnal year, establishing military control over a wide area.<sup>8</sup> A key feature of Tiglath-pileser III's reign was an improvement in the organisation and logistics for both the army and communication networks in Assyrian territory. He also created a more rigorous provincial system to create a more efficient and profitable empire. Tiglath-pileser III was also the first monarch to systematically deport population groups between recently conquered territories in order to prevent future rebellions.<sup>9</sup> These developments enabled him to expand the territory of the Assyrian empire, and led to increased contact with 'Arab' populations as well as the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

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<sup>5</sup> Grayson 2002: 11; RIMA 3 A.O.102.2 ii89b.

<sup>6</sup> Eph'al came to this conclusion because the 'Arabs' were not mentioned in relation to Shalmaneser III's Damascus campaign, nor in the texts relating to the defeat of the king of Damascus by Adad-nērārī III. Eph'al argued that this indicated Gindibu' was not from the region surrounding Damascus, as otherwise he would have been mentioned alongside other kings who were from that region giving tribute to Assyria. Eph'al 1982: 76-77.

<sup>7</sup> RINAP 1 15 2.

<sup>8</sup> Grayson 1991a: 83; Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 1. For Samsi, see: RINAP 1 20 18'-21 11'; RINAP 1 42 19'b-33'; RINAP 1 44 3'-16'a; RINAP 1 47 r.1'-6'a; RINAP 1 48 24'b-27'; RINAP 1 49 r.17-r.21.

<sup>9</sup> Grayson 1991a: 83.

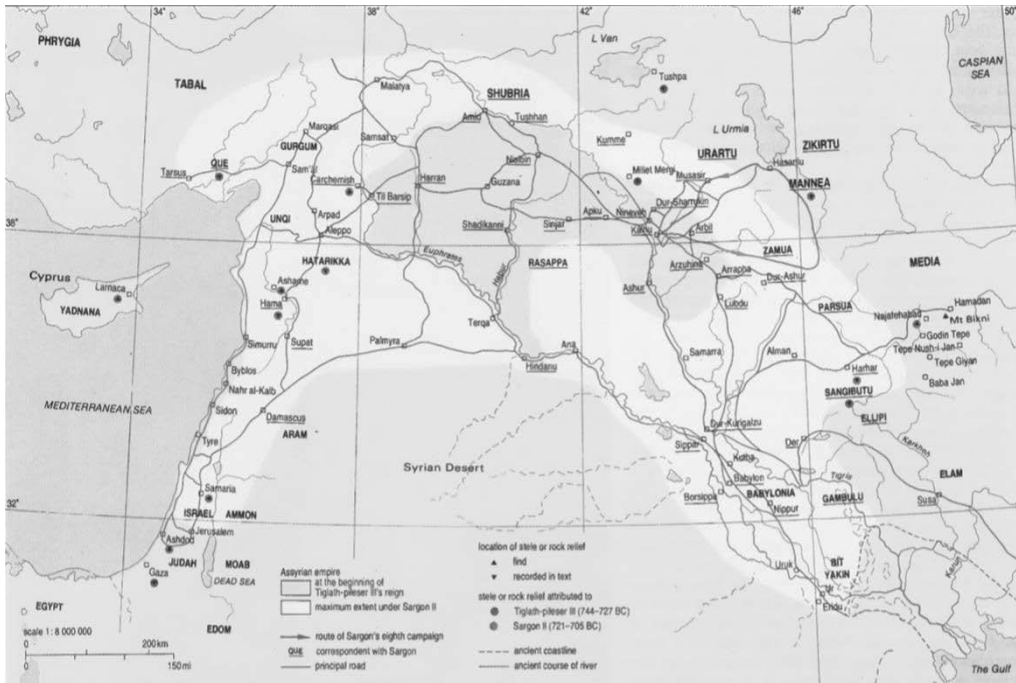


Figure 1 *Extent of Assyrian Empire.* [Map] Roaf 1990: 179.

Samsi was unique amongst the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, as she appeared in the texts from the reigns of two kings, when the other women appear in the texts of one Assyrian king as a contemporary ruler. The first is a tribute list in the annals of Tiglath-pileser III’s successor Sargon II (721-705), and the event probably dated to 716 or 715.<sup>10</sup> Like his predecessor, Sargon II campaigned in almost every direction as well as in almost all of his regnal years. Sargon II undertook a major offensive against the Babylonian rebel Marduk-apla-iddina in 710, and afterwards was recognised by the Babylonians as their rightful sovereign.<sup>11</sup> In addition to restoring several temples, Sargon II started work in 717 on a new Assyrian city intended to become the new capital – Dur-Šarrukin (or Khorsabad).<sup>12</sup> Sargon II needed to draw upon as much wealth as possible in order to fund these building works and campaigns, including wealth extracted through tribute sourced from foreign leaders such as Samsi.

The ‘Queens of the Arabs’ Te’elḫunu and Iati’e were mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib (704-681).<sup>13</sup> His reign oversaw several military campaigns as well as several building activities. One of the most important

<sup>10</sup> Grayson 1991a: 89; Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a; Frahm 2017: 301.

<sup>11</sup> Grayson 1991a: 98, 100; Beaulieu 2018: 199-200.

<sup>12</sup> Grayson 1991a: 100-102. Frahm 2017a: 181.

<sup>13</sup> For Te’elḫunu see: RINAP 3 35 r.53’. For Iati’e see: RINAP 3 1 28.

aspects of the reign is the movement of the capital from Dur-Šarrukin to Nineveh.<sup>14</sup> Nineveh was almost completely rebuilt from a squalid old city to one with wider streets, a park, and garden plots for its citizens. Vast irrigation works were undertaken in order to water these gardens.<sup>15</sup> In addition to this, Sennacherib built the lavishly decorated ‘Southwest Palace’, or the ‘Palace Without a Rival’ on the Kuyunjik mound at Nineveh.<sup>16</sup> In stark contrast to these building works was Sennacherib’s harsh policy towards Babylon. ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Iati’e was mentioned in the narrative of this policy, where her brother was captured in the battle against the Babylonian insurgent Marduk-apla-iddina.<sup>17</sup> This is the first evidence of the Assyrian need to maintain the ‘Arabs’ as Assyrian allies to prevent them from becoming allies to renegade Babylonians. In 694, the son of Sennacherib who was placed on the throne of Babylon, was kidnapped and not heard from again. Sennacherib believed the Babylonians were behind this, and he sacked Babylon, and the statue of Marduk taken to Assyria.<sup>18</sup> Sennacherib did not focus his campaigns solely on Babylon, as there are reports of a campaign in the Arabian Peninsula. This narrative is where the defeat of Te’elḥunu, who fought alongside the ‘Arab’ male ruler Ḥazā-il against Sennacherib, was recorded. The end of Sennacherib’s reign is shrouded in mystery, as there are only a few accounts of his assassination. This paucity of sources has led to speculation about the role of both Esarhaddon and Naqī’a/Zakūtu (henceforth referred to as Naqī’a) in the assassination.<sup>19</sup> Naqī’a will be a key comparative case study for how Assyrian scribes and artists treated the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as opposed to royal Assyrian women.

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<sup>14</sup> Grayson 1991b: 118. Frahm stated that one reason for this was a fear of contamination from the death of Sargon II. This was part of a wider trend in Sennacherib’s reign of distancing himself from his father (Frahm 2017a: 183).

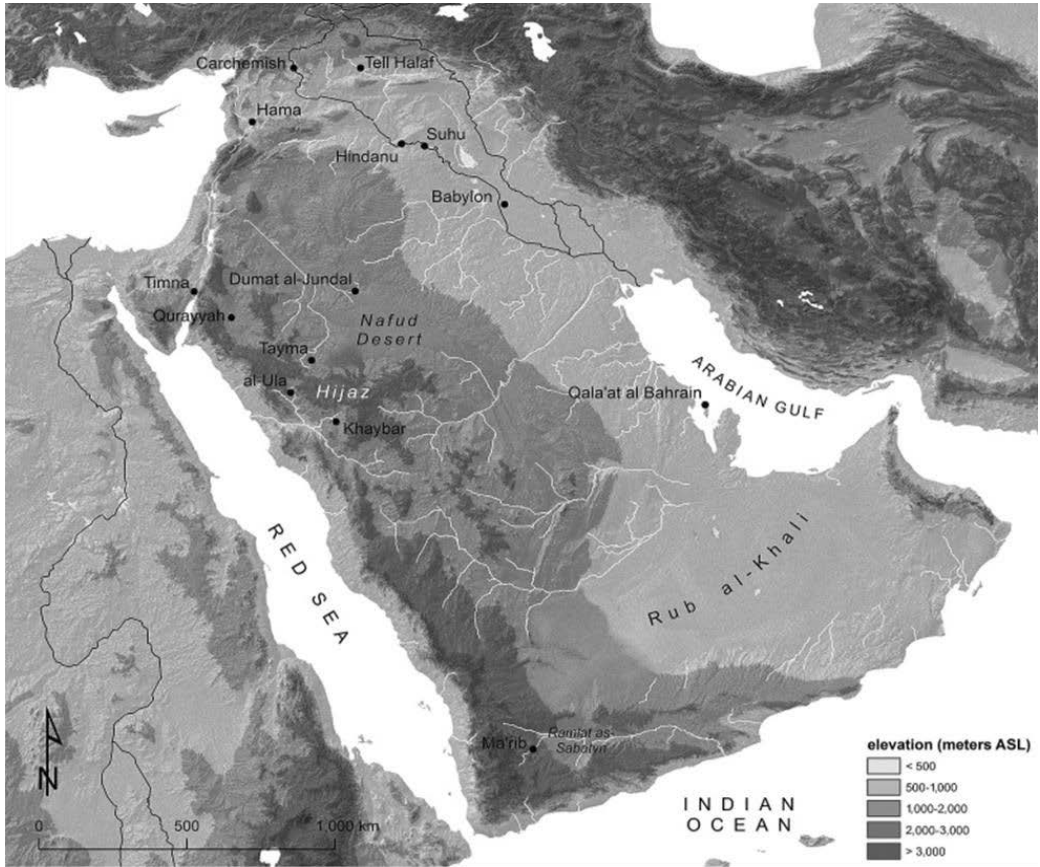
<sup>15</sup> Grayson 1991b: 113–115.

<sup>16</sup> Grayson & Novotny 2012: 17.

<sup>17</sup> Eph’al 1982: 40.

<sup>18</sup> Grayson 1991b: 118.

<sup>19</sup> Grayson 1991b: 119–121, 138.



**Figure 2** *Map of the Arabian Peninsula.*[Map] Magee 2014: 260.

The texts from the reign of Esarhaddon (680-669) have the largest number of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ mentioned in his royal inscriptions: Te’elḥunu, Tabū’a, Iapa’, and Baslu.<sup>20</sup> The most important aspects of Esarhaddon’s reign were his conciliatory policy towards Babylonia, his campaign to Egypt, and the succession of Assurbanipal and Šamaš-šumu-ukin to the thrones of Assyria and Babylonia respectively.<sup>21</sup> Esarhaddon was wary of any threat to his power and constantly sought prognostic reports to reaffirm his hold on the Assyrian throne.<sup>22</sup> This

<sup>20</sup> Te’elḥunu is mentioned under a different name in these royal inscriptions: ‘Apkallatu’. See chapter 5, section 5.1 for the reason behind the discrepancy between the uses of these names.

<sup>21</sup> Cole & Machinist 1998: XI-XIII; Van de Mieroop 2007: 255-256. A traditional characterisation of Esarhaddon is that he was deeply superstitious (e.g. Grayson 1991b: 135), but this is likely due to the imbalanced nature of the texts that have survived. In Parpola 1993: XXVI is a table that demonstrated how many letters from priests have survived in comparison to those from the reign of his son Assurbanipal. Parpola also explicitly made clear that this communication with specialist diviners was not due to suspicion, nor was it evidence of undue reliance on external experts, but was actually standard practice to ensure the correct running of the Neo-Assyrian empire (Parpola 1993: XIII-XXVII).

<sup>22</sup> Grayson 1991b: 141. This impression of Esarhaddon’s reign, as well as the subsequent purge of scholars at the end of his reign by his son Assurbanipal, might be simply due to the texts discussing such scholars is

wariness reached its peak toward the end of Esarhaddon's reign, when he attempted to ensure the smooth transition of power to his heirs. Esarhaddon wished to avoid the same kind of violent accession to the throne as he experienced, and Esarhaddon therefore appointed Šamaš-šumu-ukin to the throne in Babylonia, and his younger brother Assurbanipal as ruler over the rest of the empire.<sup>23</sup> At Esarhaddon's death in 669, the succession went smoothly – there was none of the violence that Esarhaddon had feared. This was partly due to the elevated status of Naqī'a, who oversaw the transition and had the power to ensure the intended succession took place.<sup>24</sup> Esarhaddon's mother Naqī'a has traditionally been seen as having a large part in not only the rise of Esarhaddon to power, but in the running of the empire.<sup>25</sup>

Esarhaddon's invasions of Egypt in 671 and 669 relied upon 'Arab' co-operation in order to cross the hazardous desert.<sup>26</sup> Esarhaddon's return of 'Arab' gods to the 'King of the Arabs' Ḥazā-il, and the appointment of Tabū'a as 'queen' over all of the 'Arabs', were the first attempts at gaining this co-operation.<sup>27</sup> Following this, Esarhaddon also quashed a rebellion against the Assyria-friendly 'Arab' ruler, Ḥazā-il's son, Iata'. To further secure his footing in Arabia, he also campaigned against eight rulers in a region called 'Bāzu'.<sup>28</sup> This passage is particularly interesting, as the female rulers Iapa' and Baslu were included in this list of eight foreign rulers.<sup>29</sup>

Adiye is the final 'Queen of the Arabs' to be mentioned in the Assyrian evidence. She appeared in the accounts regarding the first 'Arab' campaign of Assurbanipal (668-631).<sup>30</sup> The reign of Assurbanipal is one of the best-attested periods in the history of Assyria, and whilst there were several major military operations, the two most important were the wars against Babylonia and Elam respectively.<sup>31</sup> At the beginning of Assurbanipal's reign there were friendly relations with both regions, but in 667 Urtaku, the king of Elam, invaded Babylonia.<sup>32</sup> In 664, Teumman seized the throne and in 653 Šamaš-šumu-ukin – Assurbanipal's brother who ruled over Babylonia – formed an anti-Assyrian

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limited to these years of transition. It is therefore difficult to say if all rulers would have this type of relationship with the scholars (particularly the *ummānu* scholars), or if this was indeed truly exceptional. See Verderame 2014 for more on the relationship between the *ummānu*, Esarhaddon, and Assurbanipal.

<sup>23</sup> Grayson 1991b: 133, 139, 140; Frahm 2017a: 188-189.

<sup>24</sup> SAA 2 8; Melville 1999: 79-90.

<sup>25</sup> Grayson 1991b: 138-139, and Siddall 2013: 90-94 are examples of the traditional viewpoint, but Melville 1999 proposes a different theory – that Naqī'a was elevated to her position by Esarhaddon. This would mean Esarhaddon had a sophisticated knowledge of the importance of gender.

<sup>26</sup> Grayson 1991b: 126.

<sup>27</sup> RINAP 4: 1 iv1-31; 2 ii46-iii8; 3 iii1'-iii12'; 6 iii' 1'-iii' 24'.

<sup>28</sup> RINAP 4: 1 iv53-77; 2 iii9-iii36; 4 ii' 25'-iii' 1'; 8 i' 12'-i' 23'.

<sup>29</sup> Eph'al 1982: 130; Grayson 1991b: 126. See chapter three, section 3.2.3. for a discussion regarding the location of Bāzu in the Arabian Peninsula. For discussion regarding the implications of the inclusion of these women as 'kings', see chapter three, section 3.2.3. A more in-depth discussion regarding this definition can be found in this chapter, section 1.4.

<sup>30</sup> RINAP 5 8 ix 1" and RINAP 5 11 viii 24. For the reconstruction of the events of Assurbanipal's 'Arab' campaigns, see Gerardi 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Grayson 1991c: 159.

<sup>32</sup> Grayson 1991c: 148. Beaulieu gives 664 as the date for this event (Beaulieu 2018: 213).

alliance with Elam. Teumman was defeated at the River Ulaya, but the war between the brothers continued from 652 to 648. In addition to military events, Assurbanipal worked on building works at Nineveh and Arba'il and continued the restoration programme began by Esarhaddon.<sup>33</sup>

The sequence of Assurbanipal's 'Arab' campaigns is confusing, as there are several textual editions referring to these, and every edition positioned events slightly differently.<sup>34</sup> There is therefore a conflicting picture of Adiye, who in Edition K was defeated by Assurbanipal, whilst in Edition A she was given the title of 'wife of Uaite' (Iauta'), the king of the land of the Arabs'.<sup>35</sup> This provides a dual image of Adiye as both a military leader and as a wife of another leader.<sup>36</sup> The contact with Adiye spurred the commissioning of an extraordinary palace relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured women.<sup>37</sup> The description of Adiye as a spouse of a male 'Arab' ruler is more akin to the roles we see the Assyrian royal women inhabit, and demonstrated the Assyrians knew and remembered previous 'Queens of the Arabs'. This memory influenced artistic endeavours that expressed Assyrian royal ideology.

After the reign of Assurbanipal there are no further mentions of 'Queens of the Arabs', despite Nabonidus' travels into northern Arabia and the subservience of tribes in the region to this Neo-Babylonian king.<sup>38</sup> There is very little to explain this, but it may be that these women were based in the far North and the East of the Peninsula. As Nabonidus' route to Tayma was along the West of the Arabian Peninsula, Nabonidus was unlikely to come across the 'Queens of the Arabs' if they were only in the North and East.<sup>39</sup> Another possibility is that Esarhaddon's attempt to placate the 'Arabs' worked but resulted in the pacification of the female rulers – not the male leaders. This is unlikely, as Adiye appears in the sources of Esarhaddon's son Assurbanipal. The final option is that Ḥazā-il, the 'King of the Arabs', was from a society that placed primacy on male rule rather than women rather than the societies ruled by women. As leader of the 'Qedarite Federation' this would mean he would endorse men over women as rulers, and there would have been a 'phasing out' of 'Queens of the Arabs' in favour of 'Kings of the Arabs'. Until more evidence surfaces, it is unlikely there will be a solid explanation, but the 'Queens of the Arabs' were certainly not the last women to hold significant power in the ancient Near East.

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<sup>33</sup> Grayson 1991c: 148-153, 155-157; Beaulieu 2018: 214-216.

<sup>34</sup> For an in-depth discussion regarding this, see Gerardi 1992.

<sup>35</sup> RINAP 5 11 viii 24-25; Gerardi 1992: 77, 90.

<sup>36</sup> Here it would be tempting to impose this situation upon all of the 'Queens of the Arabs', but to suggest that all 'Queens of the Arabs' were also wives of male rulers of the 'Arabs' would be stretching the evidence. See section 1.4 in this chapter for why I have not taken this approach.

<sup>37</sup> BM 124927. An in-depth discussion regarding the contents and unique aspects of this relief can be found in chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

<sup>38</sup> Magee 2014: 273.

<sup>39</sup> Hausleiter 2012: 823. In Figure 2 Hausleiter's route would take Nabonidus through Dumat al-Jandal, al-'Ula, Khaybar, and end in Medina.

The final female ruler from the Arabian Peninsula who has been conspicuously absent thus far is the anonymous ‘Queen of Sheba’. She only appeared in the book of Kings in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>40</sup> As her role was to demonstrate the greatness of King Solomon as a literary device, I have not included her in the main body of this dissertation.<sup>41</sup>

Table 1 provides the names of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in the Neo-Assyrian sources, and the dates connected with them. The nine ‘Queens of the Arabs’ appeared over a span of ninety-one years, and in the Assyrian sources there was an evolution in the Assyrians’ understanding of their role in ‘Arab’ society. This is the main problem in attempting a study of these women – or indeed any member of ‘Arab’ society. Modern scholars have to view ‘Arabs’ through the Assyrian lens and misunderstandings about ‘Arab’ society. In addition, any misunderstandings are further compounded by modern orientalist approaches ideas regarding ancient ‘Arab’ populations.

**Table 1**            *The names of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the dates of events they were connected to. When possible, a range for a ‘queens’ reign has been given.*

‘Queen of the Arabs’	Date They Were Connected To
Zabibê	738
Samsi	733-715
lati’e	703
Te’elḥunu	690
lapa’ and Baslu	677/76
Tabū’a	681-676 <sup>42</sup>
Adiye	650-647 <sup>43</sup>

### 1.1.2. PREVIOUS WORK ON ‘ARABS’ AND THE ‘QUEENS OF THE ARABS’

The most important work regarding the ‘Arabs’ during the Neo-Assyrian period is Israel Eph’al’s *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Borders of the Fertile Crescent 9th-5th Centuries BC*. Eph’al wrote a socio- and ethnographical history of the ‘Arabs’ from their first attestation during the Neo-Assyrian period until the Achaemenid period. The ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were mentioned only with regards

<sup>40</sup> 1 Kings 10:1-13.

<sup>41</sup> For a full explanation for the exclusion of the ‘Queen of Sheba’ in this analysis, see Appendix C.

<sup>42</sup> This is not a reign for Tabū’a but a plausible suggested by Eph’al 1982: 125.

<sup>43</sup> This is not a reign of Adiye but a date range for the narrative of Assurbanipal’s first ‘Arab’ campaign, where we find mention of Adiye. Eph’al 1982: 143.

to their impact on the political history of the Assyrians, with little recognition of their gender and their position as female rulers in the ancient Near East. This is a valuable monograph, as it was the first attempt at a full history of the earliest 'Arabs'. Eph'al's monograph emphasised the need to view the 'Arabs' as constantly engaging with major powers in the ancient Near East, such as Assyria, Egypt and Babylonia. 'Arabs' were clearly a power within their own right in the ancient Near East – something that had not been clear before. The importance of Eph'al's work can be seen in sheer number of references to it by later authors researching the 'Arabs' in pre-Islamic Arabia, and later authors have used Eph'al's socio-ethnographical approach in their discussions regarding the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

The reason for this reliance on Eph'al is that many works on ancient Arabia are general in their scope of both time and geography. As we have little evidence for North Arabia during the Neo-Assyrian period, other works regarding the history of ancient Arabia are wider in their scope in both time and the regions discussed. Hoyland's *Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* had a large temporal scope, and this leaves little room for an in-depth discussion regarding the cultures in different time periods.<sup>44</sup> This is also the case with Macdonald's addition to *Civilisations of the Ancient Near East*, as well as Eckart Frahm's contribution regarding Assyria and Arabia in *A Companion to Assyria*. However, such generality is necessary in pieces of scholarship that were to Arabian history to non-specialists.<sup>45</sup> A more detailed and historical approach is presented by Retsö, whose goal was to discover the definition of the term 'Arab' in Pre-Islamic Arabia.<sup>46</sup> However, since this monograph in 2003 there has been much archaeological research done in the Arabian Peninsula. The most recent monograph about this archaeological evidence is Magee's *The Archaeology of Prehistoric Arabia*.<sup>47</sup> Magee married both the archaeological and historical evidence for a more detailed discussion of the history of the Arabian Peninsula. This approach built upon Eph'al's work, as it used the archaeological material to demonstrate that the 'Arabs' in the Northwest of the Peninsula were not operating in a vacuum.<sup>48</sup> These works demonstrate the rich culture and history of the whole Arabian Peninsula, and the approach of integrating the archaeological evidence

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<sup>44</sup> Hoyland 2001. This is not to say that this work is not important, as it does discuss the development of the concept of 'Arab' in the years immediately preceding the Islamic period (Judd 2003: 215).

<sup>45</sup> MacDonald 1995; Frahm 2017a. These are both aimed at Assyriologists, and as such they focus on the Mesopotamian material.

<sup>46</sup> Retsö 2003.

<sup>47</sup> Magee 2014. Two further important resources have been the journal *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*, and the publications of the proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies.

<sup>48</sup> The reliance on Eph'al in Magee's otherwise comprehensive volume is partly due to a lack of further research in Assyriology for Magee to draw upon, but is also partly due to an overall scarcity of textual sources to draw upon. Overall there is a strong impression that these two disciplines, Arabian archaeology and Assyriology, have been operating separate from one another. This further emphasises the need for more interdisciplinary research in this area.

will provide the Arabian historical context of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This will counter evidence from the Assyrian perspective.

Within the small amount of research about the ancient ‘Arabs’, there has been even less published about the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. The most prominent is Abbott’s 1941 article titled ‘Pre-Islamic Arab Queens’.<sup>49</sup> The article in question is 80 years old, but has had a great impact on later authors, who used this article in order to fill a gap left by Eph ‘al. The aim Abbott’s article was to itemise the female ‘Arab’ rulers of Pre-Islamic Arabia, not just the Neo-Assyrian period. Only the first third of the article deals with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ during the Neo-Assyrian period, and the rest discussed the royal women from the more documented Nabataean period (the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD). Within the section dealing with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, most of the discussion focussed on the ‘Queen of Sheba’. This is part of a wider trend, as her appearance in the Hebrew Bible means she is the most prominent of the female rulers of Arabia in the popular zeitgeist.<sup>50</sup> There then followed a list of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but there were several inaccuracies in Abbott’s treatment of these women. Samsi is described as a Sabaeen ‘queen’, when there is no evidence that she was from the South Arabian Peninsula. Tabū’a was described as being born in Nineveh, a ‘priestess’, and that after being loyal to Assyria and she lost favour with the ‘Arabs’.<sup>51</sup> None of these aspects of Tabū’a’s rule are verified by the textual sources, and these inaccuracies have been based on out of date translations.

Saana Svård’s article in preparation on the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ will bridge this gap, and it will outline the problems in discussing the identity of these women. It will focus on the violence against ‘Arab’ women in a palace relief from the North palace of Assurbanipal.<sup>52</sup> Svård points out that not only is this violence against women unique in Assyrian reliefs, but this was done to prove the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ would be treated in the same manner as foreign kings in a way that demonstrated an awareness of their femininity. The conclusions of this article have been formulated separately from this dissertation, but corroborates my own findings in chapter three, section 3.2.4.

What is clear in the literature regarding the ‘Arabs’ thus far is that there are not only few works of modern scholarship regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but few works regarding the ‘Arabs’ during the Neo-Assyrian period in general. This has been partly due to the lack of evidence available, and the lack of interdisciplinary research that spans Arabian archaeology and Assyriology. From

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<sup>49</sup> Abbott 1941.

<sup>50</sup> Abbott 1941: 1-3. For an overview of the enduring appeal of the Queen of Sheba, see Appendix C.

<sup>51</sup> Abbott 1941: 5.

<sup>52</sup> Svård in preparation. Draft version of the article was first presented in 2016, before Svård became the supervisor of this thesis: “Arabian queens: Constructing Identity in the Neo-Assyrian Empire” presented in *Identity in Mesopotamia: Sources and Methodology* 25-26.2.2016, Berkeley, California, USA. I am grateful for Saana Svård for providing me a more advanced version of this manuscript as presented at the Third Workshop on Gender, Methodology and the Ancient Near East 8-10 April 2019, Ghent, Belgium.

the archaeological perspective, there is little material evidence from the Northwest Arabian Peninsula – where the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were most likely to have operated from – that originated from the Neo-Assyrian period. From the Assyriological perspective, there are only a few detailed accounts of interactions with ‘Arabs’, and they have therefore received little attention – particularly when some of the texts are difficult to reconstruct.<sup>53</sup> I will bridge these disciplines in order to gain a better understanding of the context the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ operated in, as well as the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ themselves.

## 1.2. GENDER THEORY

Gender is an integral part of every human being’s identity. Unfortunately, the discussion of gender in the studies of the ancient Near East has been lagging in comparison to the studies of other cultures, but there have been significant strides made to rectify this.<sup>54</sup>

Most studies of gender in history follow one of three different and broad methodologies – first, second, and third wave. These are called ‘waves’ purely because they arose at different times, but they actually reflect different approaches towards studying gender. Bahrani has described these in detail, and here I shall provide an overview.<sup>55</sup>

The ‘first wave’ arose in the 1960s and was focussed on locating women in the historical record. The focus was very simple and this dissertation falls within this parameter, as the first stage of the analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ was to locate all of the instances in which these women appeared. This approach does not question why women appear as they do in the sources. This began to be addressed by ‘second wave’ scholars, which arose in the 1970s. This wave asked why women were often in a subordinate status and offered several different explanations. The first of these was that a patriarchal society oppresses women and so we are looking for evidence of this oppression.<sup>56</sup> There was also an attempt

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<sup>53</sup> See Gerardi 1992 for an example of reconstructing Assurbanipal’s annals

<sup>54</sup> The key additions to gender in the Neo-Assyrian period are Budin, Cifarelli, Garcia-Ventura, & Millet 2019, Melville 1999, Melville 2004, Parpola & Whiting 2002, Peled 2016, Svård 2015a, Svård & García-Ventura 2018, and Zsolnay 2017. See Garcia-Ventura & Zisa 2017 for a full bibliography of research into gender in the Ancient Near East from 2002 until 2016. An in-depth discussion of the position of gender studies within ancient Near Eastern studies in 2008 can be found in Bolger 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Bahrani 2001: 14-23. Also see Svård 2015a: 8-15. Rose has written an accessible introduction to the ‘waves’, as well as how the methods are based on the academic context of the UK and the USA (Rose 2010).

<sup>56</sup> A cornerstone of second wave methodology is Gerda Lerner’s *The Creation of Patriarchy* (Lerner 1986). She wished to find the origin of the patriarchy, and started with the earliest ‘cities’ in the ancient Near East. Methodologically this this problematic, as she believed that there is a patriarchy in the same form as in modern Western Europe present in each society she discussed. It is also a very Euro-centric approach, as she viewed the Middle East as the originator of European patriarchy, and dismissed that the Middle East could develop it’s own patriarchy worth discussing.

to find an ancient matriarchal society, and was motivated by wishing to find an ideal society with which to inspire contemporary and future women.<sup>57</sup> This approach is problematic, as it makes evidence fit a theory and projects modern Western notions of patriarchy onto past societies.<sup>58</sup> As Rosaldo has said, 'our theories are... only as good as our data'.<sup>59</sup>

At this point the conflation of modern political movements and the wish to study gender in history is most evident. Those like Spencer-Wood call gender studies 'feminist studies', which poses questions as to who we include in our studies and the motivation behind studying gender.<sup>60</sup> I take the stance that calling gender studies 'feminist theory' is a misnomer, as it implies that only women in history are included in gender studies and conflates the study of gender in history with the modern political movement.<sup>61</sup> Whilst I agree that we must acknowledge the role modern political movements have played in the formation of gender theory, I do not believe I can include modern political views into discussions of ancient gender without the risk of imposing modern ideas upon the evidence. Therefore, there shall be little input from the modern political movement of feminism in this dissertation, but the role it has played in the formation of gender theory has to be acknowledged.

The final aspect of the 'second wave' is the redefinition of 'labour' and of gender roles.<sup>62</sup> This concept redefined what has been seen in the modern West as traditionally 'female' labour as equal to physical labour like agricultural work. The 'Queens of the Arabs' do not appear in either of these roles, and thus this aspect will not be discussed in this dissertation. Additionally, this is based on a Western definition of traditionally 'female' roles that were not necessarily the same in the ancient Near East, let alone in 'Arab' society. There is very little known about 'Arab' society during the Neo-Assyrian period, and even less is known about what roles 'Arab' women were expected to fulfil – or even if these were the same across the Arabian Peninsula. This issue will be addressed in section 1.4.3 of this chapter.

A key problem with the 'second wave' is that of 'essentialism'. This is where aspects of identity such as gender or sex are believed to be the same throughout history and is unchanging no matter the culture we are studying. An example of this is Rosaldo's 1980 article 'The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding', where she states that all social systems base their organisational structure on 'biological sex'.<sup>63</sup> This is

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<sup>57</sup> Bahrani 2001: 16-17.

<sup>58</sup> Bahrani 2001: 14-16.

<sup>59</sup> Rosaldo 1980: 389.

<sup>60</sup> Spencer-Wood 2006; Brumfiel 2006. Some of the questions such terminology raises are: can only feminists study gender? Is gender studies only to further modern political causes? Does this mean only those who can be recognised by modern scholars as 'women' in sources be included in gender studies?

<sup>61</sup> For example, Brumfiel has said: 'all scholarship in the social sciences is rooted in political stances and has political implications' (Brumfiel 2006: 31).

<sup>62</sup> Bahrani 2001: 17.

<sup>63</sup> Rosaldo 1980: 395.

problematic because it reduces decisions and actions made by a society down to sex when this is not reflective of the evidence.<sup>64</sup> These fundamentals in Western thought were questioned by the ‘third wave’ in the 1980s. This ‘wave’ questioned concepts like oppression, patriarchy, sexuality and identity, and was based on the postmodernist premise that all knowledge is constructed.<sup>65</sup> Even the way knowledge is constructed is inherently gendered, with knowledge in the past having been constructed in a male-dominated manner.<sup>66</sup> The male-dominated view means these were assumptions made about what men and women do in society based on modern views and societal roles.<sup>67</sup> One way that has been suggested as a way of combating this is by avoiding the passive voice.<sup>68</sup> The passive voice obscures the author’s role in the construction of knowledge in reports, articles and monographs, and as an attempt to rectify this, I will be referring to myself (the author) in the first person.<sup>69</sup> This will serve as a reminder that I have come to the evidence regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as a white, educated, middle-class woman trained in Europe, and this background inevitably plays a role in how I will engage with the sources.

Being a white, middle-class European woman means that my concerns have largely been reflected in gender studies thus far, but the ‘third wave’ attempted to break away from this. The main result of this ‘wave’ has been the realisation that both sex and gender are socially constructed.<sup>70</sup> This is because both sex and gender are performed through a process that repeats itself every day in what Butler described as a ‘matrix of power’.<sup>71</sup> Butler describes physical reality as the basis of sexual difference, which is constructed through a gendered ‘matrix of power’. This is then reinforced by those viewing this construction from outside of this matrix.<sup>72</sup> In layman’s terms, human genitalia have been the basis for the performance of sex, which is then reinforced by the performance of gender by the individual and the group. This theory allows for a questioning of the very fundamentals of sex and gender, and for discussions of more avenues of thought. A key aspect of this is the growing fields of queer and masculinity studies, as both interrogate the normative structure of gender in a given society.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> There is in fact no single identifier for ‘sex’, and each biological indicator exists on a spectrum – not a binary (Kessler & McKenna 1978). For an overview of the work relating to the distinctions between sex and gender, see Wiesner-Hanks 2001.

<sup>65</sup> Bahrani 2001: 18-19.

<sup>66</sup> Bahrani 2001: 19; Nelson 2006: 3.

<sup>67</sup> Nelson 2006: 8.

<sup>68</sup> Nelson 2006: 9.

<sup>69</sup> Spencer-Wood 2006: 63 outlines some other approaches to counter this problem, such as removing gendered nouns like ‘he’, ‘mankind’, and ‘he’.

<sup>70</sup> Bahrani 2001: 20.

<sup>71</sup> Bahrani 2001: 21-22; Butler 2011: 4.

<sup>72</sup> Butler 2011: 5, 22.

<sup>73</sup> Bahrani 2001: 24. Two key additions to the study of masculinities in the Neo-Assyrian period are N’Shea 2018, Zsolnay 2017, and Zsolnay 2018. Queer theory includes both the study of LGBTQ+ individuals, but also involves questioning approaches created by a field reflecting heterosexual values. Examples of this approach are McCaffrey 2002, Peled 2016, Helle 2020, Croucher 2005. This addition

Views of Middle Eastern women are too commonly coloured by the orientalism and colonialism of early anthropologists. These scholars all believed they were objective – but their white, Western, male perspective has often narrowed their perspectives.<sup>74</sup> In studies of women in the ancient Near East, there has been an issue of imposing Western views on the evidence. Nowhere is this more evident than in discussions about the ‘harem’. European accounts of Ottoman royal palaces have been taken to be universal in Middle Eastern history and have been imposed upon the ‘women’s quarters’ of the Neo-Assyrian royal palaces.<sup>75</sup> Svärd’s *Women and Power in Neo-Assyrian Palaces* has helped to dispel many of these views about the women of the Neo-Assyrian royal palace, but caution has to be retained when reading early works dealing about ancient Near Eastern women.<sup>76</sup> The questioning of Western ideals has made the ‘third wave’ scholars particularly sensitive to postcolonial critiques, and this methodology tries to move away from the idea that the ‘Western Man’ was the chief agent of history.<sup>77</sup> A key component of this is the concept of intersectionality, as written about by Kimberlé Crenshaw-Williams. Intersectionality is the theory that you cannot look at one aspect of identity in isolation, as it interacts with others to form the individual’s position in the world.<sup>78</sup> In other words, the identity of ‘woman’ cannot be separated from identities such as ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’, or ‘class’. With the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ this means there has to be an awareness that it was not just their gender which makes these women unique, but also their place in society, their ethnicity, their location, the sources they appear in, and their depiction.

Whilst there has been a considerable delay in applying the above approaches to gender in the ancient Near East in comparison to other fields of historical inquiry, scholars are incorporating all three of the above ‘waves’ in their research.<sup>79</sup> My work shall be based in both the ‘first’ and ‘third’ waves. I will be presenting all of the evidence pertaining to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and thus ‘locating’ these women. Yet the societal structures and norms that have resulted in their presence in the sources will also be questioned. This will include investigating the orientalist viewpoints of modern scholars as well as the Assyrians’ misunderstandings about both the ‘Arabs’ in general and the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This questioning of fundamental assumptions is rooted firmly in the

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to the repertoire of gender studies in the ancient Near East means my identity as a cisgender straight woman is also important in my approach to the Neo-Assyrian sources.

<sup>74</sup> Pyburn 1999: 190.

<sup>75</sup> Bahrani 2001: 16. Due to Bahrani’s observation it would therefore be inaccurate to describe the quarters of the royal women in palaces as ‘harems’ due to these associations with the Ottoman period.

<sup>76</sup> Svärd 2015a.

<sup>77</sup> Bahrani 2001: 10.

<sup>78</sup> Crenshaw 1991a & 1991b. Crenshaw placed this in a discussion about the unique oppression of black women in the USA. Also see Keenan 2004: 117.

<sup>79</sup> For example, Melville 2004; Melville 2005; Svärd 2015a. These three works are based on both the ‘first’ and ‘third’ waves. Recent introductions for the state of gender studies of the ancient Near East can be found in Svärd 2016 and Garcia-Ventura & Svärd 2018.

‘third’ wave approach, and this combination of methods will illuminate some interesting aspects of these women.

### 1.3. COMPARATIVE APPROACH

There is very little evidence regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. It is not conducive to a traditional Assyriological approach, so an alternative methodology was needed to try to elucidate the roles of these women. As the majority of the evidence is from the Assyrian perspective, I turned to the comparative method to provide models for what may be missing in the evidence.

There are several different comparative methodologies, but they can be broadly divided into two groups. The first is the approach of comparing cultures that are similar to each other, and this is largely done to understand particular societies.<sup>80</sup> This normally involves using other cultures to illuminate the culture at the centre of the author’s expertise.<sup>81</sup> The second approach aims at answering more universal questions about human nature, and so uses cultures that normally have very little contact with each other.<sup>82</sup> This approach requires a far more involved process, as it requires the author to have equal control of the original material.<sup>83</sup>

In this dissertation I will be taking the former approach, comparing cultures that are similar to each other. The material that records the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is Assyrian, therefore my expertise lies largely in reading and understanding these materials. Yet there are considerable gaps in knowledge where comparing with other cultures will be vital. Assyrian kings will therefore provide a comparison for the roles Assyrian scribes and artists expected from a ‘king’ during the Neo-Assyrian period. In order to reflect the gender of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, the Assyrian royal women will be another comparison in terms of what the Assyrian scribes and artists expected from a woman in a position of power. However, as the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were an ‘Arab’ population, I will take comparisons from societies in the Arabian Peninsula as well. The oasis town Tayma, the South

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<sup>80</sup> Poo called this the ‘historicist’ approach (Poo 2005: 14). Also see Malul 1990: 21.

<sup>81</sup> Poo 2005: 14.

<sup>82</sup> Poo called this the ‘structuralist’ approach, but in the field of Assyriology this term can cause confusion (Poo 2005: 14).

<sup>83</sup> Poo 2005: 15. Malul provides an overview for criticisms of the comparative method in relation to ancient Near Eastern Studies and the Hebrew Bible, as well as methodological pointers on how to overcome these (Malul 1990: 37-108). The primary issue is that of a similarity of evidence (Malul 1990: 87-91), which is exacerbated in this dissertation as there is no evidence from the ‘Arab’ populations. This highlights the need to stress that evidence from one culture is not evidence for another, and this point will be repeatedly emphasised throughout the dissertation.

Arabian *mukarribate* culture, Safaitic culture, the city al-‘Ula, and third or second millennium boulder of Haṣāt bin Ṣalt will be included in this dissertation.<sup>84</sup>

## 1.4. DEFINITIONS

There is a unique challenge in the study of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, as there are two distinctive layers of interpretation about these women. The ancient authors and modern researchers have their own interpretations about these women. This is partly due to the lack of firm definitions for the words ‘queen’ and ‘Arab’.

‘Queen’ in modern English is a surprisingly fluid word. It can mean both a female ruler who is part of the monarchy of a country, and a woman who was the wife of a king.<sup>85</sup> This can have an unfortunate effect on our translations, as women who may be described explicitly in Akkadian as a ‘wife of the king’ or ‘female ruler’ can both be translated as ‘queen’. The translation obfuscates their true role from an untrained reader, and for this reason I have put the term ‘queen’ in quotation marks. Instead, I will turn to the Assyrian texts and look at these women’s titles.<sup>86</sup> These titles are informative for how Neo-Assyrian royal women were perceived in Assyrian culture and will act as comparison point for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

The Assyrian royal women’s titles reveal that their power was intrinsically tied with their relationships with male rulers or the palace. Melville has argued that these titles demonstrate Assyrian royal women’s closeness to the king, and their position in the hierarchy of the women in the royal palace.<sup>87</sup> The closer a woman was to the king, and how many kings she had relations with, the higher her status in general.<sup>88</sup> The two categories of women who were closest to the king were the MÍ.É.GAL, or ‘woman of the palace’, and the AMA LUGAL, or ‘mother of the king’.<sup>89</sup> In terms of the ‘woman of the palace’, she had her own office in the royal household, and received a share of the king’s tribute and audience gifts.<sup>90</sup> This

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<sup>84</sup> This will be particularly important in chapter 5, section 5.3.3, where all of these examples will help provide a model to counter the Assyrian lens of the religious role of Te’ elḫunu.

<sup>85</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. ‘queen’.

<sup>86</sup> Melville has found that titles for the Neo-Assyrian royal women are almost entirely in logograms. Melville has outlined the most important of these titles: MÍ.ERIM.É.GAL (concubine), DUMU.MÍ.LUGAL (daughter of the king), MÍ.NIN.LUGAL (king’s sister), MÍ.É.GAL (‘woman of the palace’), and AMA LUGAL (mother of the king) (Melville 2004). There is a debate as to the normalisation and the readings of these logograms, particularly with MÍ.É.GAL. For an overview of these arguments, see Parpola 1988. Whilst Borger gives the title of the ‘woman of the palace’ as MUNUS É.GAL, here I am following the current convention in the discussion of this office as MÍ.É.GAL in order to prevent confusion (Borger 2004: 346-347; Melville 2004; Svärd 2015a).

<sup>87</sup> Melville 2004.

<sup>88</sup> Melville 2004: 39, 53.

<sup>89</sup> Outside of the women’s quarters there was only one publicly acknowledged ‘woman of the palace’. As a result of this lack of knowledge about marriage practices, it is unknown how this woman was chosen (Melville 2004: 47). In support of the existence of only one MÍ.É.GAL at a time, see Svärd 2015a: 40-48.

<sup>90</sup> In order to reduce confusion, I shall henceforth refer to the MÍ.É.GAL as the ‘woman of the palace’. Melville 2004: 47-48; Svärd 2015a: 40-47.

woman would be described in modern English as a ‘queen’, as she was married to the male ruler of Assyria, but this English translation does not entirely describe this woman’s role in the palace.

Instinctively, I expected to see a title like those listed for Assyrian royal women used for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Instead, a different title was used: *šarratu*. This is not written with a logogram but in Assyrian, and was never used for the Assyrian royal women. This immediately described a different form of power held by the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as this title is the feminised form of *šarru*, the Assyrian word for ‘king’.<sup>91</sup> Instead of their male relatives being the source of their power, the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ held power that to the Assyrian kings was the same as the power of male foreign rulers. Rather than create a new title to try and describe this power, the Assyrian scribes chose a solution that illustrated both the power these women held and recognised their gender in the title *šarratu*.<sup>92</sup> I propose this title should be read as ‘female king’. For clarity and conciseness, I shall still refer to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as ‘queens’ in this dissertation, but I shall only be using this term to refer to women who were ‘female kings’. Women who fall outside of this definition shall be referred to in other ways to reflect their precise position, such as the ‘Assyrian royal women’.

‘Queen of the Arabs’ has another difficult term: ‘Arab’. As given in the Oxford English Dictionary, the modern definition of this is ‘a member of a people of the Middle East and North Africa’, which is a problematic definition for this dissertation.<sup>93</sup> This definition would include people in Iran, Iraq, the Gulf States, Yemen, and Israel, and many within those modern states would not identify themselves as ‘Arab’. This term is even more difficult to define in the ancient sources, as discussed by Retsö. There have been four arguments as to what ‘Arab’ meant in the earliest written records. The first is that ‘Arab’ meant a ‘desert-dweller’ or ‘nomad’. As there are mentions of ‘Arabs’ in towns and cities, and this term is never explicitly used for nomads, I do not believe this is how ‘Arab’ should be viewed.<sup>94</sup> The second is that ‘Arab’ is a nationality, but this is born out of a modern notion of ‘nationhood’ that there is no evidence for in the ancient Near East. Third is the concept that ‘Arabs’ were those who speak Arabic. This has no relevance to our study, as Arabic was not spoken during the Neo-Assyrian period, and there were many other Arabian languages spoken within the Peninsula.<sup>95</sup> Finally, there has been the argument that ‘Arab’ meant ‘mixed people’, but this is an unverified etymological argument.<sup>96</sup> As such I shall not follow these

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<sup>91</sup> CAD s.v. ‘*šarru*’.

<sup>92</sup> This has been independently concluded by Saana Svärd in Svärd forthcoming.

<sup>93</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. ‘arab’.

<sup>94</sup> Retsö 2003: 107-108.

<sup>95</sup> Macdonald has written extensively about the different languages and dialects of the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, but see Macdonald 2004 specifically for Ancient North Arabian. Retsö 2003: 111; Macdonald 2004: 488.

<sup>96</sup> Retsö 2003: 111.

definitions. In the face of no applicable modern definitions of ‘Arab’, how should this term be read?

I want to be explicit in my division between ‘Arab’ and ‘nomad’. I have taken the approach of Retsö that these are separate concepts, and someone can be one, the other, or both.<sup>97</sup> Nomadism and sedentarism do not exist in a dichotomy.<sup>98</sup> They are on a scale with varying degrees of nomadic behaviour interacting with sedentary behaviour.<sup>99</sup> The classification of where the ‘Arabs’ sit on this scale depends on their total or partial movement, temporary or permanent establishments or communities, and if they are found in one or more locations.<sup>100</sup> As many of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were not mentioned in conjunction with a specific location or city, I believe these women were in cultures with at least a nomadic element. This is not the case with all of the ‘queens’, as Iapa’ and Baslu were described as rulers of specific cities. The societies that Iapa’ and Baslu ruled over were likely predominantly sedentary. In addition to this Te’elḥunu fled to the city of Adummatu.<sup>101</sup> Just from this brief overview of the nomadic and sedentary nature of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ it cannot be said that these women ruled over completely nomadic or completely sedentary populations. It is far more likely that these cultures were a combination of the two, and the degree of nomadism differed between population groups. Therefore, in this dissertation the notion of ‘nomad’ shall be separated from the term ‘Arab’.

The most difficult hurdle in creating a working definition for ‘Arab’ is that the texts about these people were all from the point of view of the Assyrians.<sup>102</sup> The Assyrian texts have an interesting approach to the identity of the ‘Arabs’. Fales has demonstrated that the *nisbe*-ending (*-āy/āyūm*) can be used to investigate how the Assyrians viewed ethnicity.<sup>103</sup> Interestingly, the *nisbe*-ending was not

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<sup>97</sup> Retsö 2003: 1-7. Tebes 2017 is an excellent example of explicitly discussing nomadic groups in a reappraisal of rock art from the Southern Levant and the Northwestern Arabian Peninsula, whilst purposefully avoiding the term ‘Arab’.

<sup>98</sup> Streck 1998 has a good overview of nomadism and the problems with discussing this with regards to Mesopotamia.

<sup>99</sup> Szuchman 2009: 3. See Szuchman 2009 for a discussion of the problems defining the terms ‘nomad’ and ‘tribe’.

<sup>100</sup> Castillo 2007: 143.

<sup>101</sup> RINAP 3 35 53’-9”.

<sup>102</sup> The question of whether the attestations of these ‘Arabs’ in the Assyrian texts are tied to modern ‘Arabs’ is not the central aim of this dissertation. This problem has been discussed in Webb 2017, which is a discussion of the ethnogenesis of the ‘Arabs’ as tied to the rise of Islam. Webb has categorically concluded that these Assyrian attestations were not tied in any way to the ethnicity of ‘Arabs’ later seen in the tenth century AD. Webb warned against this approach as it risks painting the varied and different population groups across the Arabian Peninsula in both time and geography with one brush, whilst giving the false impression that the ethnicity of ‘Arab’ is static and unchanging over time (Webb 2017: 26). This was echoed in Richardson 2019, who rightfully states that just because the term was used for multiple individuals, this does not mean they were in reality from that same ethnic group (314). Webb argues that the term ‘Arab’ was used in a more general sense for nomadic peoples to the west of the Assyrian empire (Webb 2017: 25-26).

<sup>103</sup> Fales demonstrated in the first of three articles dealing with this problem that it could be used to denote a non-Assyrian territory that had a ‘special’ status, and was a way of minimising foreign rulers. Fales speculated that foreign enemies were diminished in their importance by the use of their ethnicity rather than their name. Fales indicated that the reference of a foreign ruler by name was a

used in the titles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but was used when referring to the ‘Arabs’ more generally in the correspondence of the Assyrian state.<sup>104</sup> ‘Arab’ was therefore a term used by the Assyrians to refer to a specific ethnic group. This was also the case with the Sabaeans, whose people were referred to as ‘LÚ.sa-ba-’a-a-a’, but this ending also occurred with the KUR determinative.<sup>105</sup> Ethnicity could also be tied to cities, as we see the city Tayma has this *nisbe*-ending affixed to it.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, whilst the *nisbe*-ending should indicate what the Assyrians thought of as ‘ethnicity’ and thus help us to define what they meant by ‘Arab’, the lack of consistency about the usage of the *nisbe*-ending will not create a satisfying definition for the term ‘Arabs’.

I therefore read the term ‘Arab’ in the Assyrian texts as something more akin to ‘population group thought by the Assyrians to stem from the Arabian Peninsula’, who happen to use a term that can best be translated as ‘Arab’. As this does not correspond to a modern ethnic group, I will write the term ‘Arab’ within quotation marks. This will indicate that this term is taken from an unknown definition of a population group found only in Assyrian texts and reflects the unknown nature of what this population group would call themselves.<sup>107</sup> Added to this, those who are called ‘Arab’ are only called so if this term is used in the source.<sup>108</sup> In the few occasions where I have included a woman who is neither called ‘Queen of the Arabs’ nor has the term ‘Arab’ associated with her, I have only included them after considering their geographical location and method of rule within the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>109</sup> If a woman is therefore included in a list of rulers, rules an area similar or close to areas ruled by other ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but does not have this title, I have included them in this study.

To summarize, the words used to discuss the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ are difficult to define. In this dissertation when I use the term ‘queen’ I refer to the definition of *šarratu*: a woman ruling in the capacity of a male king. Other women in different positions of power I shall refer to in terms that describe their position in society, such as ‘mother of the king’ or ‘Assyrian royal women’. In this dissertation I shall use the term ‘Arab’ as shorthand for a population group that was located in the ancient Arabian Peninsula, or if an individual or group has been identified as such.

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way of the Assyrian king could demonstrate his respect to that ruler. If this is the case, then it would have interesting ramifications with the analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, as they are never referred to as ‘the Arabian’, thus indicating the Assyrian kings held respect for these women. As this is speculative on Fales’ part, I have not followed this theory (Fales 2013: 56-61, 71-73).

<sup>104</sup> SAA 11 162; SAA 1 179.

<sup>105</sup> RINAP 1 42 27’; Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a.

<sup>106</sup> RINAP 1 42 27’. Although Iapa’ and Baslu, both ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who are tied to cities in their titles, do not have this *nisbe*-ending.

<sup>107</sup> Modern Arabs will be written without the quotation marks.

<sup>108</sup> Retsö 2003: 7. The exceptions to this are Iapa’ and Baslu.

<sup>109</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.3. These women have been located on the eastern coast of the Peninsula along the Persian Gulf, close to Qala’ at al-Bahrain on figure 2.

As one of the few aspects of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ that unites most of them is their titles, I will now discuss the use of titles and epithets more generally in Assyrian sources. I will discuss in section 1.4.1 the titles and epithets of the Assyrian kings and royal women, and how they were used to convey specific messages about their position in society. In 1.4.2 I will explain how Iati’e’s brief mention in the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib flipped the standard syntax found with Assyrian royal women, and her title used her in order to identify a male relative of hers. Finally, I will return to the problem of who the Assyrians classified as ‘Arabs’. In section 1.4.3 I will use the determinatives in the titles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ to suggest that the understanding of who the ‘Arabs’ were was fluid over the Sargonid period.

### **1.4.1. TITLES OF ASSYRIAN KINGS AND ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN**

Titles are important tools of communication about identity. Many titles and epithets from the Neo-Assyrian period were stereotyped phrases developed through time, used by multiple rulers to connote ideas of ‘greatness’, whilst simultaneously tying themselves to previous great kings. These emphasised the tradition of kingship, as well as a theoretically unbroken dynastic line.<sup>110</sup> Yet some variations can be seen, and they stressed what individual kings wished to emphasise about their rule. Some, like Esarhaddon, emphasised their wisdom, whilst others like Sennacherib emphasised their military prowess or scientific endeavour.<sup>111</sup>

The titles of the Neo-Assyrian kings had to be earned through the events and achievements of the king throughout his reign.<sup>112</sup> These achievements could be omitted if they did not conform to the overall message the Assyrian king wanted to convey in the sources, and therein lay the power of the royal titles.<sup>113</sup> These titles created the image and the character of the king to both the gods and future kings who may read these royal inscriptions. Radner went further and explained that these titles also reinforced the supremacy and primacy of the king in the universe.<sup>114</sup> For example, Sennacherib’s titles emphasised that he was an ‘unrivalled king’ and ‘foremost of all rulers’, reinforcing the idea of the supremacy

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<sup>110</sup> Many of these titles state the genealogy of the Assyrian king. Most of these state the king’s father and grandfather, but some go back further. These genealogies may not have been correct, but such ‘incorrect’ titles gave a sense of legitimacy to the current Assyrian king’s claim to rule. For more work regarding royal titulary in Mesopotamia, see Seux 1967.

<sup>111</sup> For example, Esarhaddon declares himself as ‘expert governor’ in RINAP 4 44, 1; and Sennacherib RINAP 3/1 17 vi90 states how he is the expert in everything. For a discussion about the variation of the expression of the Assyrian kings’ masculinities within these titles and epithets, see Bennett 2019.

<sup>112</sup> Siddall 2013: 92.

<sup>113</sup> The titles of the early Neo-Assyrian kings have been discussed by Cifola and have shown that titles and epithets changed depending on many different circumstances, but were particularly sensitive to socio-political changes (Cifola 1995).

<sup>114</sup> Radner 2010: 26-28.

of the Assyrian king, but also stressed the ability to defeat other foreign rulers in any contest.<sup>115</sup> These titles therefore carry key ideas of the Assyrian royal ideology in a concise and impactful manner.

The supremacy of the Assyrian kings takes on a special role with regards to Babylonia – a region the Assyrians struggled to fully control. This acts as an excellent case study to demonstrate the messages that could be conveyed by titles, and the political importance of their use. Royal titles could be used to express the political position of Babylonia in relation to Assyria, and sent a political message to the Babylonians themselves. For example ‘governor, or viceroy, for Babylon’, and ‘king of Sumer and Akkad’ were used by Assyrian kings like Tiglath-pileser III and Esarhaddon to express they were the rightful successors to Babylonia.<sup>116</sup> This title accurately explained the relationship of Babylonia to Assyria but also gave Babylonia a special status not given to other regions. In comparison, Sennacherib decided to exclude any references to Babylonia in his titles, and reduced the status of Babylonia to that of any other region governed by Assyria.<sup>117</sup> The royal titles reflected the priorities of the Neo-Assyrian kings, and demonstrate a fluctuating relationship between Assyria and Babylonia that was manifested in these important expressions of kingship.

The titles of the royal Assyrian women served a different purpose, and positioned these women in relation to Assyrian kings. In this section I will use Sammu-rāmat and Naqī’a to illustrate this point. Sammu-rāmat is probably the most well known of the Neo-Assyrian royal women, whose legend is still present today due to the Greek literary tradition of Semiramis.<sup>118</sup> I will not be discussing the legend of Semiramis, as here I shall be investigating the historical figure of Sammu-rāmat and the importance of her titles in understanding her unusual position in the texts dating from her son Adad-nērārī III’s reign.<sup>119</sup>

Sammu-rāmat’s name indicates that she was either West Semitic or Akkadian.<sup>120</sup> She was the mother of king Adad-nērārī III, who ruled from 810-783 and inherited an empire suffering some serious problems.<sup>121</sup> The indicator of these issues is the prominence of some Assyrian officials, who reached such authority that their names and deeds were recorded in royal inscriptions in much the same form as the Assyrian king (however, they always acknowledged the king as their overlord).<sup>122</sup> Adad-nērārī III’s reign allowed those who would not

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<sup>115</sup> RINAP 3 1 1-3.

<sup>116</sup> Porter 1993: 79, 96-97. For example, see RINAP 1 51 1 where Tiglath-pileser III declares himself the ‘king of Sumer and Akkad’, and in RINAP 4 1 12 Esarhaddon describes himself as the ‘governor of Babylon’.

<sup>117</sup> Porter 1993: 80.

<sup>118</sup> This was written by Herodotus alongside the narrative of Nitocris, whose heroic deeds included altering the course of the Euphrates. Dalley has explained that this sounds like the work of Sennacherib at Nineveh, which lends credence to the idea of these legends having a kernel of truth to them (Dalley 1996: 531).

<sup>119</sup> This follows the method of Siddall 2013.

<sup>120</sup> Baker 2002: 1083; Novotny 2002: 1083.

<sup>121</sup> Grayson 2002: 200.

<sup>122</sup> Grayson 2002: 200-1.

normally have achieved king-like feats to do so, and this the context within which Sammu-rāmat is found.

Initially Sammu-rāmat was seen as an extremely powerful woman, and the five-year gap in the records of Adad-nērārī III led scholars to believe Sammu-rāmat must have reigned as king during that time. However, this is now an outdated viewpoint and most scholars would label Sammu-rāmat's position as 'regent' rather than 'ruler'.<sup>123</sup> These two viewpoints have developed partially due to the very existence of a prominent woman in Assyrian royal inscriptions, but also due to the titles of Sammu-rāmat. Neither of these aspects were typical of Assyrian royal women, and thus there has been an assumption that she must have had an unusual amount of power.

There is a hint of her position in a stele found in Ashur (it is remarkable for a stele to be dedicated by a royal women in the first place), that listed titles placing her in a high position in the royal household. She was described as the 'woman of the palace' of Šamši-Adad V, the mother of Adad-nērārī III, and finally as daughter-in-law of Shalmeneser III:<sup>124</sup>

- 1) *ša-lam* <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-mu-ra-mat*
- 2) MUNUS.É.GA[L<sup>125</sup> *ša* <sup>m</sup>*šam*]-*ši-d*IŠKUR
- 3) MAN ŠÚ MAN <sup>r</sup>KUR<sup>1</sup> [<sup>d</sup>*a*]-*šur*
- 4) MUNUS.AMA [*ša* <sup>md</sup>IŠ]KUR-ÉRIN.TÁḪ
- 5) MAN ŠÚ MAN K[UR] <sup>d</sup>*a-šur*
- 6) MUNUS *kal-lat* [<sup>md</sup>*šù*]*l-ma-nu-MAŠ*
- 7) MAN *kib-rat* *4-ti*

Translation:

- 1) Monument of Semiramis,<sup>126</sup> the palace woman [of Šam]šī-Adad (V), king of the universe, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nārārī (III), king of the universe, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law of Shalmaneser (III), king of the four quarters

Sammu-rāmat's titles framed her relationships with three kings of Assyria. Her relationship with these three kings immediately positioned her as the most important woman in Assyria at the time. These relational titles therefore point towards Sammu-rāmat in a role more akin to a 'regent' of Adad-nērārī III. Here

<sup>123</sup> This was initially posited by Unger in 1916 and remained the consensus until Schramm's 1972 article 'War Semiramis assyrische Regentin?'. Here Schramm pointed to Sammu-rāmat's position as a 'regent' rather than 'ruler', and Siddall stated that the influence of this article has meant others have not attempted to define her position, but rather describe it in vague terms about her 'influence' in the royal court (Siddall 2013: 87-88).

<sup>124</sup> RIMA 3 A.O.104.2001. 1-7; Grayson 2002: 226.

<sup>125</sup> Whilst in RIMA 3 this is edited as MUNUS.É.GAL, I have decided to read and discuss this title following the convention where this is given as the MÍ.É.GAL (following Svärd 2015a and Melville 2004, 2005). Borger provided a discussion of whether this should be MUNUS or MÍ, with particular attention to the office of the MÍ.É.GAL (Borger 2004: 346-347).

<sup>126</sup> This is the name given to Sammu-rāmat in RIMA 3, based on a later Greek tradition. In this dissertation I will refer to this woman using her Akkadian name, Sammu-rāmat.

we should note that there is the risk of imposing modern concepts of the behaviour, tasks, and responsibilities of a ‘regent’ onto Sammu-rāmat.<sup>127</sup> The term ‘regent’ was not used by the Assyrians, and Sammu-rāmat does not have any title that explicitly stated that she was a regent in any of the three inscriptions where her titles were given.<sup>128</sup> It is therefore more accurate to see Sammu-rāmat as simply a caretaker of the throne, overseeing the administration of the empire without implementing any drastic policies, and ensuring that no crises would arise before Adad-nērārī III could take power as king.<sup>129</sup>

This particular role had no traditional Assyrian titulary associated with it, so Sammu-rāmat’s relational titles were used as an explanation for her position and authority.<sup>130</sup> Siddall even suggested that because she was acting as any Assyrian widow would for her eldest son (as sole carer of the child and the administration of the household of her deceased husband), that she was fulfilling her role as sole caretaker of her son’s legacy. As this was an expected role, this position would not have need to be reflected in the royal inscriptions.<sup>131</sup> Her relational titles were therefore a manner in which the Assyrian scribes expressed her position in the royal court. Therefore, Sammu-rāmat’s titles related her to three kings, and each relation helped legitimise her position as the caretaker over the Assyrian empire.

Only Naqī’a could claim a similar number of powerful relationships, as she was linked to three kings of Assyria. In the ‘Zakūtu Treaty’ her titles reflected her relationships to two of these kings (but here she is referred to by her Akkadian name ‘Zakūtu’):<sup>132</sup>

Obv.

1) [a-d]e-e ṛšá<sup>1</sup> MÍ.za-ku-u-te MÍ.KUR<sup>133</sup> šá m<sup>3</sup>o-P[AB!.MEŠ-SU]  
2) [MA]N KUR-aš AMA maš-šur-PAB-AŠ MAN KUR-aš-šur

Translation:

Obv.

1-2) The treaty of Zakutu, the queen of Senna[cherib, ki]ng of Assyria, mother of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria,

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<sup>127</sup> Siddall 2013: 87. *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. ‘regent’: ‘a person appointed to rule while the monarch is too young or unfit to rule, or is absent’. This modern definition implies that the regent has all the functions and abilities as the monarch, just without the traditional legitimacy that the monarch has to rule.

<sup>128</sup> RIMA 3 A.o.104.3; RIMA 3 A.o.104.2001; RIMA 3 A.o.104.2002.

<sup>129</sup> From this point I shall refer to Sammu-rāmat’s role as ‘caretaker’, as I believe this is closer to the role she played than ‘regent’.

<sup>130</sup> Siddall 2013: 94.

<sup>131</sup> Siddall 2013: 97. As the majority of the textual sources overwhelmingly reflect masculine viewpoints and the lives of men, it is not surprising that such details about the office and expectations of ‘queenship’ were not reflected in the material for all of the Neo-Assyrian royal women.

<sup>132</sup> SAA 2 8 obv. 1-2.

<sup>133</sup> This is an alternative to the title MÍ.É.GAL, this time as the logograms MÍ.KUR, which should be read as ‘woman of the palace’. See Borger 2004: 372, 450.

Later in this treaty, Naqī'a was repeatedly linked herself with her grandson Assurbanipal, but is called his 'mother'.<sup>134</sup> As Svärd and Melville have pointed out, this is not to be taken literally, but rather should be read as Naqī'a fulfilling the social role of a 'mother'.<sup>135</sup> Melville has explained in detail that Naqī'a's presence in this treaty was the culmination of Esarhaddon's efforts to ensure a smooth transition of power to his son Assurbanipal to avoid a violent succession.<sup>136</sup> In order to do so he needed a trusted official to oversee this transition of power, and Esarhaddon picked his mother for this role.<sup>137</sup> Melville went on to explain that in order for the Assyrian court to accept Naqī'a's role as the ultimate authority in this succession treaty she needed to be in high standing at the court. This was done through making her extraordinarily visible in comparison to other Assyrian royal women.<sup>138</sup> This would have carried through into the titles used to express her position and status, and therefore Naqī'a's high position at court was created through clever use of specific titles and epithets.

With both Sammu-rāmat and Naqī'a their high positions were based upon their relationship to the Assyrian kings, but they were still subordinate to him. This is the same method male members of the royal court used to demonstrate their position. Whilst this adds to Svärd's argument that the women of the royal household carried out the same duties as men, there was clearly a gendered aspect to the use of these titles by the royal women.<sup>139</sup> There were no instances of the titles of royal women referring to other women in the royal household or the royal court, and it is clear that their power and position was derived from their relationship to powerful men. Through this framework of using the titles relating women to male rulers, the Assyrian scribes demonstrated these women's position in the Assyrian court and household. In order to reflect the reality of Sammu-rāmat's position, the scribes used the norm for male officials, and ensured that her ties to multiple kings were fully addressed in her titulary, whilst also demonstrating that despite her powerful status she was still subordinate to the king. In the case of Naqī'a her titles were used to place her in a position of higher respect within the Assyrian court. Her ties with three kings enabled her to have the authority to oversee the peaceful succession of Assurbanipal as king of Assyria, and to ensure there would be little resistance from within the royal court.

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<sup>134</sup> SAA 2 8 r6, r10-11, r16, r25-r.e.26.

<sup>135</sup> Svärd 2015a: 47.

<sup>136</sup> Melville 1999: 79-90.

<sup>137</sup> Melville 1999: 35-36.

<sup>138</sup> Melville 1999: 37-60. The sheer number of texts referring to Naqī'a far outweigh the number of sources referring to Sammu-rāmat. Naqī'a was even depicted upon a bronze plaque (Macgregor 2012: 109).

<sup>139</sup> In SAA 7 6, there are titles for male officials like 'prefect of the crown prince', 'royal bodyguard', and "'third man" of the crown prince'. Svärd pointed to the functions the women in the royal palace carried out, and their similarity with the functions and actions of male palace personnel. For more discussion regarding the qualitative similarities in the duties between man and women in the royal household, see Svärd 2015a: 87-143, 173; Svärd 2015b.

## 1.4.2. IATI'E AND THE ASSYRIAN PERCEPTION OF THE STATUS OF ŠARRATU

Titles can therefore convey a large amount of information in a very concise manner. In order to demonstrate this with regards to the 'Queens of the Arabs', I will analyse the title of Iati'e. This 'Queen of the Arabs' was only mentioned twice in the textual evidence, but the way her title was formulated and used is in contrast to the titles of Assyrian royal women. In the two attestations of her name and title there are two interesting aspects. The first was that she is called *šarratu* (a feature that she shared with other 'Queens of the Arabs'), and the second is that she was used as the identification of her brother.

Iati'e is the least discussed of the 'Queen of the Arabs' in modern scholarship, as there is more textual evidence regarding Samsi, Te'elḫunu, and Tabū'a.<sup>140</sup> There are only two attestations of Iati'e's name, and they were found in a wider narrative regarding Sennacherib's conflict with Marduk-apla-iddina. They are virtually identical except for the determinative for the term 'Arab' in Iati'e's title.<sup>141</sup> Here I provide the attestation with the determinative LÚ for the 'Arabs':<sup>142</sup>

27) *m̄ta-an-na-a-nu a-di um-ma-na-at* LÚ.ELAM.MA.KI LÚ.kal-du ù  
LÚ.a-ra-mu ša i-da-a-šu iz-zi-zu-ma il-li-ku re-ṣu-us-su BAD<sub>5</sub>.BAD<sub>5</sub>-  
šú-un áš-kun-ma ú-par-ri-ir el-lat-su

28) *m̄a-di-nu* DUMU NIN<sup>143</sup> m̄dAMAR.UTU-IBILA-SUM.NA a-di m̄ba-  
as-qa-a-nu ŠEŠ 'ia-ti-i'-e šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti um-ma-na-te-šú-nu  
bal-ṭu-su-un ina qa-ti aš-bat

29) GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ GIŠ.ṣu-um-bi ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ  
ANŠE.KUNGA.MEŠ ANŠE.MEŠ ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ ANŠE.ud-ri ša  
qé-reb tam-ḥa-ri muš-šu-ru ik-šu-da ŠU.II-a-a

Translation:

27-29) I defeated Tannānu, together with the Elamite, Chaldean, and Aramean troops who had stood by him and had come to his aid, and I scattered his forces. I captured alive Adinu, a nephew of Marduk-apla-iddina (II) (Merodach-baladan), together with Basqānu, a brother of Iati'e, queen of the Arabs, along with their troops. I seized the chariots, wagons, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, (and) Bactrian camels that he had abandoned during the battle.

<sup>140</sup> For example Eph'al 1982 and Abbot 1941 only discuss Iati'e and Basqānu briefly, whilst Frahm 2017 and Magee 2014 do not mention her.

<sup>141</sup> RINAP 3 1 28; RINAP 3 213 28.

<sup>142</sup> RINAP 3 1 28.

<sup>143</sup> Grayson & Novotny notes that this sign could have been DAM but explain that this reconstruction is based on one of the cylinders discussing this campaign from Tarbiṣu (Grayson & Novotny 2012: 29, 34).

This attestation is an indirect reference to Iatī'e. She was not involved in the conflict described, but was used instead to identify a captive taken by the Assyrians. She was mentioned in the title of a man: 'Basqānu, a brother of Iatī'e, queen of the Arabs'.<sup>144</sup> Here Basqānu's status was understood through his relationship with the female ruler of the 'Arabs', Iatī'e. This is a reversal of the standard titles regarding royal women in the Neo-Assyrian period. Instead of a woman who was identified through her relationships with powerful men, here a man was identified through his relationship to a female ruler. In the same passage, there is another man who is seemingly defined by his relationship to his mother. However, upon second reading, this was a way of defining Adīnu in relation to Marduk-apla-iddina. Here the mother was acting as a bridge to form this defining relationship between two men. For Basqānu, his relationship to Iatī'e was what defined him.

The closest comparison here would be the 'kings of the Arabs', but until this point there was only one male ruler of the 'Arabs' mentioned in the Assyrian texts – Gindibu'. There is only one attestation of this ruler in the royal inscriptions of Shalmeneser III, where he was mentioned in a list of rulers alongside his contribution of dromedary camels to an alliance battling the Assyrians at Qarqar in 853 BCE.<sup>145</sup> Here the title of Gindibu' is very different, as he was given the epithet 'KUR.ar-ba-a-a', or 'of the land of the Arabs'.<sup>146</sup> This is structurally very different, as the goal here was simply to point to the geographical location and ethnicity of Gindibu'. Once this enemy was defeated, the implication was that they would be subject to Assyrian rule in some fashion. Therefore, the title of Gindibu' was actually a reflection of the power of the Assyrians, not of the foreign ruler.

The Neo-Assyrian royal women are more relevant for this section, as their titles were used to inform others of their status to each other and to those outside the royal court and palace. Melville has suggested a hierarchy of the royal women and how they related to each other, with the 'concubine' at the bottom and the 'mother of the king' (AMA LUGAL) at the head.<sup>147</sup> Svärd countered this view, and argued against the imposition of a hierarchical structure upon the royal women when there is no evidence for such a power dynamic.<sup>148</sup> Many of the titles of the royal women of Assyria related these women to the king – the most important person in the land. For example, there was the 'daughter of the king' (DUMU.MÍ LUGAL), the 'king's sister' (MÍ.NIN LUGAL), and the 'mother of the king' (AMA

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<sup>144</sup> RINAP 3 1 28.

<sup>145</sup> RIMA 3 A.O.102.2 ii 89b-102; Eph'al 1982: 77.

<sup>146</sup> RIMA 3 A.O.102.2 ii 94.

<sup>147</sup> Melville's argument rested on the relational titles given to these women in the administrative texts from the courts of Nineveh and Nimrud. Melville specifically points to the fact that when a woman could not call upon a relation with a king, they point to their relationship with powerful women (Melville 2004: 39). Svärd believed this is overly complicated, and pointed to the simpler interpretation of a non-hierarchical structure of women living together, and the 'woman of the palace' occupied an official position within the royal household (Svärd 2015a: 40-43).

<sup>148</sup> Svärd 2015a: 43. Indeed, Svärd pointed to the only apparent 'hierarchy' within the royal women that was the 'woman of the palace'.

LUGAL). When these women's titles do not refer to the king, they related the women to their position within the household. This was the case with the 'wife of the king', as she held an administrative role at the head of an office with her own personnel within the royal household.<sup>149</sup> Titles allowed these women to express their status, but only when there was a relationship with the Assyrian king. Crucially, the closer a woman was to the king, the more visible she was in the records (and potentially higher in Melville's hierarchy as well).<sup>150</sup> In addition, the more Assyrian kings she was linked to, the higher the Assyrian royal woman's status. This was most evident in the cases of Sammu-rāmat and Naqī'a. Sammu-rāmat was the daughter-in-law, wife, and mother of three Assyrian kings, whilst Naqī'a's titles included being the consort, mother, and grandmother of three Assyrian kings.<sup>151</sup> Each of these high-profile Assyrian royal women demonstrate the importance of titles to emphasise their roles within the sources.

This principle is also true for the titles of the 'Queens of the Arabs', who were always given the title *'šarratu'* (the feminine form of *'šarrum'*). Only Tabū'a was not described as *'šarratu'*, and this may be because she was described as having been placed by the Assyrians as ruler over the 'Arabs', as opposed to being *'šarratu'* based on a system used by the 'Arabs'.<sup>152</sup> This is very unusual, as this term is otherwise only used in relation to goddesses.<sup>153</sup> Since these women did not have the divine determinative 'd' in their titulary it is clear that these 'Queens of the Arabs' were not seen as deities, but foreign rulers. Our next question is why this term was used for 'Arab' royal women, when the Assyrians did not use it for their own royal women. In Assyrian documents, royal women inhabited a position that, despite acting in a manner that was surprisingly similar to Assyrian kings, did not enable them to inhabit the same roles as the Assyrian king.<sup>154</sup> The actions of royal Assyrian women were framed around their duties for the male-dominated institution of the royal house, and on the occasions where the women's relationships became relevant, the closer to the king they were, the higher their status.

In comparison, the 'Queens of the Arabs' acted beyond the administrative duties of the royal Assyrian women: they were involved in politics beyond their region in a manner similar to Assyrian kings, and in a way that is not seen with

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<sup>149</sup> Svärd 2015a: 40-43. There is also the potential for this woman to have had her own military unit, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3, section 3.1.2. (Svärd 2015b: 162-166).

<sup>150</sup> Melville 2004: 39.

<sup>151</sup> For example, in a boundary stone we see Sammu-rāmat is called the MÍ.É.GAL ('woman of the palace') of Šamši-Adad V, AMA ('mother') of Adad-nērārī III, and *kal-lat* ('daughter-in-law') of Shalmeneser III (RIMA 3 A.O.104.3). We see a flexibility in which titles were used for Naqī'a, and in one text we see her titles include: MÍ.É.GAL ('woman of the palace') of Sennacherib; *kal-lat* ('daughter-in-law') of Sargon II; and AMA ('mother') of Esarhaddon (RINAP 4 2004). In the Zakūtu Treaty we see the additional information that she is the grandmother of Assurbanipal (SAA 2 8).

<sup>152</sup> This raises some interesting questions, such as whether this means the title *'šarratu'* had to be earned by an 'Arab' ruler, whether this title could only be bestowed by 'Arab' populations, or whether it was merely an Assyrian descriptor of their position and behaviour.

<sup>153</sup> Siddall 2013: 92; Svärd 2015a: 39 n. 214; CAD, s.v. *'šarratu'*.

<sup>154</sup> Svärd 2015a: 173; Svärd 2015b.

the Assyrian royal women. Instead of supporting male ‘Arab’ rulers, the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ took action on their own. They embarked on their own military campaigns, they sent their own tribute, and they were the ones who framed the position of men in their society (as seen with Iati’e framing the position of Basqānu). This is very similar to the way Assyrian kings behaved, and ‘šarratu’ was a manner in which the Assyrians could respect this position whilst reflecting the gender of these women. Grammatically ‘šarratu’ is the feminine form of ‘šarrum’ for ‘king’, so it would be more accurate to describe these ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as ‘female kings’ of the ‘Arabs’.<sup>155</sup> This title was therefore a simple way of demonstrating the role these women played in ‘Arab’ society whilst respecting the gender of these women.<sup>156</sup>

The titulary of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ conveyed information about how the Assyrians viewed these women’s positions within ‘Arab’ society. They were seen as ‘kings’ by the Assyrians, as testified by the format and syntax of the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’, which was more similar to those of foreign kings found in the Assyrian texts rather than those of the Assyrian royal women. This pointed to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ themselves being the originators of their status - not their male relatives. However, as the titles and epithets of the Assyrian kings have shown, there is a real possibility that the titles and epithets were manipulated by Assyrian scribes and artists in order to convey a particular message.

### 1.4.3. HOW DID THE ASSYRIANS CLASSIFY THE ‘ARABS’?

The textual evidence of the Neo-Assyrian period demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding as to who the ‘Arabs’ were. This is best seen in the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’ which was usually in the following formula: *šarratu* (‘Queen’) – determinative – *aribi* (‘Arabs’ in the genitive case). The *šarratu* and *aribi* aspects of this formula were relatively stable (except for Iapa’ and Baslu, who were rulers of specifically named cities), but these tell us little about who exactly the ‘Arabs’ were. The determinative is far more informative, and fluctuated between the logograms KUR, LÚ, and URU. These determinatives communicated whether the following word was classified as a land, people, or city, respectively. In the case of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, this can indicate whether the ‘Arabs’ were understood by the Assyrians as tied to a specific piece of land (or city), or as a people.

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<sup>155</sup> However, as this is a role which is also expressed by the English term ‘queen’, I shall still use this term to describe these women in order to reduce confusion. See this chapter, section 1.4 for the discussion behind this decision.

<sup>156</sup> This was the same conclusion Saana Svärd came to in a separate investigation in her conference presentation “Arabian Queens: Constructing Identity in the Neo-Assyrian Empire”, as presented at the Third Workshop on Gender, Methodology and the Ancient Near East 8-10 April 2019, Ghent, Belgium, which she has graciously informed me of through personal communication. Svärd’s article on this topic is forthcoming. For the sake of further clarity and to emphasise the point, when I use the word ‘queen’ I am referring to the definition of a ‘female king’.

In terms of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, the dataset used to answer this question is very small. Only twenty-eight texts reference the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Three do not mention the title of these women, or the determinative in the title was not preserved.<sup>157</sup> In addition, Tabū’a was not given the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’. She is therefore not included in this survey. The small corpus means the results of this section should be read as a cautious demonstration of an overall confusion as to how the Assyrians classified the ‘Arabs’ the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ ruled.

Table 2 collates the determinatives used in the titles of the ‘Queen of the Arabs’, and is organised according to the reign of the Assyrian king the text was dated to. During the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III the determinative KUR was used. However, from the reign of Sargon II both KUR and LÚ were used to classify the ‘Arabs’. Under Esarhaddon the determinatives for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ referred to land (KUR), people (LÚ), and in three instances women were ruling named cities (URU).<sup>158</sup> There is an increase in the attestations of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in the reign of Esarhaddon, which is second only to Tiglath-pileser III’s. This is partially due to the preservation of duplicate texts during these reigns, but also speaks to an increase in contact between the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the Assyrians. Finally, there is only one attestation of the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’ from a royal inscription of Assurbanipal, and the determinative used is KUR. When looking only at determinative usage according to Assyrian king, only Tiglath-pileser III’s texts consistently classified the ‘Arabs’ as KUR, or tied to an area of land.

**Table 2** *Numbers of determinatives in the titles of the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ in royal inscriptions, in relation to the reign of the Assyrian king under which the source referring to these women was created.*

King	KUR/Land	LÚ/People	URU/City	Total
Tiglath-pileser III	9	0	0	9
Sargon II	2	2	0	4
Sennacherib	1	2	0	3
Esarhaddon	3	2	3 <sup>159</sup>	7
Assurbanipal	1	0	0	2

<sup>157</sup> The number of instances is influenced by the survival of the sources, and the number of copies of specific royal inscriptions that have survived. For example, the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III were heavily damaged, and thus it is difficult to determine whether there would have been more attestations of the events involving Samsi that have not survived.

<sup>158</sup> Even though Iapa’ and Baslu were not given the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’, they were rulers of cities, and have been included in Table 2 for completion.

<sup>159</sup> This unique incidence is in relation to Iapa’ and Baslu, and is discussed in more detail in chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

In table 3 I have used the same data, but it is arranged according to the ‘Queen’ the title is referring to. I have separated Te’elḫunu from ‘Apkallatu’, as these were seen as two separate women by the Assyrians, and were treated differently in the royal inscriptions. I have also not included Tabū’a, as mentioned prior, as she is never mentioned with the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’.

Table 3 demonstrates that there was fluctuation in which determinatives were used even in the textual attestations of the same woman. The total numbers of attestations for the title of each women is very low. Samsi has the highest number of attestations of nine, largely due to several copies of Sargon II’s texts which mention her and her title. There are only four women who demonstrate a consistency in the classification of ‘Arabs’ in their titles. In the case of Te’elḫunu and Adiyē, this is because they were only attested with their title once in the corpus. Baslu is a special case, as her title is ‘Queen of the city Iḫilum’, and therefore does not inform about how the Assyrians classified the ‘Arabs’. However, Zabibê is mentioned four times in the corpus as ‘Queen of the Arabs’, and in every instance the ‘Arabs’ were classified with the determinative KUR. This indicates some consistency that at least Zabibê was seen as a ruler of a group tied to a specific land.

**Table 3** *The frequency of the different determinatives relating to ‘Arabs’ in the titles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.*

Queen	KUR/Land	LÚ/People	URU/City	Total
Zabibê	4	0	0	4
Samsi	7	2	0	9
Iati’e	1	1	0	2
Te’elḫunu	0	1	0	1
Apkallatu	2	2	0	4
Iapa’	1	0	1	2
Baslu	0	0	2	2
Adiyē	1	0	0	1

Samsi is an interesting case in this data. Out of the seven instances where her title has the determinative KUR, five were under the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. Yet under the reign of Sargon II, her title includes the determinative KUR and LÚ twice each. This variation indicates that texts written under the reign of the same king, referring to the same woman, could vary on their classification of the ‘Arabs’ as either a land or as a people.

The fluctuation between the usage of the determinatives LÚ and KUR in the titles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is indicative of the Assyrian scribes never reaching a consensus as to whether the ‘Arabs’ were a ‘people’ or a ‘land’. These tentative results indicate that the scribes of Tiglath-pileser III were consistent in how they classified ‘Arabs’ with the determinative KUR. This could indicate that during this period the ‘Arabs’ were classified a land. However, after this point there was very little consistency regarding which determinative to use. Individual ‘Queens of the Arabs’ could also have multiple determinatives used in their titles across the corpus, which further adds to the argument that the Assyrians did not know how to classify the ‘Arabs’. The lack of consistency of determinative usage with regards to the ‘Arabs’ indicates the Assyrian scribes were unsure how to classify this group.

## 1.5. MANN’S ‘IEMP’ MODEL OF POWER AND THE SCOPE OF THIS DISSERTATION

In order to assess the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, I required a framework with which to analyse the material. This is where the dissertation turns away from a traditional Assyriological approach, as focus on the textual material only would have produced limited results. I turned to the ‘IEMP’ model of Mann, as the evidence of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in preliminary research seemed to fit this model. However, this model required some significant modification in order to be applied to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

In terms of historical analysis, Mann’s inclusion in Blaut’s *Eight Eurocentric Historians* highlights his shortcomings.<sup>160</sup> Mann viewed history as an inevitable ‘march’ from Mesopotamia to modern Europe, and saw strong leaders and ‘barbarian hordes’ as the reason why the Middle East did not reach the same level of civilisation as what he saw in Northwestern Europe. There are several aspects of his results that are highly problematic: his elevation of Northwestern Europe as his definition of ‘civilisation’; the definition of ‘strong leaders’ and ‘barbarian hordes’; Mann’s ability to only see strong leaders and ‘barbarian hordes’ in the East; and the need to claim Mesopotamia as the source of his elevated Northwestern European culture.<sup>161</sup> For these reasons, I have not included Mann’s historical analysis of the Neo-Assyrian period in this dissertation.

The strength of Mann was his clear identification of four important ‘spheres of influence’ that produce power in society. As the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were based on their power within ‘Arab’ society and their ability to communicate with the Assyrians as a foreign power, these four categories allowed for a thorough

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<sup>160</sup> Blaut 2000.

<sup>161</sup> A full discussion of the failings of Mann for a historical analysis of Mesopotamia (or any non-European history) can be found in Blaut 2000: 113-122.

discussion of these women's roles. The proposed 'IEMP' model proposed by Mann identified four key areas that interacted to create power. These four categories, as conceptualised by Mann, are discussed in the following pages, as well as the limitations and necessary changes that will be made in order for this model to be used to analyse the roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

Mann's framework is based on the Weberian understanding of power. This notion of power was based on the individual and was defined by Weber as the 'chance of a man or number of men to realise their own will... even against the resistance of others'.<sup>162</sup> Here the exercise of power required legitimacy based on three grounds: rational (or legal) grounds, traditional grounds, or finally charismatic grounds.<sup>163</sup> Each of these aspects may function on their own, but often they operate alongside each other. This would form an excellent framework with which to view the 'Queens of the Arabs', but there is a fundamental flaw with Weberian views of power. As Weber solely viewed power as an individual trait, he effectively ignored the collective existence.<sup>164</sup> As Gubbay explained, this is where power is rooted in social structures allowing for the distribution of abilities and resources.<sup>165</sup>

Therefore, I have taken the approach of Mann, who added to Weber's concepts with the 'IEMP' model of power.<sup>166</sup> Here Mann takes a slightly different approach to Weber, and stated that power has to be institutionalised in order to maintain itself – in other words, power is reliant upon institutions.<sup>167</sup> This counters the assertion of Weber that power has to be legitimate and unchallenged, otherwise it is insecure.<sup>168</sup> If legitimacy is institutionalised rather than reliant upon an individual, it becomes harder to challenge the legitimacy of power.

Svärd has critiqued Mann's approach, as it does not adequately incorporate gender theory into the model, and is limited in its ability to analyse the power of individuals.<sup>169</sup> Instead, Svärd suggested an alternative approach of identifying 'heterarchical' power networks of Assyrian royal women.<sup>170</sup> Whilst identifying heterarchical power networks is desirable for the 'Queens of the Arabs', it is not possible. This approach requires documents from within 'Arab' culture to identify internal networks that support the position of the 'Queens of the Arabs' within

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<sup>162</sup> Weber 1978: 926; Gubbay 1997: 154.

<sup>163</sup> Weber 1968: 215.

<sup>164</sup> Goodwin 1997: 25; Lee 1997: 85.

<sup>165</sup> Gubbay 1997: 157.

<sup>166</sup> Mann 2012: 22-28.

<sup>167</sup> Mann 2021: 30.

<sup>168</sup> Gubbay 1997: 158.

<sup>169</sup> Svärd 2015a: 27-30.

<sup>170</sup> Svärd 2015a: 147-159. Svärd discussed that there are several different definitions of 'heterarchical' power, and includes: 'an array of independent, homogenous elements'; 'the membership of elements in many different unranked interaction systems with participation in each system determined by the needs of each element'; 'the membership of elements in many different systems of ranking were the same element occupies a different rank in the different systems'; 'the existence of two or more functionally discrete but unranked systems that interact as equals'; and 'the existence of two or more discrete hierarchies that interact as equals' (Svärd 2015a: 156).

their culture. There is no such material, and the textual evidence regarding these women are from the Assyrian perspective. Due to their misunderstandings of ‘Arab’ culture, Assyrian evidence is very limited in what can be determined about the structure of power of the ‘Arabs’.<sup>171</sup> In light of the scarcity of evidence, I have chosen to use a modified version of Mann’s ‘IEMP’ as a tool to identify the key roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. What follows is an overview of Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power and the modifications needed in order to apply this model to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model divides the concept of ‘power’ into four spheres: ideological, economic, military, and political.<sup>172</sup> This model provides a heuristic tool with which to analyse the evidence for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ according to these themes. It became evident that this model required adjustment in order to reflect the nature of the evidence.

The most visible sphere of power in the Assyrian sources is that of ‘military’ power. According to Mann, those who can mobilise ‘military’ power can obtain collective and distributive power through the deployment of armies and the territorial gains from a military victory (not to mention the labour gained from those conquered).<sup>173</sup> Mann adds this to the forms of power that Weber outlined and is a more accurate reflection of the situation in the Neo-Assyrian period.<sup>174</sup> Chapter 3 will investigate the ‘military’ roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. As the majority of the evidence regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ portrayed their battles against Assyria, this is the category that required the least amount of modification.

‘Economic’ power is the second sphere of power that Mann described, and he explained this as the ability to satisfy subsistence through social organisation and the consumption of products.<sup>175</sup> When discussing the Assyrian empire I would modify this to: ‘the ability to satisfy a need or demand through social organisation and the consumption of products or services’, as the Assyrians were engaging in economic transactions to fulfil more than simply subsistence. ‘Economic’ power thus resided with those who were able to orchestrate the labour necessary to coordinate the acquisition and consumption of such goods and services. In chapter 4 the evidence for the economic roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ will be discussed, and will be based on the Assyrian textual evidence and the archaeological evidence from the Arabian Peninsula.

‘Ideological’ power can be further divided into two subsections – ‘transcendent’ and ‘morale’. ‘Transcendent’ is a form of ideological authority that originated from a sacred source, and is more important than secular authorities. ‘Morale’ ideological power serves to aid the cohesion of an already established

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<sup>171</sup> This lack of material is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

<sup>172</sup> Svård 2015a: 28.

<sup>173</sup> Mann 2012: 26.

<sup>174</sup> Svård 2015a: 28.

<sup>175</sup> Mann 2012: 24.

social group and therefore provides even more power to those in power.<sup>176</sup> This form of power can be seen in the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but there is only evidence for the ‘transcendent’ form for one woman. This ‘sphere of power’ requires the most modification, as there is no evidence for one half of this sphere. The ‘transcendent’ form of ideological power is the theme for chapter 5, which will be focused on assessing the religious roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

The final sphere is ‘political’ power. This power was formed from a centralised, institutionalised, and territorial regulation of aspects of social interaction. This sphere of power was held in a central location, and then was exercised outwards towards the periphery of the territory.<sup>177</sup> The ‘political’ sphere is intertwined in almost every interaction between the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the Assyrian kings. Even the sources these women appear in are mired in ‘political’ power, and as such cannot be separated from the ‘political’ sphere into a separate analytical chapter. Here lies the main problem with Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model for the Assyrian sources. In light of this, there is no chapter dealing explicitly with the ‘political’ roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and instead I will extrapolate indirect references to the ‘political’ sphere through discussions of the other three spheres. This will emphasise how all four of the spheres of power are interlinked and play off of each other in order to enhance their influence.

This fundamental problem with directly applying Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model also demonstrates the most important aspect of this framework in relation to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, as each of these spheres of power do not act on their own. In fact, they interact with each other to form a complex web of power where each sphere enhanced the other three.<sup>178</sup> In particular, the ‘political’ sphere interacted with the other three spheres in the Assyrian sources.

This is where gender will play an important role in the analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Gender is also part of a complex network that forms identity, and cannot be left aside when discussing the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Each chapter will therefore also assess the role gender played – if at all – in each of these spheres of power. It is also important to note that the separation of these powers is very much arbitrary. There is no source that only demonstrates one sphere of power with regards to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This demonstrates that despite the small dataset, the information within these sources are rich with information regarding these fascinating women. This ‘IEMP’ framework will therefore allow for further analysis concerning how gender played a role in each sphere, as well as an exploration of the misconceptions held by the Assyrians and modern scholars about who these women were.

Chapter 2 will discuss the small corpus regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in detail. The focus of this chapter will be stressing the need to use the textual, visual,

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<sup>176</sup> Mann 2012: 22-24.

<sup>177</sup> Mann 2012: 27.

<sup>178</sup> Mann 2012: 27; Svärd 2015a: 28.

and archaeological evidence to provide wider context for these women, as well as to create a more accurate image of their roles. After an assessment of these pieces of evidence, the heuristic tool of Mann's 'IEMP' model will provide three key roles which can be identified in the evidence.

Chapter 3 will investigate the military roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. It is arguable whether the 'political' sphere has more of an influence here than in the 'economic' sphere, but there is a very strong link between 'political' and 'military' sphere of power. This chapter will use gender theory and comparative study, as the royal women of the Neo-Assyrian empire will be used as a comparison to the 'Queens of the Arabs'. It will be clear that these 'Arab' female rulers acted in a manner that was counter to the behaviour expected of an Assyrian royal woman. This is because they were portrayed as being physically close to scenes of physical violence, and were depicted as conducting military campaigns against the Assyrian kings. Chapter 3 will assess what the roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs' were in military campaigns, and the influenced this had on how the Assyrians discussed them in the sources.

Chapter 4 will focus on the 'economic' sphere of power of the 'Queens of the Arabs', and will follow the 'economic' aspect of the 'IEMP' framework. Here the discussion will focus on the goods and services the 'Arab' populations had access to, and the role this played in inter-regional politics. This secondary aspect will help fulfil the 'political' aspect of the 'IEMP' model, and demonstrate the interconnected nature of these spheres. The 'Arab' populations from the Arabian Peninsula had access to many items that were both luxurious and important for the Assyrian military, and could be traded for vast sums of money. This chapter will assess whether this view is accurate, what items and services the 'Arabs' had access to in reality, and their value to the Assyrians. Direct evidence for this is scarce, but tribute lists will be used to assess what the Assyrians viewed as both accessible to the 'Arabs' and valuable to either the Assyrian market or to the royal house. In addition, the archaeological data has greatly enhanced what is known about the economy in the Arabian Peninsula. This data will be invaluable, and will counter the Assyrian evidence that has so far predominated the discussion of the items and services controlled by the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

Chapter 5 will illustrate the existence of the religious role the 'Queens of the Arabs' held within their communities, which was part of the 'ideology' sphere of the 'IEMP' framework by Mann. This is based on the evidence of Te'elḥunu, who was referred to by her title 'Apkallatu' in the inscriptions from Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. This chapter will stress that the evidence for one 'Queen of the Arabs' does not necessarily mean that all of these women held religious roles. Despite this, chapter 5 will outline how religion played an important role in both Assyrian culture and the cultures of the Arabian Peninsula. Chapter 5 will have the greatest inclusion of archaeological data from the Arabian Peninsula, and will stress the need to avoid looking solely at the Assyrian texts when researching the

‘Arabs’. This is because the religious roles of the Assyrian kings have generated most of the contemporary misunderstandings by the Assyrians regarding ‘Arab’ society, and there is a need to find a balance from as many non-Assyrian sources as possible. Consequently, the archaeological material from the Arabian Peninsula will be paramount to this chapter to frame alternative models for the interaction between religion and rulership.

In each of these chapters I will approach to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as individuals. It is difficult to make general statements about these women, as there is such a small amount of data, and each of these women may have ruled different population groups. Instead, within each chapter there will be a focus on the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who have evidence for the role discussed. This is because not every ‘Queen of the Arab’ exhibited every sphere of power in the ‘IEMP’ model, and some exhibited more than one sphere. Therefore some of these ‘queens’ will be discussed in more than one chapter, and others will only be discussed in one. The important aspect here is that each will be investigated on their own terms, and it is important to emphasise that one ‘Queen of the Arabs’ does not speak for all of these women. The societal structure that allowed for one ‘Queen of the Arabs’ to act upon their ‘economic’ power does not mean that societal structure will exist for another ‘queen’ in a different population group.

Finally, in each chapter there will be an evaluation for how applicable Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model was for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Already this model has proven to not be applicable to the evidence without modification. As the evidence of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were mostly expressions of political power, it is impossible to separate and divide the political roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ into a separate chapter. In addition, there is only evidence from the Assyrian perspective, and there is no evidence for the ‘morale’ aspects of the ‘ideological’ sphere of power. Therefore, only the ‘transcendent’ aspect is discussed in chapter 5. Further adjustments will be addressed within the chapters.

This dissertation will therefore use Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power as a heuristic tool to analyse the roles the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ held in ‘Arab’ societies in the North of the Arabian Peninsula. The use of comparative studies with the kings and royal women in the Neo-Assyrian empire as well as evidence from the Arabian Peninsula will be used to expand the scope of analysis beyond the Assyrian material. The Assyrian texts, the visual material, as well as the archaeology of Arabia will be included in my analysis. The latter source material is particularly useful as a balance for the material from Assyria, and will provide a wider context for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. The results will be that these women were functioning in a manner that looked to the Assyrians like the behaviour of foreign male kings, but will also demonstrate a deeper confusion regarding ‘Arab’ society as a whole. This dissertation therefore uses a more holistic approach to the evidence regarding the ‘Arabs’, and demonstrates that such an approach can provide a wealth of information about an often-misunderstood group of women.

## 2 SOURCES

The single largest reason for the lack of an in-depth discussion regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is the small number of sources which explicitly refer to these women. There are only twenty-eight texts and two palace reliefs where these women are mentioned or depicted in some manner. With such a small corpus, it is worth discussing each of these sources and expanding on some of the issues with interpreting them.

The textual corpus comprises of only twenty-eight texts, and the details about these women are quite threadbare. Often texts only mention their names and titles, as well as their defeat in battle. With such sparse information, it is clear why the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ have not been the focus of traditional Assyriological research. When much of Assyriology is based on textual evidence, it has been hard for scholars to see much worth in discussing these women. This is why the inclusion of alternative methodologies such as gender theory and a comparative approach will be important, as these approaches have allowed for a more in-depth discussion and analysis.

All of the textual and visual evidence is from the Assyrian perspective, and there are no counterpoints to this material from the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.<sup>1</sup> The issue then becomes how much of what we know about these women could have been misconceptions by the Assyrians, whose own cultural norms and expectations influenced how these women were discussed and depicted.

In order to counter this large methodological problem, I will use archaeological material from the Arabian Peninsula to provide a wider context within which we find these women and their interaction with the Assyrians. It is crucial to include this evidence in a largely Assyriological discussion, as the recent archaeological work in the Arabian Peninsula has not yet been thoroughly integrated in the Assyriological discourse about the ‘Arabs’. This material is often not from the Northwestern region, but will be included to provide a wider context for the culture and society the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ operated within.

I will use textual, visual, and archaeological evidence in a holistic manner. Each type of evidence has its own methodological issues, and I will explain these in detail in this chapter. I will demonstrate how the combination of the textual,

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to say there was neither writing nor visual material in the Arabian Peninsula - it would be surprising if there was no form of written word in an area this large. The issue, as discussed in more detail in section 2.3, is that none have been dated to the Neo-Assyrian period, and what rock art has survived is difficult to date securely to this time period.

visual, and archaeological material will complement each other, and will create a far more accurate image of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and their roles.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

The majority of the evidence for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ comes from the textual material preserved from the Neo-Assyrian period, and represents an Assyrian perspective. Whilst texts regarding the ‘Arabs’ span several genres, ‘Queens of the Arabs’ only appear in two: royal inscriptions and administrative documents. These two genres have aspects specific to them that can obfuscate crucial information, or exaggerate events for a specific message. I will explain these methodological issues in detail for each genre, and then I will discuss the textual evidence according to the ‘queen’ who is depicted in the texts.

### 2.1.1. ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS

Twenty-nine of the texts that mention a ‘Queen of the Arabs’ are Assyrian royal inscriptions. These range in length and format, including small epigraphs on wall reliefs labelling the actors and locations, inscriptions on colossi describing actions a king undertook in his reign, and inscriptions on personal objects identifying their owners.<sup>3</sup> All of these inscriptions were intended to portray Assyrian royal ideology, and most of these have been collated in the Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period series, or RINAP. However, there are some limitations when using this series, as the royal inscriptions for only four of the kings we are concerned with were published at the time of writing this dissertation.<sup>4</sup> This left a considerable gap with regards to the records of Sargon II, and for these inscriptions I turned to Fuchs 1994.<sup>5</sup>

The royal inscriptions I will use offer descriptions of the events of Assyrian kings undertook, either in chronological or geographical order. In many cases there were several different versions of the annals of each king are preserved

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, translations for the textual evidence can be found in Appendix A. This includes tables with short overviews of the text edition, the ‘Queen of the Arab’ mentioned, which Assyrian king commissioned the text, as well as the museum numbers (where available) of the texts.

<sup>3</sup> These can include slabs, stele, statues, cliff faces, tablets, basalt bulls and lions, blocks, bricks, weights, beads, tiles, bowls, and plates. Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 2-3 includes a table which lists these as items royal inscriptions were written upon for Tiglath-pileser III’s royal inscriptions. For a more detailed discussion on epigraphs, see Gerardi 1988. An excellent overview of the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and some of the interpretive difficulties of these texts as historical documents can be found in Frahm 2019.

<sup>4</sup> For Tiglath-pileser III see RINAP 1, Sennacherib RINAP 3/1 and 3/2, Esarhaddon see RINAP 4, and finally for Assurbanipal see RINAP 5.

<sup>5</sup> Fuchs 1994. These text can now be found in RINAP 2.

which causes problems when reconstructing events.<sup>6</sup> These different editions were from different dates of the reign, as new events would require re-writing and editing previous events.<sup>7</sup> In some versions there may be a stronger emphasis on cultic activity than military campaigns, as these inscriptions may be written upon objects that had a relationship with temples. This would necessarily shorten the sections about military conquests in order to present the Assyrian king in a more pious light. In every case, these manipulations were to emphasise or de-emphasise certain events during the reign of an Assyrian king, and these inflations and emphases have to be taken into account in discussing the historical events described in the royal inscriptions.<sup>8</sup>

Such manipulations have caused the royal inscriptions to be called ‘propaganda’. This is a problematic term which indicates that the aim of these inscriptions was to sway public opinion, but there is no evidence that the opinion of the public was vital to the success of the Assyrian king.<sup>9</sup> Most royal inscriptions were inaccessible to the general public, so it is difficult to see how this would have been done.<sup>10</sup> The royal inscriptions in the palace would have only been accessible to royalty, the upper echelons of the elite, and the staff of the palace. Royal inscriptions placed in foundation deposits were unable to be read by humans once placed in the ground. As access to these inscriptions was so limited, there have been multiple suggestions as to the intended audience. The Assyrians had a strong tradition of rebuilding important structures like temples, and therefore there has been the suggestion that these inscriptions were for future rulers to respect previous kings.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, this was a way of leaving a legacy for a later king to respect, as seen in the many appeals to future kings in the royal inscriptions.<sup>12</sup> The royal inscriptions written on the reliefs of the palaces could also be re-used by

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<sup>6</sup> Kuhrt 2002: 474. For a case study on the difficulties of reconstructing a chronology for the events of the ‘Arab’ campaigns of Assurbanipal, see Gerardi 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Kuhrt 2002: 474.

<sup>8</sup> Kuhrt 2002: 476. These manipulations can cause serious difficulties with regards to dating events, causing Frahm to remark: ‘the chronological framework of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions is remarkably complex and to some extent deceptive’ (Frahm 2019: 148).

<sup>9</sup> Tadmor 1997: 332-334.

<sup>10</sup> Frahm points out that access to the royal inscriptions was largely restricted, as many were only accessible to those who were able to enter the palace, but many were also under floors or within the walls themselves (Frahm 2019: 141). Liverani has suggested a concentric model for discussions of the audience of such texts, with the innermost ring including the literate elite, followed by the population of Assyrian capital cities, then those in the towns and villages, and the outermost ring contains foreigners as the intended audience (Liverani 2014b).

<sup>11</sup> For example, a cursory search of the RINAP 4 corpus shows at least 60 attestations of temples being ‘rebuilt’ and ‘reconstructed’ by Esarhaddon. Liverani suggests future kings were the intended audience for royal inscriptions that were written on rock reliefs (Liverani 2014b: 379).

<sup>12</sup> These were targeted at either future kings, with appeals for them to take care of the renovated building in the future, or at someone who would dare to deface the object (such as a stele). In the latter case this would also be accompanied by a litany of curses that would befall the individual and stressed the importance of the object surviving for as long as possible (for example see RINAP 4 98 r53b-57). Frahm also expands this to include both present and future members of the palace establishment (Frahm 2019: 142). Liverani characterises the royal inscriptions found on rock reliefs as a challenge to future rulers to reach a difficult location and leave a mark – just as the king’s challenger did (Liverani 2014b: 379).

later Assyrian kings, as Tiglath-pileser III's reliefs were re-used in the palace of Esarhaddon.<sup>13</sup> The gods have also been suggested as an audience due to the inaccessible nature of many of these inscriptions.<sup>14</sup> The foundation deposits are the most likely candidate for this theory, but it also holds true for those inscriptions in locations which were more accessible. Few people in the palaces were literate enough to read these inscriptions.<sup>15</sup> Royal inscriptions found on stele in the landscape, or in rock reliefs, would not have been readable (or even visible) to those travelling past them, and the vast majority of those travellers would not have been literate enough to read them.<sup>16</sup> These ideas have been largely speculative with little evidence to support the claims thus far. The important aspect of this is the existence of an intended audience rather than who precisely who that audience was. The very fact there was a tailored message for a specific audience required a manipulation of the content in order to fit the message the Assyrian king intended to convey.

Numbers play a powerful role in the narratives of the royal inscriptions, as they illustrated the magnitude of the great feats of the Assyrian king.<sup>17</sup> As discussed by De Odorico, numbers tended to fall under two categories: 'accurate' and 'inflated'. 'Accurate' numbers could either be rounded as an approximation, or they could represent an exact figure.<sup>18</sup> Within this category, 'exact' numbers tended to be used in business documents, and were accurate representations of the quantities involved, whilst 'round' numbers were more likely to be in literary texts and were approximations to reflect a magnitude.<sup>19</sup> In royal inscriptions it can be unclear which of these was used. If the numbers are deemed to be 'round', then there is the question of inflation. 'Round' numbers could either be 'high' or 'low', and these were used to either emphasise large amounts and thus the scale of the achievement, or how quickly a great feat was achieved.<sup>20</sup> These manipulations can speak volumes to both Assyrian views of 'Arab' society, as well as the historical reality of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. As detailed in chapter 3, Samsi is recorded in the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III as having close to 10,000 people under her command, the majority of which were killed by the Assyrians.<sup>21</sup> The Assyrian

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<sup>13</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: 22.

<sup>14</sup> Tadmor 1997: 331-332. For a discussion regarding the issues of researching the royal inscriptions and some potential solutions, see Fales 1999-2001.

<sup>15</sup> Radner proposes some interesting evidence that suggests the artists inscribing had a small degree of literacy (Radner 2019b).

<sup>16</sup> Though Liverani does explain that the very presence of monuments and architecture created at the command of the Assyrian king would deliver a message to anyone who saw them, no matter their level of literacy (Liverani 2014b: 376-378).

<sup>17</sup> We see numbers used to describe where the 'Queens of the Arabs' were located, which may have been changed to emphasise the distance between them and the Assyrian heartland (RINAP 4 1 iv53-iv59). Numbers are also used in describing the outcome of battles, as these quantified how many of the 'Arab' army were killed, how many were captured, and how many objects were taken in booty (RINAP 1 42 19b'-33').

<sup>18</sup> De Odorico 1995: 5-7.

<sup>19</sup> De Odorico 1995: 5.

<sup>20</sup> De Odorico 1995: 6.

<sup>21</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

scribes emphasised the large nature of the force they needed to overcome, and that Tiglath-pileser III's army was overwhelmingly victorious.

A key issue of royal inscriptions is that many are incomplete. Whilst most of the royal inscriptions are fragmented or have some portions which are unreadable, those of Tiglath-pileser III are particularly broken. Tadmor and Yamada have discussed this in detail, but here I shall give a brief outline of the problems they have described. Only one third of the annals (texts which described the feats of Tiglath-pileser III chronologically) have survived, and eight regnal years are completely missing.<sup>22</sup> These gaps are due to the attempt by Esarhaddon to re-use the orthostats where Tiglath-pileser III's royal inscriptions were written in Esarhaddon's 'Southwest' palace in Kalhu.<sup>23</sup> They were dismantled from Tiglath-pileser III's 'Central' palace and stacked, and the orthostats (and the inscriptions written on them) were abandoned as the 'Southwest' palace was never completed. Not only are the inscriptions broken and poorly preserved, but the attempt to re-use the inscribed slabs means their events and order have had to be reconstructed.<sup>24</sup> To mitigate some of this, Tadmor and Yamada turned to another form of royal inscriptions: 'summary' texts. These are texts where narratives were arranged geographically, not chronologically.<sup>25</sup> This means that campaigns against the 'Arabs' tend to appear towards the end of these texts. Whilst these do not give us a rough date for events, these do help us to 'fill in the gaps' which may not have survived in the annals.<sup>26</sup>

The objects which the royal inscriptions were written upon played little role in the analysis of the royal inscriptions. In the past twenty years or so there has been a move to 'read' these texts in a more holistic manner, which would include the texts' interaction with the object they were inscribed upon, as well as the location the object was found or intended to be installed.<sup>27</sup> This is particularly important when texts which are very similar and are published in large editions, but the differences may be accounted for when looking at the different objects they were inscribed upon. There are vast differences in the space allowed for a text on an eight sided prism when compared to the space between a *lamassu's* legs. It is therefore important to make a distinction between the two, and here I follow Russell's categorisation. A 'text' here is the composition, of which several copies

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<sup>22</sup> Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 4, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: 20, 23; Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 4-5.

<sup>24</sup> Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 5.

<sup>25</sup> Here events detailed in geographic units and start in the South, working around the empire counter-clockwise (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 4, 9). These texts generally began with the wars against Babylonian, then narrated the Zagros campaigns, then the wars against Urartu, then the conquests in northern Syria, and finally the conquests and military events in South Syria, Palestine, and Arabia were found towards the end of the inscriptions.

<sup>26</sup> Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 9.

<sup>27</sup> See Rocio Da Riva 2008: 33-43 for a similar discussion regarding the Neo-Babylonian period. Many of the principles hold true for the Neo-Assyrian royal inscription. See Russell 1999 for a discussion of how the royal inscriptions are intertwined with the palace reliefs and accompanying imagery. More recently, see Morello 2016 for how cuneiform signs were inscribed in strategic places on the palace reliefs to emphasise specific messages.

can exist. An ‘inscription’ refers to the physical manifestation of the ‘text’.<sup>28</sup> For example, there may be several copies of ‘texts’ with reference to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but the ‘inscriptions’ and their contexts demonstrate how the Assyrians viewed these women. In other words, whilst the message may be the same, the impact is different when it is inscribed upon a prism as part of a foundation deposition than on display as part of a palace relief. I will take this into account in the following chapter, as I discuss the royal inscriptions and the evidence these inscriptions give for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

As there are so few women who possess the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’ within the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, I have treated the evidence for each woman separately. The evidence for the role of one woman is often not reflected in the texts for another. For example, there is evidence for the economic role of Zabibê, but not a military role like the evidence related to Samsi. In the following section I will therefore discuss the evidence for each woman as present in the royal inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian period. The evidence will refer to the published edition of the text. With a few exceptions, these have been published in the RINAP series and I will follow the conventions of this series. This means that RINAP 1 32 refers to RINAP volume 1, text number 32. This can then be used to identify further technical details in Appendix A, where the relevant passage has also been provided in transliteration and translation. Those texts referred to as RINAP 1 14-15 refer to texts that are part of a wider narrative, but have been edited separately in the RINAP series. This means RINAP 1 14-15 should be read as a text in RINAP volume 1, and the relevant passage spans two edited texts. This means precise line numbers are generally not included in this section unless otherwise stated. For those texts that are not published in RINAP, I will include an explanation of how I refer to these texts.

### **2.1.1.1. ZABIBÊ**

Zabibê is the first ‘Queen of the Arabs’ mentioned in the Neo-Assyrian texts, and she was mentioned in a long list of rulers who sent either ‘tribute’ or ‘gifts’ to Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>29</sup> The text is present in four inscriptions: RINAP 1 14-15, 27-28, 32, and 35. All of the inscriptions were linked with visual material, with three of these texts originally found on the royal palace reliefs, and one on the so-called ‘Iran Stele’. This is perhaps the best example of the need to separate the ‘text’ from the ‘inscription’, as the passages dealing with Zabibê are very similar, but their contexts vastly change their message. Despite the very similar text, the location, the state of excavation of the site, and the type of object the inscription is found upon are different.

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<sup>28</sup> Russell 1999: 7.

<sup>29</sup> For a brief overview of his reign, see chapter 1, section 1.1.1.

The texts RINAP 1 14-15, 27-28, and 32 were wall reliefs from the Central Palace of Tiglath-pileser III (although 14-15 was found in Esarhaddon's Southwest Palace, ready to be re-used). They are in varying degrees of preservation, and their original positions in the Central Palace have been difficult to reconstruct.<sup>30</sup> In fact, Tadmor and Yamada has relied on copies made by Layard or Rawlinson for each of these texts to varying degrees.<sup>31</sup> These texts all preserve copies of the Kalhu Annals: 27-28 are part of Series A; 14-15 are part of Series B; and 32 is part of Series C.<sup>32</sup> These texts were all accompanied with (or in the case of text 32, associated with) images carved onto the orthostats. Texts 14-15 were in registers above and below an image of the Assyrian king receiving a submissive foreigner, and texts 27-28 were inscribed below an image of a city under siege.<sup>33</sup> Russell points out that the decoration of the Central Palace's wall slabs and the inscriptions were planned separately from one another, and so direct relationships between the two are purely coincidental. However, the broad messages and themes often overlapped, and in these cases the images conveyed the message of the submission of foreigners to Tiglath-pileser III, and Assyrian dominance over non-Assyrians.<sup>34</sup>

Text 32 is only known from copies made by Rawlinson, as the original was left in Kalhu, and the only images that accompanied the text are fragmentary.<sup>35</sup> The head of the Assyrian king and a beardless attendant have been preserved, and due to the presence of the king's 'shepherd's staff', the imagery had a general theme of submission before the Assyrian king.<sup>36</sup>

Only one text which mentions Zabibê originates from outside of Kalhu. This is the 'Iran Stele', published as text 35 in RINAP 1. It was found in the West of modern Iran, in the region called Luristan, and depicts Tiglath-pileser III and the symbols of gods on the front side. Only the back of the stele is uninscribed, and was erected partially to celebrate Tiglath-pileser III's achievements of the Median campaign in 737.<sup>37</sup> The text described his first nine *palûs* (745-737), but the section regarding the ninth *palû* is more extensive than the Kalhu annals.<sup>38</sup> Zabibê is mentioned in the section regarding the ninth *palû*, but it is difficult to determine how the list of rulers she is mentioned alongside relates to the events preserved beforehand, as there is a ten line lacuna prior to this list.

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<sup>30</sup> Russell 1999: 92.

<sup>31</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 44-45, 47-48, 69, 70-71, 76-77.

<sup>32</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 44-45, 47-48, 69, 70-71, 76-77.

<sup>33</sup> Texts 14-16 (as published by Tadmor & Yamada) are on the following relief: BM 124961 + BM 132306 (+) DIA 2002.166; whilst Text 27-28 is on BM 115634 + BM 118903

<sup>34</sup> Russell 1999: 93, 95.

<sup>35</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 76; BM 118899 + BM 118900.

<sup>36</sup> This staff is a long rod held by the Assyrian king in one hand. An overview of the imagery of the 'shepherd's staff' as representing the peaceful role of the Assyrian king's rule can be found in Portuese 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 80.

<sup>38</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 80.

The text is largely the same across all four of these inscriptions, but there is a crucial difference between the Kalhu Annals and the Iran Stele. The Kalhu Annals only mention that Tiglath-pileser III received a ‘payment’ from a long list of rulers, whereas the Iran Stele described this as Tiglath-pileser III imposing a ‘tribute’ over this large list of rulers.<sup>39</sup> The inscription’s context illustrates this difference was due to a different message than that expressed through the Kalhu Annals. The Kalhu Annals communicated a message of foreign lands submitting to Assyria, whereas the Iran Stele was itself a physical manifestation of the Assyrian ruler imposing his rule over all of the lands – and that this region in Western Iran would be no different. The difference is subtle, but the focus was about the consent of being ruled. In the Kalhu Annals, Tiglath-pileser III is simply agreeing to the willful submission of the rulers in this long list, who have decided on their own terms to send gifts to the Assyrian king. The Iran Stele implies that this was against the rulers’ will, and emphasized that Tiglath-pileser III could force foreigners to bend to his will.

### 2.1.1.2. SAMSI

Samsi has the most appearances in the textual record, and is present in nine of the published texts as edited in RINAP 1 and Fuchs 1994. Samsi is the only ‘Queen of the Arabs’ to appear as a contemporary ruler in the royal inscriptions of two Assyrian kings: Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II. The texts written under these two kings will therefore be treated separately, as each ruler had their own message they wished to convey through their texts and inscriptions.

Samsi was mentioned in the following group of similar texts from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III: RINAP 1 42, 44, 47, and 48. These have the same basic format, but there are different degrees of preservation of the inscription. The text begins by identifying Samsi, ‘Queen of the Arabs’, and states she was defeated at Mount Saqurri whilst also losing 9,400 soldiers. Then the text lists the items that were taken from Samsi’s camp, and she fled into the desert. Her remaining property and camp was set on fire, which forced Samsi to send items to Assyria as tokens of submission. We are told that a <sup>lu</sup>*qēpu* (‘representative’) was imposed over her alongside 10,000 soldiers – presumably to allow her to continue to rule, so long as she remained in line with Assyria’s policies.

All of these texts are what Tadmor and Yamada call ‘summary inscriptions’, and describe events geographically. This means Samsi often appears at the end of the inscriptions. Texts 42 and 44 are stone slabs, but both were left in situ at Kalhu. Tadmor and Yamada report that 42 was likely a pavement slab, and that 44 was part of a wall relief which included a figure holding a mace.<sup>40</sup> These

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<sup>39</sup> CAD, s.v. ‘*maddattu*’, ‘*biltu*’. *maddattu* is used in the following sources: RINAP 1 14 10; RINAP 1 27 2; RINAP 1 32 1. *biltu* and *maddattu* are used in RINAP 1 35 iii20.

<sup>40</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 104, 110.

inscriptions were not standalone in the palace, and were part of larger narratives across other slabs.<sup>41</sup> Without any further information, it is difficult to say any more than these inscriptions were to impress and further emphasise the omnipresence of the Assyrian king in the empire by repeating his military exploits across the palace walls.

Texts 47 and 48 were written on clay tablets, which Tadmor and Yamada have identified as draft versions of the texts inscribed on the stone slabs at the Central Palace, and probably originate from the Nabû temple at Kalhu.<sup>42</sup> Tadmor and Yamada suggest that these texts were originally the same tablet, with 47 as the obverse and 48 as the reverse.<sup>43</sup> Without seeing the physical tablet, it would be difficult to say if this was anything other than simply ‘possible’. In the face of uncertainty, I will treat these texts as they have been published in RINAP: two separate texts.

Other texts have variations to the narrative of Samsi. Text 20 is the only text mentioning Samsi in the Kalhu Annals, in Series C.<sup>44</sup> This particular inscription was on a wall relief depicting the Assyrian king in a chariot led by two attendants, and in this case it is difficult to see a shared message between the text and the imagery. This text is the only one that mentions Samsi transgressing an oath to the god Šamaš, and the narrative continues on text 21 – however, it is only fragmentarily preserved, and so we cannot determine much more about this particular narrative.

Text 49 is another clay tablet that was a draft of the summary inscriptions found on the stone slabs originally from the Central Palace.<sup>45</sup> It is the only clay tablet in this study that can be securely provenanced to the Nabû temple at Kalhu, but it is only known from three smaller fragments.<sup>46</sup> The texts on these fragments have a brief account of the battle with Samsi, and it is the only text which includes the phrase ‘I cut down with the weapon’ in reference to the destruction of her camp.<sup>47</sup> This emphasized the nature of these draft texts, as this version and phrase was ultimately not included in the summary texts on the stone slabs – or at least, this version has not been preserved on the surviving stone slabs.

The last text written during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III that mentioned Samsi is text 53. Lines 14 to 18a deal with the defeat of a foreign enemy, and the installation of governors, and an enigmatic *šī* (‘her’) implies that this enemy was Samsi.<sup>48</sup> The inscription was found on one of the two bulls found at Arslan Tash

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<sup>41</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 94.

<sup>42</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 95, 115, 125.

<sup>43</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 125.

<sup>44</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 19-20.

<sup>45</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 95.

<sup>46</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 128-129.

<sup>47</sup> RINAP 1 49 r.17.

<sup>48</sup> This is due to the fact that the only foreign female leader with an in-depth narrative of her military defeat who is recorded in other inscriptions from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III is Samsi. There is a possibility that this actually refers to a campaign against Zabibê, but without another text confirming this it is likely this *šī* referred to Samsi.

(ancient Ḥadattu, in modern Northern Syria), and the inscription is very damaged.<sup>49</sup> It is likely that Samsi's name was originally mentioned, but over time this must have worn away to only leave her pronoun and a shortened version of events. The inclusion of Samsi in this narrative indicates that her defeat was seen as important to Tiglath-pileser III.

The final group of texts that mention Samsi were written during the reign of Sargon II. There is no other instance of this in our corpus where a 'Queen of the Arabs' is described as contemporaneous with the Assyrian who commissioned the inscription, and offers a glimpse to the length of her reign. The texts have been compiled and edited in Fuchs 1994 as Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a; Prunk. Saal X 3 3; Prunk. Saal IV 11 10-11, 9 1; Prunk. Saal VII 3 2-4; and Prunk. Saal VIII 13 5-6.<sup>50</sup> I have followed Fuchs' method of referring to these texts. This group was edited as two separate texts – the annals and the 'Prunkinschriften', and their abbreviations form the first section of their reference: 'Ann.' or 'Prunk.'. Following this is the hall in which the inscription was found at Khorsabad, the text number, and the line. I have deviated from Fuchs in that I have not provided the collations he has provided, but the inscriptions. I made this decision because the collations mask the nature of the inscriptions, and infer the text was only on one inscription. By separating the collations into their individual inscriptions, the position of the inscription in the palace and its interaction with palace reliefs can be analysed, and it is easier to see how the overall message of the text changed. Samsi is mentioned alongside the king of Egypt and the ruler of Saba'a, and luxury items they sent to Sargon II are listed.

Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a was found in Hall II of Sargon II's palace at Khorsabad (Dur-Šarrukin), and was between two registers of reliefs that depicted the campaign of 716 and a banquet.<sup>51</sup> These reliefs did not illustrate the events of the texts, but instead were selected to match the theme of the decoration of the room.<sup>52</sup> The text was chosen because it fit the same theme of military accomplishments and success of Sargon II. The key aspect of this version of the narrative is the phrase '*šarrāni ša aḫi tamtim ù madbari*' ('kings of (the) ocean shore and of (the) desert'), which emphasised the totality of Sargon II's rule.<sup>53</sup> This phrase is not found in any of the other *Prunkinschriften* texts, either due to preservation issues (for example, Prunk. Saal VII 3 2-4 is heavily broken), or ancient editorial decisions. The best preserved exemplar (Prunk. Saal X 3 3) does not include this phrase, so this specific phrase was probably reserved for Hall II.

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<sup>49</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 139-140.

<sup>50</sup> These texts have recently been published in the latest publication of RINAP. This volume was published at the final stages of writing this dissertation, and as such I have used the editions as published by Fuchs. The texts published in RINAP are as follows: RINAP 2 1 123b-125a; and RINAP 2 7 27.

<sup>51</sup> Russell 1999: 113-114.

<sup>52</sup> Russell 1999: 114.

<sup>53</sup> Ann. Saal II 11 7.

The final major variation in this short text about Samsi is the variation of the determinative included in her title ‘Queen of the Arabs’.<sup>54</sup> In Prunk. Saal IV 11 10-11, 9 1 and Prunk. Saal VIII 13 5-6 this determinative is LÚ, meaning to the scribes who wrote these inscriptions, ‘Arabs’ were classified as a people. The determinative used for the same title in Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a and Prunk. Saal X 3 3 was KUR – the scribes working on these rooms instead saw ‘Arabs’ as a land. A full discussion of these variations are in chapter one, section 1.4.

Whilst I follow the publication numbers of RINAP 1, this can give the misleading impression that the texts of Zabibê and Samsi were not related to each other. There is one instance where Zabibê and Samsi share the same narrative, namely the Kalhu Annals, which dates from the end of Tiglath-pileser III’s reign.<sup>55</sup> Samsi is mentioned prior to Zabibê in Series C, and the chronological layout of this narrative has meant the events of both Zabibê and Samsi have been able to be dated.<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, Samsi was not mentioned in Series A or B or the Kalhu Annals, and Zabibê was not mentioned in the Summary texts. The distinct pattern suggests that this is more than a coincidence of preservation, and indicates a preference in terms of narrative. What this preference was dependent on is unclear, but Samsi and Zabibê’s narratives were clearly conceived by the Assyrians as separate to each other.

### 2.1.1.3. IATI’E

Iati’e has the lowest number of attestations of the ‘Queen of the Arabs’. She is mentioned in two versions of the ‘First Campaign Cylinder’ of Sennacherib, edited as RINAP 3/1 1 27-29 and RINAP 3/2 213 27-29. Iati’e is only mentioned in order to identify her brother, who featured in the narrative of Marduk-apla-iddina’s rebellion. The narrative is almost completely identical in both of these texts, and the only difference is in the subsequent building reports.<sup>57</sup> These cylinders were foundation deposits – RINAP 3/1 1 was collated from three different cylinders deposited in the ‘Palace Without A Rival’, the citadel wall, and Nineveh’s new wall. RINAP 3/2 is made up of two clay cylinders, deposited under the Northwest and Southwest corners of the Nergal temple in Tarbišu.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> There is also a relatively minor variation in the terms used for dromedary camels. In Prunk. Saal X 3 3 the term was GAM.MAL; whilst in Prunk. Saal VIII 13 6 this animal is called ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ. It is unclear why there is this variation, but it is likely due to scribal preference.

<sup>55</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 19.

<sup>56</sup> Eph’al dates Zabibê sending her items to Tiglath-pileser III to 738 (Eph’al 1982: 23), and the battle against Samsi to 733 (Eph’al 1982: 26).

<sup>57</sup> The inscriptions found in Nineveh and Ashur (RINAP 3/1 1) have a building report about Nineveh, whereas the inscriptions found in Tarbišu report on the building of the Nergal temple (RINAP 3/2 213).

<sup>58</sup> Grayson & Novotny 2014:292-293

#### 2.1.1.4. TE'ELĦUNU

Perhaps the most complicated evidence from the royal inscriptions about a 'Queen of the Arabs' relates to Te'elĥunu. She appears in texts from the reign of Sennacherib to Assurbanipal, but she was only a contemporary of Sennacherib. In addition, she appears with two different names – Te'elĥunu and Apkallatu. This has made analysis of this 'Queen of the Arabs' much more difficult than others, as there is the additional factor of what the later Assyrian kings remembered about her.

Te'elĥunu appears in RINAP 3/1 35, RINAP 4 1, 2, 4, and 6, and Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558. The only text which is contemporaneous to her narrative is RINAP 3/1 35.<sup>59</sup> This text was inscribed on two stone tablet fragments presumed by Grayson and Novotny to originally have been from Nineveh.<sup>60</sup> It describes the military accomplishments and building projects of Sennacherib in Nineveh.<sup>61</sup> The section recording the military defeat of Te'elĥunu comes after a narrative about the capture and defeat of Elamite allies, and is heavily reconstructed. Her title is completely preserved, but only the last syllable of her name is partially preserved on line r.53'. Then there is a mention that she was in the middle of the desert, and that items were taken away from her, including at least one thousand camels. There is mention of Ḥazā-il, and that both him and Te'elĥunu fled to Adummatu. After a lacuna there is a brief and broken discussion about a siege and the receipt of tribute from Adummatu and surrounding cities.

RINAP 3/1 35 is the only text from the period of Sennacherib, but there are four texts from the period of Esarhaddon, that refer to Te'elĥunu: RINAP 4 1, 2, 4, and 6. Whilst these texts do not expand our knowledge of the battle itself, they aid in understanding how subsequent generations of Assyrian rulers and scribes understood the role of Te'elĥunu. These inscriptions are all prisms of varying degrees of preservation, and most of which were from Nineveh.<sup>62</sup> The text is largely the same. The narrative begins with mentioning the city Adummatu, and then explains how Sennacherib defeated Te'elĥunu and brought her, with her property, back to Assyria. There then follows the events of Ḥazā-il travelling to Esarhaddon to request the return of the gods Sennacherib had taken. This narrative includes the imposition of another 'Queen of the Arabs', Tabū'a, by Esarhaddon over the 'Arabs', but this will be discussed in the section about the textual evidence regarding Tabū'a.<sup>63</sup>

There is a glaring difference between these texts and the earlier version provided in RINAP 3/1 35: Te'elĥunu's name. In the texts from the period of

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<sup>59</sup> This refers to RINAP volume 3 part 1, text number 35.

<sup>60</sup> Grayson & Novotny 2012: 226.

<sup>61</sup> Grayson & Novotny 2012: 227.

<sup>62</sup> RINAP 4 1, or Nin. (Prism) A. is the only text where this is not the case, as there are exemplars of this text in Nineveh, Ashur, and Susa (Grayson & Novotny 2012: 9).

<sup>63</sup> See this chapter, section 2.1.1.5.

Esarhaddon she is called *Apkallatu*, and the reason for this discrepancy is discussed in more detail in chapter five, section 5.1. For the sake of consistency and understandability, I will only use *Te'elḥunu* in reference to this woman. In terms of differences between the Esarhaddon texts, the only substantial difference is in the determinatives used for 'Arabs' in *Te'elḥunu*'s title. In RINAP 4 1 iv4 and 6 iii1', LÚ is used as the determinative for 'Arabs', whilst in RINAP 4 2 ii49 and 4 ii'5' KUR is used.

The final group of inscriptions are edited as one text in Borger 1996: K3087, K3045, and Rm 2.558. As these have been collated together, they will be referred to as 'K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558'. This is the only text where *Te'elḥunu*'s name has been fully preserved, and it is interesting to note that this text was composed during the reign of Assurbanipal. For an unknown reason *Te'elḥunu* was known only by her title '*apkallatu*' during the reign of Esarhaddon, but two generations later during the reign of Assurbanipal she was known as *Te'elḥunu*. The preservation of this name is the reason for the reconstruction in RINAP 3/1 35.<sup>64</sup>

The goal of K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558 is very different from the royal inscriptions thus far, as it was a dedicatory text for the Arabian goddess *Dilbad*.<sup>65</sup> This rather complicated title follows the conventions of Borger 1996, where three clay tablets were collated together. The text describes how the 'Arab' goddess *Dilbad* helped Assurbanipal defeat the 'Arab' ruler *Uaiate*', in the same way that she helped Assurbanipal's ancestor *Sennacherib* defeat *Te'elḥunu*.<sup>66</sup> The contents and narrative of these events agree with the texts of Esarhaddon. The important difference is the description of *Te'elḥunu* as '*kumirtu*'. This translates as 'priestess', and so we can see that the memory of *Te'elḥunu*'s religious role had been preserved in the Assyrian cultural memory.<sup>67</sup>

### 2.1.1.5. TABŪ'A

An 'Arab' woman called *Tabū'a* was mentioned in the same narrative of *Te'elḥunu* in the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon. She was not given the title 'Queen of the Arabs', but she was imposed as ruler over the 'Arabs' by the Assyrian king. This event is preserved in RINAP 4 1, 2, 3, 6, and 97. RINAP 4 1, 2, and 6 have been discussed in the section about *Te'elḥunu*. Therefore this section will focus on RINAP 4 3 and 97. RINAP 4 3 was a hexagonal prism from Nineveh, and largely preserves the same narrative as those previously discussed that refer to

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<sup>64</sup> The only aspect of *Te'elḥunu*'s name preserved in RINAP 3/1 35 is the final sign NU. This sign looks very different to the sign TÚ, the final syllable of *Apkallatu*. As NU agrees with the name given in K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558, *Te'elḥunu* has been preferred over *Apkallatu*.

<sup>65</sup> Cogan 1974: 15.

<sup>66</sup> Cogan 1974: 15-20.

<sup>67</sup> CAD s.v. '*kumirtu*', this is translated as 'priestess'.

Te'elḥunu.<sup>68</sup> However, this text is not included in the section about Te'elḥunu as there is a lacuna prior to the return of the 'Arab' gods to Ḥazā-il. This means that Te'elḥunu may have originally been mentioned in this text, but the present preservation means we cannot be sure about this.

RINAP 4 97 is an incomplete stele from Tell Aḥmar (ancient Til Barsip), and has an image of two foreign rulers who are leashed, and whose ropes are held by Esarhaddon.<sup>69</sup> The text inscribed on this stele is more explicit in its description of Tabū'a's imposition as ruler in comparison to the other texts. In RINAP 4 1, 2, 3, and 6, Tabū'a is described as being 'placed ... as ruler over them', with the inference that 'them' referred to the 'Arab' rulers.<sup>70</sup> In RINAP 4 97, this is changed to 'appointed ... as ruler'.<sup>71</sup> This did not change the overall meaning of the events, and raises the question of why this small change was necessary. It may have been due to the text being inscribed on a stele outside of Nineveh, but the exact reason for this change may simply be due to scribal preference.

As with the discussion of Zabibê and Samsi, there is the question of why the passage of Tabū'a was present in RINAP 4 97, and not Te'elḥunu. I believe this might be a simple question of preservation, as prior to the mention of Tabū'a there are several broken lines. As the other texts were so similar to each other, and Te'elḥunu and Tabū'a are mentioned in the same overall narrative, it is very likely that the narrative of Te'elḥunu was originally present, but has not been preserved over time.

### 2.1.1.6. IAPA' AND BASLU

Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions have the most attestations of 'Queens of the Arabs' of any Assyrian kings' royal inscriptions.<sup>72</sup> Iapa' and Baslu are the last women who appear in these texts. They only occurred together, and even though they do not appear with the title 'Queen of the Arabs', I include these women in this group as they ruled in the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>73</sup>

Iapa' and Baslu are recorded in the texts RINAP 4 1 and 8 by name, where the passage begins by describing how hostile and far away Bāzu was from Nineveh. The narrative goes on to describe the defeat of eight rulers from the region, and ends with another ruler – Laialê – submitting to Assyria. In these two texts the eight rulers are listed by name, and whilst the total specifies there were eight kings, two of these rulers were female rulers: Iapa' and Baslu. The importance of

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<sup>68</sup> Leichty 2011: 35.

<sup>69</sup> Leichty 2011: 180.

<sup>70</sup> *aš-kun-ma* is used in these texts. *CAD* s.v. 'šakānu'. The discussion of who she was intended to be ruler of, as well as the discussion of her childhood, can be found in chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>71</sup> RINAP 4 97 13.

<sup>72</sup> This includes Te'elḥunu, Tabū'a, Iapa, and Baslu.

<sup>73</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.3 for the discussion on the location of Bāzu and these women.

this inclusion is discussed in chapter three, section 3.2.3. This same narrative is present in texts RINAP 4 2, 3, and 4, but there is no itemised list of rulers – only a simple ‘I defeated eight kings’.<sup>74</sup>

All of these inscriptions were clay cylinders, and all except some exemplars of RINAP 4 1 were from Nineveh.<sup>75</sup> As discussed in the section regarding Te’elḥunu, some of these exemplars were also found in Ashur and Susa. There does not appear to be a clear reason in either the text carrier or the locations where the prisms were found which could explain why there is this difference between itemising the rulers individually in a list, or simply stating how many were defeated.

### **2.1.1.7. ADIYE**

Adiye is the final ‘Queen of the Arabs’ in the royal inscriptions. Prisms G and A of Assurbanipal, edited as RINAP 5/1 8 and 11 respectively, name Adiye in part of the narrative of Assurbanipal’s ‘Arab’ campaigns. The events of these campaigns were very difficult to discern, and are described in more detail in Gerardi 1992.

In RINAP 5/1 8, Adiye is described as being ‘defeated’, and her tents were set on fire.<sup>76</sup> She was then captured and was brought to Assyria alongside booty, and this version of events gives the impression that she played an active role in the military campaign. In comparison, RINAP 5/1 11 has a very different image of Adiye – she is described as the wife of the ‘Arab’ king Iauta’, and she is then taken to Assyria with Qedarite king Ammi-ladin.<sup>77</sup> These are two very different images of Adiye – one is a female ruler who is discussed in a similar manner to previous ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and the other is of a wife who was taken as a trophy. These two portrayals of Adiye will be discussed further in chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

### **2.1.1.8. ADUMMATU**

Adummatu was mentioned explicitly in relation to Te’elḥunu, and the textual evidence regarding this city is worth discussing in more detail in order to understand how the Assyrians viewed this city.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> 8 LUGAL.MEŠ šá qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú a-duk (RINAP 4 2 21).

<sup>75</sup> The full list of exemplars can be found in Leichty 2011: 9-10.

<sup>76</sup> RINAP 5/1 8 ix1’-6’.

<sup>77</sup> RINAP 5/1 11 viii24-26.

<sup>78</sup> Textual evidence can be found in both biblical and Assyrian sources, and we have different descriptions regarding the inhabitants of Adummatu. The Mesopotamian sources saw Adummatu and the ‘Arabs’ as rich with goods from South Arabia (Eph’al 1982: 238). In comparison, the biblical sources saw the ‘Arabs’ as only nomads who lurked on the Israelite borders (Eph’al 1982: 238). The most extensive sources regarding Adummatu are the biblical references to ‘Dumah’, but they do little to inform us about the historical oasis city found in the Assyrian texts, other than they had links with Levantine cities and towns. Here we not only are given a location but given a character of that location.

In the Akkadian texts Adummatu is attested as *adummatu*, *adummutu*, and Gallagher also suggests *dummetu*.<sup>79</sup> The first mentions of the city are in the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib, and details the campaign against the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Te’elḥunu. However, it is only in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon where Adummatu is described as a fortified city:<sup>80</sup>

Col. iv

1) URU.a-du-ma-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a-ri-bi

2) ša md30-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR.aš-šur<sup>ki</sup> AD ba-nu-u-a

3a) ik-šu-du-ma

Translation:

1-3a) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered

Here the simple designation of Adummatu as *dannūtu*, or ‘fortress’, is a testament to the regional importance of Adummatu.<sup>81</sup> The existence of fortifications infers that not only was there a need for defences surrounding Adummatu, but those ruling Adummatu must have commanded the resources and manpower necessary to construct such defensive architecture. This status also suggests that there were other smaller settlements surrounding this city. One of these may be the city Kapānu, which was listed later in the text, as well as another city whose name has not survived.<sup>82</sup> Eph’al did not believe this city was relevant to the narrative of Te’elḥunu, and suggested it is in fact related to the building activities at the bottom of the reverse side.<sup>83</sup> I do not agree with this, as Kapānu is not mentioned in the section of the text dealing with the building activities, but is mentioned in the aftermath of the campaign just before the description of the objects taken away from Te’elḥunu. Therefore, it is reasonable to state that Adummatu was a fortified city, surrounded by at least one other settlement named Kapānu, and had some sort of connection to Te’elḥunu.

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The biblical authors viewed ‘Dumah’ in such a poor light that it became a byword for ‘death’, ‘silence’, and the Netherworld. In modern English translations ‘Dumah’ is also translated into a ‘land of silence’ (Gallagher 2003 2004: 423. Psalms 94:17, 115:17).

<sup>79</sup> Gallagher 2003 2004: 423. RINAP 3 35 r.56’, r.57’; RINAP 4 1 iv 1, 2 ii 46, 4 ii’ 2’.

<sup>80</sup> For the Sennacherib texts: RINAP 3 35 r.56’, r.57’. The Esarhaddon passage is RINAP 4 1 iv 1-3a. For more detail regarding this campaign, see chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

<sup>81</sup> CAD, s.v. ‘*dannūtu*’; Magee 2014: 256.

<sup>82</sup> RINAP 3 35 r3’’: [...]’-lu’-ni URU.ka-pa-a-nu URU.[...]. The potential for Te’elḥunu’s fate influencing this town is discussed in chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

<sup>83</sup> Eph’al 1982: 42.

## 2.1.2. ADMINISTRATIVE LETTERS

Administrative letters to and from the Assyrian central administration and the provinces, which have mostly been collated in the State Archives of Assyria corpus (which will be referred to as SAA), provide an alternative body of textual evidence to complement and contrast the royal inscriptions.<sup>84</sup> Most of these have been found in the archives of cities like Nineveh, and appear to have been kept for administrative purposes. What these letters show us is the practical as opposed to the ideal that was portrayed in the royal inscriptions. For example, the royal inscriptions give the impression that the only interaction Assyrians and those in the Assyrian provinces had with ‘Arabs’ was through mass armed conflict. The royal inscriptions depicted the ‘Arabs’ as a population group who were separate from the empire, who occasionally caused military conflicts on its periphery, and who were sometimes allies with the enemies of Assyria. The letters depict far more complicated relations revolving around negotiations of trade and grazing rights between those who lived in the empire and the ‘Arabs’.<sup>85</sup> The administrative letters record the peaceful penetration of ‘Arabs’ into Mesopotamia. In a governor’s archive from Nippur which dates mostly from 755 to 732 there are many instances of ‘Arab’ names, indicating ‘Arabs’ were far more integrated into Mesopotamian society than the royal inscriptions suggested.<sup>86</sup> These documents offer an insight into the problems the Assyrian officials faced in managing contact with the ‘Arabs’. One famous example of this is SAA 1 179, which includes a declaration that iron should not be traded with the ‘Arabs’. Nowhere in the royal inscriptions do we find this restriction on trade, and this letter points to a necessary interaction that had to be restricted in order to minimise the threat of an effective ‘Arab’ rebellion. This wider context of interaction between the Assyrians and the ‘Arabs’ more generally, as depicted in the administrative letters, is much-needed when discussing both the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and the ‘Arabs’ in general.

SAA 1 179 demonstrates another problem with administrative letters, as these documents could also distort facts to depict a particular message. Bēl-iqbi, the governor of Ḫuzaza, defended his actions in trading iron to the ‘Arabs’ to the Assyrian king. This is the same issue we find with the royal inscriptions – Bēl-iqbi

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<sup>84</sup> This is an ongoing project, with the most recent edition dating to 2018 (SAA 21).

<sup>85</sup> See, for example: SAA 1 82; SAA 1 179; SAA 2 10; SAA 16 129; SAA 19 3. Also see Appendix A, section A.3.3.

<sup>86</sup> Cole 1996; also see Zadok 2013. Dating these letters can often be difficult. Many do not provide dates, and many do not report or comment on events included in the royal inscriptions. Where the name of an official is given we are on firmer ground, and prosopographical material or mentions in other types of textual evidence (such as the Eponym Chronicle or the royal inscriptions) can provide a rough date for the writing of the letter. In addition to these letters is an example of a loyalty oath between the Qedarites and Assurbanipal (SAA 2 10). This does not have any direct bearing on the discussion regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and so this text is not included in this overview. This also means that the genre of oaths has not been discussed in this chapter, but an overview of the importance of this genre and the issues of analysis can be found in Radner 2019a.

presented his case to a specific audience and so attempted to paint himself in the best light possible. It is very difficult to overcome this particular issue when analysing such correspondence, but we can still see core intentions: in SAA 1 179 the need was to correct the transgression of allowing the ‘Arabs’ to trade in iron in Bēl-iqbi’s province.

Only one administrative letter directly involves a ‘Queen of the Arabs’: SAA 11 162.<sup>87</sup> It is interesting that Samsi is the only woman included in such a text, but the reasons for her inclusion and the exclusion of her colleagues would be far too speculative, and may simply be a case of preservation. SAA 11 162 is a clay tablet originating from the Kuyunjik mound in Nineveh, but like many of the memoranda used in the administration of the provinces, there is no date.<sup>88</sup> The text is on a vertical tablet, but the top is broken, adding to the difficulty of interpreting this evidence.<sup>89</sup> The text names a cohort commander and the names of fugitives he is charged with delivering to a woman named Samsi. It is later stated she will also be in receipt of camels. As this woman is discussed as being in control of resources such as people (albeit fugitives) and camels, she likely had a clear economic role. Not only this, but since these items arrived from the Assyrian administration, it is likely this Samsi had some sort of political role which led to being the recipient of fugitives and camels. For this reason, I believe this woman is the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi, and this text has been included in this study to enhance the image we have of Samsi’s economic role.<sup>90</sup>

The common undercurrent of all the textual sources (both the royal inscriptions and the administrative letters) is that they all present a specific version of historical events. The royal inscriptions depict the military and political events with the ‘Arabs’ as dictated by the Assyrian king or his scribes, whilst the letters present a one-sided conversation reporting the interaction between the governing bodies of the provinces and the ‘Arabs’. Whilst informative, these sources have severe limitations in terms of both the content they can provide as well as the context in which they were found. One way of mitigating this problem is by comparing this textual information with the visual sources.

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<sup>87</sup> SAA 11 162. For more regarding this interesting letter, see chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

<sup>88</sup> Fales & Postgate 1995: XXVIII.

<sup>89</sup> Fales & Postgate 1995: XXIX

<sup>90</sup> In PNA the entry for Samsi collates this text under the entry for the ‘Queen of the Arabs’, but is careful to point out that this identification is far from certain. *PNA* s.v. ‘Samsi’. This text will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

## 2.2. PALACE RELIEFS

The textual material clearly provides a great deal of information, but it is important to also analyse the visual sources.<sup>91</sup> This different kind of evidence will provide complementary and supplementary information, and will aid in the mitigation of the limitations of the textual sources. I will be using the royal palace wall reliefs as the chief visual source as there was an intrinsic relationship between the texts inscribed upon many of them, and the images depicted on the relief.<sup>92</sup> The combination of these different types of evidence combined to deliver a particular message to the viewer.<sup>93</sup> Throughout this dissertation I will be referring to the images by their bibliographical information, but their museum numbers are provided in Appendix B.

The images on the reliefs found in the royal palaces were more than simple decoration, or illustrations of events mentioned in the texts. They were commissioned to show key events from larger narrative sequences, rather than every detail of the reign of an Assyrian king.<sup>94</sup> As with the textual evidence, this allowed for a manipulation of how events were represented.<sup>95</sup> Liverani has explained that royal ideology had the theme of the civilised Assyrians taming the wild foreign lands in order to bring order to the chaotic cosmos.<sup>96</sup> There was also the general message that Assyrian victory was never in doubt. The artists deliberately stripped foreign armies of any armour they would have worn on the battlefield, and made them seem less equipped than the Assyrians.<sup>97</sup> These simple methods of emphasis and slight manipulation of the details of war (such as soldiers spontaneously losing their clothes once they had died) were employed for the sole purpose of demonstrating how the Assyrians were superior in warfare to other foreign rulers.

Artists who created these images in the royal palace had to interpret events in accordance with their training and aesthetics, which creates a secondary layer of manipulation of the narrative.<sup>98</sup> Luckily, we can identify events according to whether they fit a specific narrative in the texts that have survived. Rather than using this to reconstruct historical events in as much detail as possible, identifying

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<sup>91</sup> Fales provides an overview of the historiographic traditions of studying Assyrian art (Fales 2009: 237-247).

<sup>92</sup> The relationship between royal inscriptions and palace reliefs differed depending on many circumstance, such as the king who commissioned the texts and imagery, the palace, the location in the empire and within the palace, and the overall purpose of both text and imagery (Russell 1999).

<sup>93</sup> Winter 1997: 359-360.

<sup>94</sup> Bersani and Dutoit 1985: 7; Fuchs 2011: 385. For an overview of palace reliefs and monumental art, see Russell 2017: 471-492.

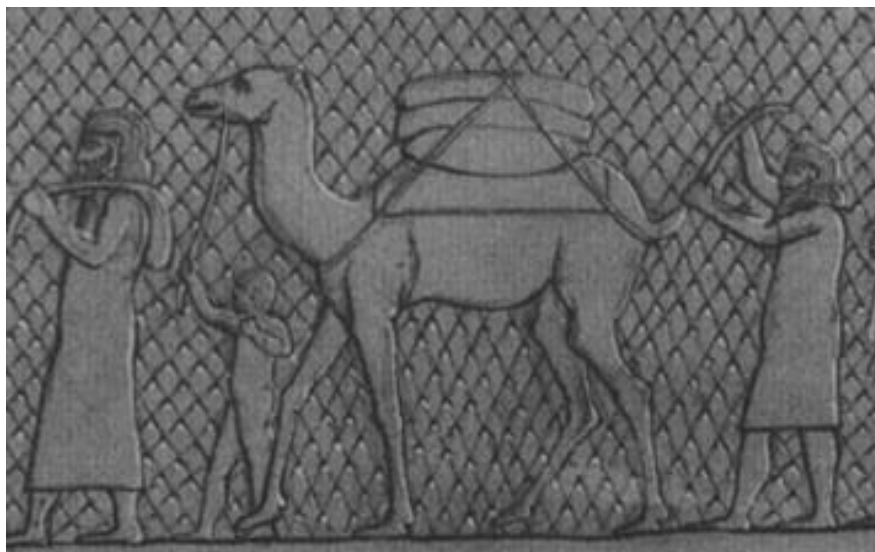
<sup>95</sup> Liverani 1979: 305; Marcus 1995: 2492; Fuchs 2011: 385.

<sup>96</sup> Liverani 1979.

<sup>97</sup> Fuchs 2011: 385.

<sup>98</sup> Carroll 1994: 214. It is these interpretive difficulties that led Novotny and Watanabe to conclude: 'The interplay between royal ideology and historical reality in Assyrian texts and art makes it a real challenge for the modern scholar to reconstruct some historical events, especially when they are known only from pictorial evidence' (2018: 105).

what events the scenes correspond to can provide information that is more difficult to grasp from the texts alone. In particular, these visual sources can provide evidence for how the Assyrians viewed these events, and what aspects of these events were deemed as the most important to stress to the viewer.



**Figure 3** *Line drawing of a palace relief depicting a dromedary camel used as a beast of burden in a non-'Arab' context – Sennacherib's third campaign. [Line Drawing] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner 1998: pl. 143. P. 73-74.*

I needed to locate potential depictions of 'Queens of the Arabs' in this rich material, as the way they were depicted could determine Assyrian attitudes and understandings of these women's roles. Identification of 'Arabs' in the palace reliefs relies upon two aspects: the presence of a dromedary camel, and figures wearing stereotypically 'Arab' dress.<sup>99</sup> The dromedary camel at this time was only found in and around the Syro-Arabian desert, and was almost exclusively used by the 'Arabs'.<sup>100</sup> Mitchell has collated the incidences of dromedaries on the reliefs of Shalmeneser III, Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, Sennacherib, and Assurbanipal, and there was no scarcity in depictions of this animal.<sup>101</sup> Yet this method alone cannot be relied upon, as there are situations like those depicted in figure 3 where a dromedary is depicted as a beast of burden without an 'Arab' depicted.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> The difficulties of attempting to identify individuals in the palace reliefs can be seen in Novotny & Watanabe 2018. The authors dissected the palace relief BM ME 124945–6, and suggest identities for four foreigners approaching Assurbanipal. This includes the Elamite leader Tammaritu and a member of his family, the Arab leader Abi-Iate', and the Nabataean Natnu.

<sup>100</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.1.2.

<sup>101</sup> Mitchell 2000.

<sup>102</sup> Barnett, Bleibtreu & Turner 1998: 73-74.



**Figure 4** *'Arabs' on dromedaries in stereotypical dress. [Palace Relief] Barnett 1976: pl.XXXIII.*

The second aspect of identifying 'Arabs' is the dress of human figures in the reliefs. This is a more reliable method than searching for dromedary camels, as artistic convention depicted foreigners in their stereotypical dress. For 'Arabs' this normally meant loose hair, beards, perhaps a headband, and a kilt or loincloth fastened at the waist. If they were in combat, they usually used bows and arrows, and occasionally spears, as seen in figure 4.<sup>103</sup>

The next stage was to determine whether there were any women in relation to either dromedary camels or 'Arabs'. Women were generally only shown in the palace reliefs as deportees alongside children wearing long fringed tunics and

<sup>103</sup> Reade 1998: 227, 225. Reade suggests that curved swords were also symbolic of the 'Arabs', but I have seen little evidence to substantiate this claim. I am currently unaware of any images of stereotypically (and therefore clearly identifiable) dressed 'Arabs' using swords, and so cannot conclude that curved swords were stereotypical to 'Arabs'.

robes.<sup>104</sup> The logical step here would be to investigate any instances of figures in stereotypically ‘female’ clothing in relation to images depicting events involving the ‘Arabs’. Therefore, I searched for women who were in ‘un-Arab’ dress but who were in ‘Arab’ contexts such as riding camels or in ‘Arab’ tribute is required.

The final step of identifying any images of ‘Queens of the Arabs’ was to compare the written texts to any corresponding reliefs which depicted some of the events reported in the texts. The royal inscriptions are particularly important here, as several were written on the same orthostat as the palace reliefs. This will allow for a comparison of how the different media needed to emphasise different elements of the same narrative. The different media will therefore demonstrate how the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were constructed dependent on the particular conventions and sensibilities required to convey a similar message.

This relatively simple approach is greatly complicated after considering not all the palace reliefs have survived to present day, and many are poorly preserved. This is particularly problematic with the reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III, whose reliefs were stacked before their reuse by Esarhaddon.<sup>105</sup> Not only are they poorly preserved but their order has had to be reconstructed by Barnett and Falkner, which may not be wholly accurate.<sup>106</sup> Luckily, the excavator A.H. Layard made line drawings of many reliefs, including those that have since been lost.<sup>107</sup> Whilst these may not be entirely accurate either, these line drawings have been used due to their record of information that would have otherwise been irretrievably lost.

After utilising this approach, I only found one ‘Queen of the Arabs’ depicted in the palace reliefs: Samsi, who is depicted in two scenes.<sup>108</sup> The scenes Samsi was depicted in extended beyond the traditional depictions of foreign women in Assyrian palace reliefs. As there are only two images depicting a ‘Queen of the Arabs’, a discussion is warranted regarding the identification of these figures, as well as the reason for their depiction.

### **2.2.1. RELIEF 1: SAMSI, ‘QUEEN OF THE ARABS’, BRINGING CAMELS TO ASSYRIA**

Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXIV is a wall relief from the Central palace of Tiglath-pileser III and is part of a series which depicts the prisoners, booty, and payment

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<sup>104</sup> Albenda 1983: 84-85; Ornan 2002: 463; Reade 1998: 227. An example can be seen in figure 6.

<sup>105</sup> This is explained further in this chapter, section 2.1.1.1.

<sup>106</sup> At the very end of the series regarding the ‘Arab’ campaign, Barnett and Falkner have included a slab which depicts rams. These animals have not been mentioned in the accompanying royal inscription, and I am hesitant to say that this slab was part of the original series (Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXX).

<sup>107</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: 7.

<sup>108</sup> There is the possibility that the women depicted in one of the Til Barsip paintings included a ‘Queen of the Arabs’, but the figures are all described as being depicted in a similar way (Tomabechei 1983/1984: 69). This is in contrast to the depictions of Samsi, where her posture, paraphernalia, and wider scene point to the identification of the figures as Samsi.

brought back to Assyria from the battle with Samsi and the 'Arabs'.<sup>109</sup> The human figure in the scene wears a head covering, and their hand is raised to their forehead (figure 5). She is holding a small container in her right hand, and is leading a group of dromedary camels.



**Figure 5** *An 'Arab' woman leading dromedary camel before the Assyrian king. [Palace Relief]*  
Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXIV.

Barnett and Falkner are keen to identify this woman as Samsi, but they do so by emphasising aspects of the relief that are not extraordinary. Barnett and Falkner believe that the head covering and its fringed form meant she was a higher status than other women.<sup>110</sup> However, this is not an unusual feature in the reliefs of Assyria, as there are images of foreign women who wear head coverings and fringed robes in Sennacherib's reliefs, such as a non-Assyrian woman with a covered head, along with a fringed cloak in figure 6.

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<sup>109</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXVI.

<sup>110</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: xvii, 41.



**Figure 6** *Deported woman from the Zagros region, wearing a long, fringed garment with their head covered, in a relief of Sennacherib. [Palace Relief] Albenda 1983: 85.*

A better identifier of this woman as Samsi is the woman's posture. As Cifarelli has stated, tributaries in Assyrian palace reliefs tend to be depicted in a 'crouching' pose, with bent heads and curved backs.<sup>111</sup> Whilst this figure is not in the extreme of this pose, when we compare her pose to that of the Assyrian eunuch leading the prisoners earlier in the scene she is certainly in a more 'hunched' posture.<sup>112</sup> This points to the figure being some sort of foreign dignitary, and as she was a woman in a series regarding Tiglath-pileser III's victory over the 'Arabs', it would be fitting for this to be a depiction of Samsi. Based on this figure's gender, its association with the 'Arabs', and her gestures towards the Assyrian king, this figure can only be Samsi, 'Queen of the Arabs'.

An interesting feature of this scene is the gesture Samsi is performing. The raised hand to the head recalls images of other non-Assyrian women who are prisoners of Assurnasirpal II, and performed the same gesture with one or both

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<sup>111</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 214-5.

<sup>112</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXIV.

hands.<sup>113</sup> As Cifarelli has explained, this gesture has largely been interpreted as one of ‘hair-tearing’ during mourning, which correlates with other examples across Mediterranean and Egyptian cultures.<sup>114</sup> Cifarelli rightly pointed out that the exact meaning of this posture to an Assyrian audience is difficult to discern. In the context of the depiction of Samsi, this gesture could be indicative of her great military defeat at the hands of Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, this could be an Assyrian artist using artistic conventions to both recognise Samsi’s gender and emphasise the overall message that the ‘Arab’ forces under Samsi suffered a military defeat so bad Samsi was in great mourning.<sup>116</sup>

This relief is the only surviving palace relief to depict a ‘Queen of the Arabs’. It is therefore the only evidence for how we should expect an ‘Arab’ royal woman to dress. This also cements the status of Samsi as a ruler of similar standing to other foreign dignitaries, as her posture is akin to male representatives and rulers of foreign lands. Meanwhile the Assyrian artist does not ignore Samsi’s gender, and used a gender-specific gesture to emphasise the great loss of Samsi in her military defeat. This defeat will be discussed in chapter three, section 3.2.1. The importance of this relief in assessing Samsi’s economic role will be discussed in chapter four, section 4.5.2.

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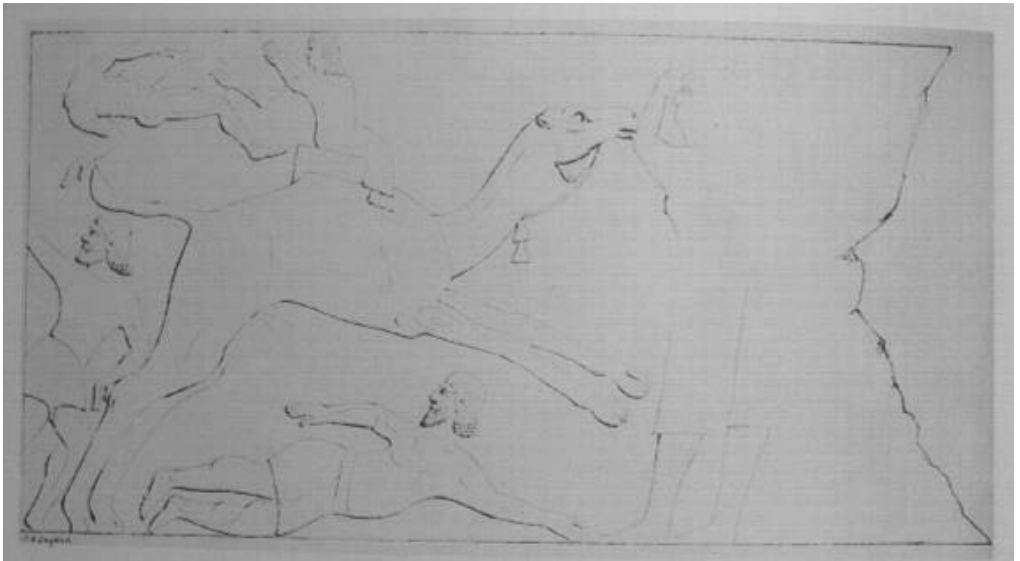
<sup>113</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 221.

<sup>114</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 221.

<sup>115</sup> This is discussed in more detail in chapter three, section 3.2.1.

<sup>116</sup> A final minor point is that this gesture is coded with meaning for the Assyrian audience viewing this palace relief. There is no evidence to suggest that this gesture was part of the ‘Arab’ culture Samsi came from.

## 2.2.2. RELIEF 2: SAMSI, 'QUEEN OF THE ARABS', FLEEING THE BATTLEFIELD



**Figure 7** *Line drawing by Layard depicting Samsi fleeing the battlefield.* [Line Drawing] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII.

Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII is a line drawing of a palace relief, and depicts a figure in a long tunic sat atop a platform-like saddle on the back of a dromedary camel fleeing the battlefield, surrounded by dead and dying 'Arab' troops. I suggest that if the line drawing by Layard is accurate, this figure is another depiction of Samsi.

The rider is distinct from the 'Arab' troops dying around her. The troops are bare headed, bearded, and wear only kilts.<sup>117</sup> In comparison, the rider is beardless and wearing a long tunic. When comparing this tunic with the previously identified figure of Samsi in Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXIV, this indicates the figure was a woman. To explain this depiction of a woman on the battlefield, further details of this depiction have to be examined.

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<sup>117</sup> Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVIII.



**Figure 8**      *Example of a 'cushion' saddle from Tell Halaf. [Relief] Bulliet 1990: 82.*

The platform on the dromedary is similar to depictions of a 'cushion' saddle, such as the one in figure 8. Bulliet has suggested that perhaps this form of saddle was used only for military purposes, as a different form of saddle is seen in reliefs where dromedaries were beasts of burden, but is absent from military scenes.<sup>118</sup> This does not match the imagery of the palace reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III. This type of saddle is not depicted on other reliefs in the same series that depict 'Arab' soldiers on the battlefield riding dromedaries with no saddle at all, such as in figure 9.

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<sup>118</sup> Bulliet 1990: 84. Bulliet also suggests that the 'cushion' saddle allowed the rider to control the dromedary camel without using a stick, thus allowing the rider to use weapons more easily from camelback



**Figure 9**      *Depiction of an 'Arab' soldier riding with no saddle on a dromedary camel. [Palace Relief] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XIV.*

As the female rider in Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII was afforded a level of luxury, comfort, and stability through the 'cushion' saddle that the male riders were not. She was therefore a higher status than the 'Arab' men in the same series surrounding this scene. The tassels on the reins of her dromedary also speak to a higher status woman than the men in the reliefs. Such tassels do not serve any practical purpose, and they only make this camel appear more luxurious, especially in the absence of such decorations on the other camels in the series of reliefs.<sup>119</sup> The saddle and tassels on the dromedary camel therefore signalled the higher status of the female rider.

The gesture of the woman riding the dromedary also points to her identification as Samsi. If this line drawing is accurate, the rider has twisted her body in the direction of the Assyrian troops she is fleeing from, with both hands raised in front of her face. I read this as an extreme variation on Cifarelli's 'crouching tributary' type of posture. Cifarelli states that the 'S' shape of tributaries' bodies in palace reliefs was in contrast to the straight, erect bodies of

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<sup>119</sup> For example, see figure 9. There are no tassels, and only simple reins to control the camel are depicted.

the Assyrians.<sup>120</sup> In this relief the convention is pushed even further, as the woman is twisting her body almost one hundred and eighty degrees to face the direction she is fleeing from. Her physicality demonstrated how un-Assyrian she was by twisting and contorting her body, thus othering her from the Assyrian soldiers in the relief series.

The gesture this woman's hands are performing is a puzzle. Both of her hands are raised behind her towards the Assyrians in a manner similar to that of the male 'Arab' rider in figure 9. However, the male 'Arab' rider is only raising one hand so the other is free to steer the dromedary he is riding. I suggest this is a mistake on the part of A.H. Layard whilst copying this relief, by drawing two hands instead of one. This still poses an interesting scenario. The 'Arab' woman is using a gesture seen in other scenes with male 'Arab' soldiers, indicating that they performed similar roles on the battlefield. This would mean that Samsi fought alongside her troops, but then had to flee when defeat was near in order to survive. When taken into consideration alongside the 'cushion' saddle and the decorative tassels on the camel's reins, this figure can only be identified as Samsi fleeing the battlefield.

The royal palace reliefs are therefore an important resource that complements the textual evidence. Samsi, 'Queen of the Arabs', was depicted in two palace reliefs. She was depicted with a posture that was similar to a male foreign tributary or ruler, but in one relief was given a gesture to indicate her great military loss, and in the other was given a gesture to indicate some sort of martial role on the battlefield. These pieces of evidence complement the written material and help identify the roles of this woman as identified by the Assyrian artists.

## **2.3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE ARABIAN PENINSULA**

The field of Assyriology is in the process of integrating recent research from Arabian archaeology into wider discussions of the 'Arabs' in Neo-Assyrian history. The lack of material from the Neo-Assyrian period at sites explicitly mentioned in the Assyrian texts has slowed this process.<sup>121</sup> Unfortunately, there has been some resistance to using sites which have been extensively investigated such as Tayma and al-'Ula as comparisons for the unexcavated sites mentioned in the Assyrian texts. I believe such a comparative approach can give a sense of what could be uncovered at unexcavated sites such as Adummatu, which was important enough not only to be mentioned in the Assyrian sources, but to be the centre of a campaign led by Sennacherib.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 214-216.

<sup>121</sup> Magee 2014: 256.

<sup>122</sup> RINAP 3 35 53', 57'.

Most of the evidence from the Northwest Arabian Peninsula from this period is archaeological. There are sadly gaps in the material, as important sites have not yet been excavated to the Neo-Assyrian level. In this research, the sites which have been excavated across the Arabian Peninsula will be used as comparisons to help provide a model for the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.

The reports by Eichmann, Schaudig and Hausleiter regarding the excavations at Tayma will be particularly fruitful.<sup>123</sup> This will be complemented by Magee's comprehensive overview of the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from prehistory through to the Hellenistic period. Magee places towns such as Tayma and al-'Ula within a much wider geographical region and demonstrated the interconnected nature of these towns and their impact upon relations with superpowers such as Assyria.<sup>124</sup> These authors will help in the discussions regarding the wider economic situation of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula in chapter four. More 'cultural' aspects of this region, such as language and religion, have been discussed by Macdonald, with a specific focus on rock art and graffiti.<sup>125</sup> Whilst much of this material is hard to date to the Neo-Assyrian period, these types of material will be useful comparisons that will help the discussion regarding the religious roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs'.<sup>126</sup>

The archaeological material will also allow for a verification of the accuracy of the Assyrian texts and visual evidence, as well as two modern misconceptions of ancient 'Arab' society. The first is the level of sedentarism of the population ruled by the 'Queens of the Arabs', as the Assyrian sources in general depict them as generally nomadic groups. Existence of cities within the Northwest Arabian Peninsula such as Tayma and al-'Ula points to the possibility that the 'Queens of the Arabs' were leaders of cities rather than nomadic populations. Second, the archaeological material will also aid the discussion of whether ancient Arabia was a land of luxury items and exotic goods so expensive they were worth their weight in gold. These questions will be further discussed in chapter four, but here I will provide a brief overview of the evidence regarding the two most important cities: Adummatu and Tayma. Adummatu is mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon as the target of a siege by Sennacherib, and is connected to Te'elḥunu.<sup>127</sup> I have also provided an overview of the evidence regarding Tayma, that will be used to suggest what might be found at Adummatu once it is excavated to the Neo-Assyrian layer.

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<sup>123</sup> Eichmann, Schaudig & Hausleiter 2006.

<sup>124</sup> Magee 2014.

<sup>125</sup> Macdonald 2010, 2012, and see Macdonald 1990 regarding the interesting practice of camel hunting in the Arabian Peninsula.

<sup>126</sup> See chapter 5, section 5.3.3 for this discussion.

<sup>127</sup> Although this connection is not confirmed in the textual evidence, it seems likely that Te'elḥunu was the ruler of this city. See chapter 3, section 3.2.2 for this discussion.

### 2.3.1. ADUMMATU

Adummatu has been widely accepted to be modern Dumat al-Jandal.<sup>128</sup> Adummatu was in an ideal position for trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula as it was, a large oasis town at the southern end of the Wadi Sirhan.<sup>129</sup> In fact, Hausleiter has described Adummatu as the ‘gateway’ leading Mesopotamian powers like Assyria and Babylonia into the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>130</sup>

Modern Dumat al-Jandal has not been excavated beyond the Nabataean occupation layer, which means the analysis of the town during the time of the Neo-Assyrian period is limited.<sup>131</sup> In the absence of direct archaeological evidence, comparisons to similar oasis towns, as well as any textual references that might inform us about the status of Adummatu during the Neo-Assyrian period, have to be relied upon.<sup>132</sup>

Adummatu was therefore located in a pivotal position that allowed its inhabitants to profit from the trade entering and leaving the Northwest Arabian Peninsula. As there is little further archaeological evidence about Adummatu during the Neo-Assyrian period, I will now discuss the evidence of Tayma – a similar oasis town which existed from the second millennium.

### 2.3.2. TAYMA

The excavations at Tayma have revealed a fortified city in the desert based around an oasis, which reached a status that at least rivalled Adummatu in the sixth century when Nabonidus moved to Tayma.<sup>133</sup> There is evidence that Tayma existed well before the time of the Neo-Assyrians, and thus acts as a good comparison to Adummatu.

The earliest archaeological remains from Tayma consist of an external mud-brick city wall dating to the late second millennium, but Hausleiter has argued

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<sup>128</sup> See figure 2 for the location of this town. This identification was based on the mentions of this location from the first century in classical and Arab authors, but Eph'al notes that whilst this has been conventionally accepted, archaeological verification is needed (Eph'al 1982: 120, 121 n.414).

<sup>129</sup> Eph'al 1982: 16; Al-Muaikel 1988: xxi; Macdonald 1995: 1360; Hausleiter 2012: 826.

<sup>130</sup> Hausleiter 2012: 826.

<sup>131</sup> Al-Muaikel 1988: 48.

<sup>132</sup> These textual references are discussed in this chapter, section 2.1.1.8.

<sup>133</sup> There are several theories as to why Nabonidus initially moved to Tayma, and why he stayed there for ten years (Lambert 1972: 62). For a brief overview of these religious and cultic issues due to this move, see Van de Mierop 2007: 278-281. I believe that at least part of the motivation was for Nabonidus to better control the trade routes through the Peninsula, as well as to control the ‘Arab’ groups in the region. This follows the argument of Al-Muaikel, who claims that this move was partially motivated by a desire to control the trade routes, as well as the need for a more secure position with which to rule the Neo-Babylonian empire safe from the threat of the Achaemenids (Al-Muaikel 1988: 14). Hausleiter follows this argument as well (Hausleiter 2012: 823). The fact that Nabonidus chose to stay at Tayma rather than any of the other cities and towns along this conquest route like al-'Ula, Padakku, Hibra, Iadihu, and Iatribu, also speaks to the importance of Tayma in the region (Hausleiter 2012: 823).

that there is evidence of occupation at this site from the fourth millennium.<sup>134</sup> The existence of such a wall meant that there was a social and political need for such a construction, as well as the organisational skill and labour for building it.<sup>135</sup> Tayma was a target due to its wealth, gained from the favourable position it held on the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula, and the sedentary population living there clearly felt a need to protect themselves in the form of a wall surrounding the city. This was supplemented by an interior wall dated to the middle of the first millennium, this time made of stone masonry and stone fillings.<sup>136</sup> This is a clear parallel to the description of Adummatu as fortified city, and confirms that walled cities did exist in the first millennium in the Arabian Peninsula.

The pivotal position of Tayma was fully exploited by the caravans passing through, whether or not they were actively participating in the overland trade route.<sup>137</sup> At Tayma during the Neo-Babylonian period 'Compound B' in the Southwest section was separated from the rest of the city by a wall, and Hausleiter has suggested that this was the stopover point used by caravans to rest their camels.<sup>138</sup> The ability to house animals safely would have furthered the importance of Tayma to the overland trade routes, and would have allowed for merchants to safely resupply without fear of their primary mode of transportation – the dromedary – being stolen.

An example of the cross-regional connections that were fostered through trade at Tayma is the discovery of a bronze axe and a dagger, which Hausleiter suggested were originally from Syria and the Levant, in Tayma's industrial zone from the second millennium.<sup>139</sup> Whilst their original usage in Tayma is difficult to ascertain, Hausleiter pointed to these objects arriving in the Arabian Peninsula at the same time.<sup>140</sup> Whilst the axe and dagger were from an earlier date than the Neo-Assyrian period, they speak to the connections of the trade routes through Tayma. The weapons demonstrate that the links between Tayma, the Levant, and Syria were established prior to the first millennium, and therefore trade between Tayma and the Levant was likely flourishing by the Neo-Assyrian period.

At Tayma there is a building which is not the same layout as contemporaneous temples in neighbouring areas, but has been identified as a religious building due to the luxury items found there alongside a large amount of pottery.<sup>141</sup> These items indicate votive and ritual activities such as offerings and libations to the gods

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<sup>134</sup> This evidence consists of arrowheads, and the remnants of carnelian bead production (Eichmann, Schaudig & Hausleiter 2006: 165; Hausleiter 2011: 109; Hausleiter 2012: 828).

<sup>135</sup> Hausleiter 2012: 820.

<sup>136</sup> Eichmann, Schaudig & Hausleiter 2006: 166.

<sup>137</sup> Dayton 1970: 253; Macdonald 1995: 1361; Hausleiter 2012: 828. See figure 2 for Tayma's location just South of Adummatu (labelled by Byrne as Dumah).

<sup>138</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 106.

<sup>139</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 112; Hausleiter 2012: 828.

<sup>140</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 112.

<sup>141</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 113. These objects can only be loosely dated to the late second or early first millennium.

worshipped at Tayma. The importance of Tayma is thus even more solidified, as it could have functioned as a central point for ‘Arab’ religion. It is possible it served both the locals and the merchants who passed through Tayma. This temple illustrates the other ways in which Tayma played an important role in Northwest Arabia.

Tayma also had its own linguistic dialect – ‘Taymanitic’.<sup>142</sup> The evidence for this comes from about four hundred short inscriptions from the sixth and fifth centuries. The texts are from a wider corpus of North Arabain dialects, where 98% are graffiti on rocks in the countryside.<sup>143</sup> ‘Taymanitic’ was in use from 800 BCE, as a regent of Carchemish boasted of knowing the language of Tayma, alongside eleven other languages of the time.<sup>144</sup> In addition, because this is a language from far away, the regent was demonstrating the communication links that would have been necessary to learn ‘Taymanitic’. The existence of a dialect specific to Tayma further illustrates the importance of this city to the region.

Tayma therefore had a sedentary population from the fourth millennium, and became fortified in the second millennium. It was in a pivotal location that allowed it to grow due to the trade of merchants who needed to pass through the territory. Tayma had links to Syria, the Levant, and Egypt, and became a cultural focal point itself.

The amount of data provided by the archaeological remains at Tayma is pivotal to understanding the position of Adummatu, and therefore is vital for the discussion of the roles of Te’elḥunu. The incorporation of this evidence is important for any discussion or analysis of the ‘Arabs’, as there were large, fortified cities present in the Northwest of the Arabian Peninsula during the Neo-Assyrian period. It has also demonstrated that cities in this region played an important role in the transfer of goods through the Peninsula, and as such could be included in important political actions with the Assyrians.

## 2.4. SUMMARY

The goal of this chapter was to treat the evidence of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in as holistic a manner as possible, as this will allow for a full understanding of the roles of these women. Most of the evidence relating to these women are royal inscriptions, and this will naturally be reflected in the dissertation. However, it is interesting that the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were included in inscriptions outside of the capital, in both pieces of palace architecture and stelae. The inclusion of the

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<sup>142</sup> Macdonald 2004 has an in-depth discussion regarding the languages and dialects which can be found in ancient inscriptions from the Arabian Peninsula. We also see the use of ‘Dedanitic’ as a dialect based around al-‘Ula (Macdonald 2004: 490).

<sup>143</sup> Macdonald 2004: 490.

<sup>144</sup> Hawkins 2000: 130-131, II.24. Karkemiš A15b, 3. §18-20. This text can be read in Appendix A.3.3. Macdonald 2004: 490; Macdonald 2010: 5.

‘Queens of the Arabs’ points to the Assyrian viewing interactions with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ was an important part of the narratives of the Assyrian kings.

The roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ must have played an important factor in their interactions with the Assyrian kings. From a brief examination of the archaeological evidence in the Arabian Peninsula, it is clear this region was an important trade hub – and control of it would be an important asset for the Assyrians. The textual evidence, while illuminating, is also rather limited in its information regarding their roles. The visual material from the royal palace reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III adds to the discussion of how the Assyrians viewed these women, as well as the possibility of Samsi being physically present on the battlefield. The archaeological evidence provides much-needed context for the wider region of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.

Overall, it is clear that the limited number of textual sources has prevented a traditional Assyriological treatment of these women. The elevation of the textual evidence in Assyriology has meant the incorporation of recent developments of archaeology in the Arabian Peninsula has been slow. I have taken a more holistic approach that better represents the fact that these are women from the Arabian Peninsula. This has included an incorporation of both visual and archaeological data. The palace reliefs with ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi explicitly enable further discussions regarding her military and economic roles. I will use the archaeological data to further contextualise the roles these women performed.

### 3 MILITARY ROLES

The majority of the evidence regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ refers to the military roles of some of these women.<sup>1</sup> According to Michael Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power, military power is both concentrated and coercive – the military could be used in battles to carry out violence on behalf of those in power, whilst coercing the general populace into submission during times of peace.<sup>2</sup> This is not quite the case with the Neo-Assyrian period, as Parker has pointed out that the military was largely aimed at attaining specific short-term gains, and to spread a ‘psychology of warfare’.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Parker stated that the Neo-Assyrian army was not deployed in every instance of a territorial dispute, and many quarrels on the border were settled by the local governors and any forces they had.<sup>4</sup> As many of the sources from the Neo-Assyrian period are either manifestations of the military successes of the Neo-Assyrian (particularly the Sargonid) kings, or record these successes, it is unsurprising that this is the most common context in which we encounter the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Five women exercised power as military leaders in these sources: Samsi, Te’elḥunu, Iapa’, Baslu, and Adiyē. This chapter will look at the military roles of these women, and will also emphasise how surprising it is to find women in such a role by providing a comparison with the military roles of the Assyrian royal women Sammu-rāmat and the military units of the MÍ.É.GAL (‘woman of the palace’).

The question for this chapter is whether the sources present accurate descriptions of the Assyrian interactions with the ‘Arab’ populations. At first glance the sources present cases where ‘Arabs’ attacked sedentary populations.<sup>5</sup> These letters also expressed the low opinions that the Assyrian governors held of the ‘Arabs’, and these ancient opinions have played into modern orientalist stereotypes of ‘Arab’ and nomadic groups as marauding raiders. This stereotype of ‘the nomad’ was of an individual who wandered through deserts full of dangerous animals, a brigand who was incurably violent, and who refused to accept authority.<sup>6</sup> For example, the Assyrian governor Ṭab-ṣill-Ešarra warned the Assyrian king that the ‘Arabs’ will move out of the region and plunder anyway.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, the ‘military’ roles of some of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ was based on

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<sup>1</sup> Zabibê, Tabū’a, and Iatī’e do not have military roles preserved in the Assyrian sources.

<sup>2</sup> Mann 2012: 26.

<sup>3</sup> Parker 2015: 290.

<sup>4</sup> Parker 2015: 291. Parker has also pointed to the problem of talking about the military and the power of the Neo-Assyrian empire in general, as there was a lot of variety in how different provinces at different times were governed (Parker 2015: 295).

<sup>5</sup> Castillo 2007: 154. For example, see SAA 1 82, 84, SAA 18 148.

<sup>6</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1359

<sup>7</sup> SAA 1 82, r.1-7.

large-scale organised warfare against the Assyrians.<sup>8</sup> It is for this reason that battles will be the focus of this chapter – not the opportunistic raids as described in the Assyrian letters.

I will compare the military roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, to those of the Neo-Assyrian royal women.<sup>9</sup> This chapter will begin with an assessment of the military roles the Neo-Assyrian royal women, and Sammu-rāmat will play a prominent role in this section.<sup>10</sup> A royal inscription on a stele from the reign of Adad-nērārī III included Sammu-rāmat in the military action of crossing the Euphrates, but then grammatically excludes her in the actual description of the battle.<sup>11</sup> I will also discuss the military units of the office of the ‘woman of the palace’. These case studies will form the basis of a comparison between the Assyrian royal women and the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and for a broader discussion regarding these women’s ‘military’ roles.

After this comparison I will analyse the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who were involved in military actions in the Assyrian evidence. There were a number of battles between the Assyrians and the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and these women had at least some role in the command of these armies. Samsi, Te’elḥunu, Iapa’, Baslu, and Adiyē were described in some sort of role in the military campaigns of ‘Arab’ population groups against the Assyrians. Samsi is the only woman in this group to be explicitly described as the leader of a military campaign against the Assyrians, but Te’elḥunu and Adiyē were also described as having been ‘defeated’ in a campaign. Iapa’ and Baslu were described in the same source as participating in a military campaign alongside each other, which illustrated how multiple ‘Queens of the Arabs’ could operate at the same time. Finally, Adiyē was described as being ‘defeated’, but also as being the ‘spouse’ of an ‘Arab’ king. She is the only example of a married ‘Queen of the Arabs’. There are no other examples of women explicitly leading military activity in the Neo-Assyrian sources, which makes these instances remarkable.

Yet even more remarkable is the reaction this garnered from the Assyrians. I will demonstrate that the Assyrian royal women were meant to remain far away from violence.<sup>12</sup> I therefore expected a significant reaction in the Assyrian sources when faced with women in an active military role. Instead, there was no explicit

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<sup>8</sup> Here by ‘organised’ I mean actions which were sanctioned or supported by an ‘Arab’ ruler and were undertaken as a group.

<sup>9</sup> The decision for using these women has been discussed in chapter 1, section 1.3.

<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth discussion regarding Sammu-rāmat’s wider role in Assyrian history, see chapter 1, section 1.4.1.

<sup>11</sup> Also see chapter 1, section 1.4.1 for more about Sammu-rāmat.

<sup>12</sup> Violence as a concept is very difficult to define. It can refer to force applied by individuals, collectively, or by institutions. It can be planned or passionate. It can be fatal or non-fatal. In addition, violence does not need to be physical (Miller 2020: 6). The scenes on the palace reliefs that depict the aftermath of battles, such as deportations and Assurbanipal’s garden scene, are therefore depictions of violence (Rede 2018: 86). In this dissertation, I use the term ‘violence’ to describe physical force that could be fatal, and was carried out by individuals – even though the actors were soldiers acting on behalf of the state. This means I will be discussing violence largely in the realm of military activities carried out during the course of a battle, and not the events in the aftermath of military ventures.

reaction regarding this difference in gender roles until the reign of Assurbanipal. Assurbanipal's response took the form of an exceptional palace relief depicting tortured, dying, and dead 'Arab' women, which sent a specific message to the audience: no matter how different a foreign ruler is from the Assyrians, they will still be subjugated to the yoke of Assyria.

### 3.1. NEO-ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN

In order to understand the Assyrian sources regarding the military roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs', I initially turned to the Assyrian expectations for women in violent circumstances. This section will therefore focus on the military roles of Neo-Assyrian royal women as a comparative case study.<sup>13</sup> There are very few depictions of Neo-Assyrian royal women, and even fewer depicting women in violent actions. Depicting Assyrian women (of any status) in the vicinity of physical and fatal violence was a subject both scribes and artists of the Assyrian court avoided. However, there are some notable exceptions, and I will discuss the case studies of Sammu-rāmat and the existence of the military units of the Assyrian royal women.<sup>14</sup> These cases shall serve as wider context for the culture that produced the sources recording the 'Queens of the Arabs', and they provide a basis for the evaluation of the 'Queens of the Arabs' with military roles.

#### 3.1.1. SAMMU-RĀMAT

Sammu-rāmat was the mother of the Assyrian king Adad-nērārī III, who ruled from 810-783. She had an unusual amount of power for an Assyrian royal woman, which can be seen in the Pazarçik stele.<sup>15</sup> In the text, Sammu-rāmat is initially included in the action of crossing the Euphrates whilst on her son's military campaign. Yet when the narrative begins to discuss the battle itself, Sammu-rāmat is excluded from the action:<sup>16</sup>

- 1) *ta-ḥu-mu šá* <sup>m</sup>10-ÉRIN.TAḤ MAN KUR *aš-šur*
- 2) A <sup>m</sup>šam-ši-10 MAN KUR *aš-šur*
- 3) <sup>f</sup>sa-am-mu-ra-mat MUNUS.É.GAL

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<sup>13</sup> For the reasoning of why the Neo-Assyrian royal women have been chosen as a comparative case study, see chapter 1, section 1.3.

<sup>14</sup> This is largely based on the textual evidence, but this rule generally applies to visual sources as well. There are only three large scale images explicitly depicting Neo-Assyrian royal women – for a detailed discussion of these see Macgregor 2012: 87-93, 109-117. Also see chapter 1, section 1.4.1 for a discussion regarding another important Neo-Assyrian royal woman, Naqī'a.

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion regarding Sammu-rāmat and her unusual position in the royal court, see chapter 1, section 1.4.1.

<sup>16</sup> RIMA 3 A.O.104.3.

- 4) *šá mšam-ši-10 MAN KUR aš-šur*  
 5) *AMA m10-ÉRIN.TAḤ MAN KAL MAN KUR aš-šur*  
 6) *kal-lat mdšùl-ma-nu-MAŠ*  
 7) *MAN kib-<rat> 4-ti ina u4-me muš-pi-lu-lu-me*  
 8) *MAN URU ku-mu-ḥa-a-a a-na m10-ÉRIN.TAḤ MAN KUR aš-šur*  
 9) *sa-am-mu-ra-mat MUNUS.É.GAL*  
 10) *ÍD pu-rat-tú ú-šé-bi-ru-u-ni*  
 11) *ma-tar-šúm-ki A mad-ra-a-me URU ár-pa-da-a-a*  
 12) *a-di 8 MAN.MEŠ-ni šá KI-šú ina URU pa-qi-ra-ḥu-bu-na*  
 13) *si-dir-ta-šú-nu KI-šú-nu am-daḥ-iš uš-ma-na(?) -šú-nu*  
 14) *e-kim(\*)-šú-nu-ti a-na šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šú-nu*  
 15) *e-li-ú ina MU.AN.NA šá-a-te*  
 16) *ta-ḥu-mu šú-a-tú ina bir-ti muš-pi-lu-lu-me*  
 17) *MAN URU ku-mu-ḥa-a-a ina bir-ti mqa-al-pa-ru-da(?)*  
 18) *A mpa-la-lam MAN URU gúr-gu-ma-a-a ú-še-lu-ni*  
 19) *man-nu šá <TA> ŠU-at muš-pi-lu-lu-me*  
 20) *DUMU.MEŠ-šú DUMU.DUMU.MEŠ-šú e-ki-mu*  
 21) *aš-šur dAMAR.UTU dIŠKUR d30 dUTU*  
 22) *a-na di-ni-šú lu la i-za-zu*  
 23) *ik-kib aš-šur DINGIR-ia d30 a-šib URU.KASKAL*

Translation:

1-7a) Boundary stone of Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, son of Šamšī-Adad (V), king of Assyria, (and of) Semiramis,<sup>17</sup> the palace-woman of Šamšī-Adad, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nārārī, strong king, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law of Shalmaneser (III), king of the four quarters.

7b-10) When Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, caused Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, (and) Semiramis, the palace woman,<sup>18</sup> to cross the Euphrates;

11-15a) I fought a pitched battle with them — with Ataršumki, son of Adramu, of the city of Arpad, together with eight kings who were with him at the city Paqarahubunu. I took away from them their camp. To save their lives they dispersed.

15b-18) In this (same) year they erected this boundary stone between Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, and Qalparuda, son of Palalam, king of the Gurgumites.

<sup>17</sup> In this translation Sammu-rāmat is named as Semiramis, presumably to tie her to the Greek legend.

<sup>18</sup> I do not know why in this case MUNUS.É.GAL has been translated as 'palace woman' in this instance, but in the same text has been translated as 'palace-woman'. I can only assume this was a small editing error in the published edition of RIMA 3.

19-23) Whoever (dares) to take (it) away from the possession of Ušpilulume, his sons, his grandsons:

21-22) may the gods Aššur, Marduk, Adad, Sîn, (and) Šamaš not stand (by him) in his lawsuit. ay Ashur, Marduk, Adad, Sin and Šamaš not stand by his decisions.

23) Taboo of Aššur, my god, (and) Sîn, who dwells in Ḥarrān.

The inscription clearly stated that both Adad-nērārī III and his mother crossed the Euphrates together in order to defeat the king of the Kummuhites, and this inclusion of an Assyrian royal woman in a military action was completely unprecedented.<sup>19</sup> Royal women were never associated with military action in the royal inscriptions, and no other source has preserved a narrative where an Assyrian royal woman was directly involved in a military campaign.<sup>20</sup> As Svärd explained in more detail, the most interesting detail here is the grammar surrounding Sammu-rāmat's actions. Up to and including line 10 the crossing of the Euphrates is described in the third person plural, which included Sammu-rāmat in the action. It is remarkable that this stele included someone other than the Assyrian king in his actions – normally Assyrian kings were the sole speakers in their royal inscriptions, and were the only ones carrying out the actions against an enemy. The Pazarçik stele demonstrated a concerted effort to ensure that Sammu-rāmat's efforts in this campaign were acknowledged. The latter half of this text demonstrated a tension in how to tactfully discuss an Assyrian royal woman who might have become involved in combat. From line 11, the grammar changed from the third person to the first person singular in the voice of Adad-nērārī III, excluding Sammu-rāmat from battle.<sup>21</sup> This change in grammar makes the succinct point that it was unacceptable for an Assyrian royal woman to be involved in combat. Royal women could accompany men on campaigns, but direct involvement in the battle itself was unacceptable. Sammu-rāmat's position of power was not being objected to, but her participation in warfare was.<sup>22</sup>

Siddall suggested that the most plausible reason for Sammu-rāmat to cross the Euphrates was in order to draw up a treaty in response to the rebellions that took place between 827 and 821.<sup>23</sup> The region had rebelled during the reign of Šamši-Adad V, and Siddall pointed out that Sammu-rāmat (a spouse of Šamši-Adad V)

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<sup>19</sup> Svärd 2015a: 49-50; Siddall 2013: 89.

<sup>20</sup> Svärd 2015a: 49-50; Siddall 2013: 89.

<sup>21</sup> Svärd incorrectly stated that this was a change from first person plural to first person singular, but the argument is the same: Sammu-rāmat was initially included in the action, and then excluded by the change of grammatical person (Svärd 2015a: 50).

<sup>22</sup> The audience of this stele was expected to see the crossing of the Euphrates with the intention to engage in combat as a non-violent action, which allowed Sammu-rāmat to be involved. To us this would be a declaration of war, an encroachment on foreign territory. The Assyrians did not view this as an act of war, and thus it may be that only explicit and direct acts of violence were off-limits to an Assyrian woman. I suggest that this action was intended to be read by the audience of the Pazarçik stele as a great feat of Adad-nērārī III, therefore it was reasonable for Sammu-rāmat to be included in this action.

<sup>23</sup> Siddall 2013: 89.

likely would have followed these events closely.<sup>24</sup> As she ruled as the ‘caretaker’ of Adad-nērārī III’s throne, Siddall then turned to Naqī’a, who oversaw the succession treaty drawn up to guarantee a smooth transition between Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal.<sup>25</sup> Siddall posited that Sammu-rāmat would help instigate internal treaties imposed on the Assyrian people to re-establish their loyalties in order to both settle the rebellious regions and ensure the continuity of the royal dynasty.<sup>26</sup> I am hesitant to agree, as no such treaty had survived, and there is no evidence that Sammu-rāmat oversaw the implementation of such agreements. I am erring on the side of caution, as the circumstances during the period of Naqī’a were not the same as those under Adad-nērārī III, who ruled approximately one hundred years prior.

Sammu-rāmat was demonstrative of Assyrian views about women and violence. Scribes wanted to report historical events, but also wanted to respect the Assyrian cultural value of keeping women away from combat. This led to the inclusion of Sammu-rāmat in crossing the Euphrates – that the Assyrian scribes viewed this as a military act – but her exclusion from the battle. Even if Sammu-rāmat was involved in military affairs, she was excluded from such roles in the official record.

### 3.1.2. MILITARY UNITS OF THE ‘WOMAN OF THE PALACE’

The Assyrian administrative documents have preserved the titles of members of a military unit of the ‘woman of the palace’. It is interesting that despite no depiction of Assyrian women in combat, there was a military unit under the control of royal Assyrian women.

The evidence for these military units comes from administrative letters, and the majority of these attestations are in the lists of witnesses for sales contracts and lists of personnel. Their titles are as follows: ‘chariot driver of the queen’; ‘cohort commander of the chariot fighters of the queen’; ‘cohort commander of the household of the queen’; ‘cohort [commander] of the queen mother’; ‘chariot driver of the queen mother’; ‘bodyguard of the queen mother’; and ten chariots sent from the household of the queen were mentioned as well.<sup>27</sup> There is very little known about the exact duties of these military personnel.<sup>28</sup> These units and personnel potentially formed one arm of the Assyrian royal women’s ‘military roles’. This finding surprised me, considering the complete separation between royal Assyrian women and violence in royal inscriptions and reliefs.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Siddall 2013: 91.

<sup>25</sup> SAA 2 8. For more regarding Naqī’a, see chapter 1, section 1.4.1.

<sup>26</sup> Siddall 2013: 91.

<sup>27</sup> SAA 6 , 329, 330 r.8, 332; SAA 7 5, ii30, r ii 5, 10; SAA 7 9 r i22; SAA 12 96, e.2; SAA 14 7, r.7; SAA 19 158, 13-15.

<sup>28</sup> Svård 2015a: 73.

<sup>29</sup> Svård 2015a: 73.

In addition to these witness lists, one letter is preserved that was addressed to a ‘mother of the king’, and implored for the swift arrival of troops to the Sealand region in order to prevent an invasion by the Elamites.<sup>30</sup> As this was a direct appeal to the ‘mother of the king’, it was an appeal for the arrival of troops under her command. This letter suggested that these military units existed to fulfil more than a ceremonial role, and that they were a practical force that could be deployed on the battlefield.

All that is known about these military units is some of their titles, and that there is a marked increase in their attestations in the period of Sennacherib.<sup>31</sup> This adds to the picture painted by Reade and N’Shea that the reign of Sennacherib saw a fundamental shift in the office of kingship and its relation to gender and women.<sup>32</sup>

### 3.2. ‘QUEENS OF THE ARABS’

The evidence for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is largely found in the royal inscriptions and reliefs, which feature the military feats of the Assyrian Empire prominently.<sup>33</sup> In the palace reliefs there were large-scale battles depicted, with the Assyrians superior in armour, weapons, and numbers.<sup>34</sup> This is not an accurate representation of the wars the Assyrians fought, but the Assyrians had a well-developed military institution that acted as the strong-arm of the Assyrian royalty. In contrast, the ‘Arabs’ were depicted as a loosely cohesive group of poorly equipped soldiers. A key question for this section will be how accurately these sources reflected reality, and how these distort the information regarding the military roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

As discussed throughout chapter four, the Assyrians wished to control the ‘Arab’ populations in order to access the overland trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula. This could be done relatively peacefully in areas with a similar social structure with non-violent methods, but the ‘Arabs’ presented a unique problem. Their social structure was organised in a fundamentally different fashion to those which the Assyrian kings were familiar with.<sup>35</sup> The methods of

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<sup>30</sup> SAA 18 85; Svärd 2015a: 57-58. This letter is likely dated to 656 (Svärd 2015a: 205), and thus this ‘mother of the king’ is Naqī’a. Another interesting aspect of this letter is that it referred to the queen mother (AMA LUGAL) as ‘my lord’, a title normally reserved to the Assyrian king. This points to the equal footing the office of the mother of the king had at least in terms of protocol.

<sup>31</sup> Svärd 2015b: 162-166. Here Svärd also outlines that during the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon there were fundamental changes to the office of the ‘woman of the palace’, but it is not known what these changes were.

<sup>32</sup> Reade 1987; N’Shea 2018.

<sup>33</sup> See chapter 2 section 2.1.1 for an overview about these sources, as well as the methodological problems with using them.

<sup>34</sup> Rede explained how this has caused an orientalist impression of the Assyrians as a militarised culture (Rede 2018: 86-89).

<sup>35</sup> Magee 2014: 268.

state and imperial control through traditional warfare against the ‘Arabs’ were not entirely successful.<sup>36</sup> We can see this in the repeated ‘Arab’ campaigns of different Assyrian kings – the royal inscriptions present a situation where as one ‘Arab’ group was subdued, another would challenge Assyrian authority.<sup>37</sup>

I took an individual approach in this section to discuss the evidence regarding the military roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.<sup>38</sup> This is because it is unknown whether they all represented the same population or social group, and they may have been unrelated to one another. This means that the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who do not have evidence of any military roles will be excluded.<sup>39</sup> I will be discussing these women in chronological order, starting with Samsi, then Te’elḫunu, Iapa’, Baslu, and finally Adiye.

### 3.2.1. SAMSI

In the royal inscriptions Samsi was recorded as defeated in battle against Tiglath-pileser III. Eph’al dated this battle to 733, based on this event’s relation to the campaign in Damascus.<sup>40</sup> The battle against Samsi was during a period of rebellion in Damascus, Israel, and Tyre, which were in the wider region close to the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.<sup>41</sup> In one royal inscription this battle narrative began with a mention of Samsi breaking an ‘oath of Šamaš’:<sup>42</sup>

Text No. 20

18’) <sup>f1</sup>sa-am-si šar-rat KUR.a\*-ri-bi ša ma-mit <sup>d</sup>šá-maš te-ti-qu-ma

Lacuna

Text No. 21

1’) ša x [...]

2’) ša la x [...]

3’) ša 16 <sup>r</sup>na<sup>1</sup> -[ge-e ša KUR.É-ḫu-um-ri-a<sup>2</sup> ...]

4’) šal-<sup>r</sup>la<sup>1</sup>-[at ...]

<sup>36</sup> Magee pointed to this difference in the structure of the ‘Arab’ society as the main factor for the difficulty for the Assyrians to conquer them (Magee 2014: 268). I suspect this difficulty was compounded by the Assyrians’ lack of knowledge about the ‘Arabs’. Individual rulers were indeed defeated and brought under the yoke of Assyria, but the Assyrian texts present a misleading image of the whole region of Northwest Arabia as difficult to control.

<sup>37</sup> The campaigns between the Assyrians and the ‘Arabs’ were recorded in the following texts: RINAP 1 42 19’b-33’; RINAP 3 35 r.53’-59’; RINAP 4 1 iv53-77; RINAP 5 8 ix1”-6”; RINAP 5 11 viii15-29.

<sup>38</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.5 for a full discussion as to why this approach is more appropriate for the discussion of these women rather attempting to find general aspects common to all ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

<sup>39</sup> Zabibê and Tabū’a are therefore not included here. For these women, see chapter 4, sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.3 respectively.

<sup>40</sup> Eph’al 1982: 26, 84.

<sup>41</sup> Eph’al 1982: 84.

<sup>42</sup> RINAP 1 20 18’, RINAP 1 21 1’-11’.

- 5') 2 ME 26 [...]  
 6') *ʿšal<sup>1</sup>-la-ʿat<sup>1</sup>* [...]  
 7') 4 ME [...]  
 8') 6 ME 56 *šal-[la-at URU.sa-...]*  
 9') 13 LIM 5 ME 20 [...]  
 10') *a-di mar-ši-ti-šú-nu* [... *ša ina*]  
 11') *KUR-e mar-šu-ti šit-[ku-na-at šu-bat-su-nu ...]*

Translation:

Text No. 20

18') Samsi, queen of the land of Arabs, who transgressed her oath (sworn by) the god Šamaš and

Lacuna

Text No. 21

1'-4') ... [...] without ... [...] I utterly demolished ...] of sixteen dis[tricts of the land Bīt-Ḫumria (Israel). I carried off (to Assyria) ...] capti[ves from ...],

5'-9') 226 [captives from ..., ...] captives [from ...], 400 [(and ...) captives from ...], 656 cap[tives from the city Sa..., ...] (altogether) 13,520 [people, ...],

10'-11') with their belongings. [I ... the cities Arumâ (and) Marum, (...) which are] sit[uated in] rugged mountains.

The circumstances for this oath are unlikely to be discovered, and unfortunately no treaties have been preserved that could verify this statement.<sup>43</sup> Appealing to the gods was an assurance that both parties were speaking the truth throughout the ancient Near East.<sup>44</sup> This was done throughout the Assyrian empire, and there were pacts of loyalty between the king, the upper classes, and the Assyrian rank and file to protect the dynasty from conspiracies and uprisings.<sup>45</sup> Retsö states this oath was a renewal of an oath taken by Zabibê in 738, based on the logic that Samsi followed Zabibê as 'Queen of the Arabs' and thus must be Zabibê's successor.<sup>46</sup> Tiglath-pileser III may have believed that this female leader of 'Arabs' must have been Zabibê's successor, and thus that Samsi was operating under the terms of Zabibê's oath. However, there is no evidence that Samsi and Zabibê were leaders of the same population, and no evidence about the practices of succession used by the 'Arabs'. At a more basic level, there is no evidence that Zabibê even agreed to a treaty with Tiglath-pileser III. The only have evidence regarding Zabibê and Assyria is that she sent a gift to the Assyrian king in order to ensure

<sup>43</sup> Grayson 1987: 131.

<sup>44</sup> Magnetti 1978: 815.

<sup>45</sup> Parpola 1987a: 161.

<sup>46</sup> Retsö 2003: 132. For more regarding the economic power Zabibê held, and the motivation behind this oath, see chapter 4, section 4.5.1.

she would not be attacked by the Assyrians.<sup>47</sup> The Assyrians might have taken Zabibê's gift as the acceptance of a treaty of some sort. This agreement would therefore be binding to Samsi – even when there is no evidence for either a treaty with the 'Arabs' before Samsi, or that Zabibê and Samsi were rulers of the same population group.<sup>48</sup> In reality, Samsi might have had no connection to Zabibê other than being another female leader of an 'Arab' group and might have had no knowledge of this oath. The evidence actually points to the opposite – that each of these women were probably leaders of separate populations.<sup>49</sup> I therefore do not believe it should be suggested that Samsi had renewed an oath made by Zabibê. Regardless of the reality for the 'Arabs', it is apparent that the Assyrians believed Zabibê and Samsi were both leaders of the same group of 'Arabs'.

The next piece of information about Samsi comes from Tiglath-pileser III's royal inscriptions, which described the battle between the rulers:<sup>50</sup>

- 19'b) *ša* <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-si šar-rat* KUR.*a-ri-bi* <sup>f</sup>*ina* KUR.*sa<sup>1</sup>-qu-ur-ri* <sup>f</sup>KUR-*i*<sup>1</sup>  
 20') [9 LIM 4 ME *di-ik-ta-šú-nu a*]-*duk* 1 LIM UN.MEŠ 30 LIM  
 ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ 20 LIM GU<sub>4</sub>.NÍTA.MEŠ  
 21') [...].<sup>f</sup>MEŠ<sup>1</sup> 5 LIM ŠIM.ĪI.A DÛ-*ma* x TU DU *né-mat-ti*  
 DINGIR.MEŠ-*ni-šá*  
 22') [GIŠ.*til-li* GIŠ.NÍG.GIDRU.MEŠ <sup>d</sup>*iš-tar-šá*] <sup>f</sup>NÍG.GA<sup>1</sup>-*šá e-kim*  
 <<KI>> <sup>f</sup>*ù* <sup>f</sup>*ši-i a-na šu-zu-ub* ZI.MEŠ-*šá*  
 23') [...<sup>51</sup> *a-na ma*]-<sup>f</sup>*ad<sup>1</sup>-ba-<sup>f</sup>ri<sup>1</sup>* *a-šar šu-ma-me* GIM  
 MUNUS.ANŠE.EDIN.NA  
 24') [*taš-ku-na pa-ni-šá si-ta-at* NÍG.GA-*šá kul-ta*]-*ri-šá hu-ra-da-at*  
 UN.MEŠ-*šá i-na* MURUB<sub>4</sub> KARAŠ-*šá*  
 25') [*ina* IZI *áš-ru-up* <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-si la-pa-an* GIŠ.TUKUL].MEŠ-*ia*  
 KAL.MEŠ *taš-šu-ut-ma* ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-te*  
 26') [*a-di* ANŠE.*ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na a-na* KUR *aš-šur a-di maḥ*]-*ri-ia*  
*taš-šá-a* LÚ.*qe-e-pu ina muḥ-ḥi-šá áš-kun-ma*  
 27') [10<sup>2</sup> LIM<sup>2</sup> LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ<sup>2</sup> ... URU].*ma-as-<sup>f</sup>a-a-a* URU.*te-ma-a-a*  
 LÚ.*sa-ba-<sup>f</sup>a-a-a*  
 28') [URU.*ḥa-a-a-ap-pa-a-a* URU.*ba-da-na-a-a*] URU.*ḥa-at-te-e-a*  
 LÚ.*i-di-ba-a-<sup>f</sup>il-a-a*  
 29') [...] *ša mi-šir* <sup>f</sup>KUR<sup>1</sup>.KUR *ša šu-lum* <sup>d</sup>*šam-ši*  
 30') [*ša má-m-ma la i-du-šú-nu-ti-ma a-šar-šú-un ru-ú*]-*qu* <sup>f</sup>*ta<sup>1</sup>-nit-ti*  
*be-lu-ti-ia*

<sup>47</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.1.

<sup>48</sup> It is also perfectly possible that this was a purposeful 'misunderstanding' that would give the Assyrian kings the perfect reason to attack the 'Arabs'.

<sup>49</sup> This is particularly evident in the discussion regarding Iapa' and Baslu, who were recorded as female rulers over two different cities, and therefore of different populations. See section 3.2.3 of this chapter for further discussion.

<sup>50</sup> RINAP 1 42 19'b-33'.

<sup>51</sup> There is likely a finite verb missing in this break.

31') [*al-ka-ka-at qur-di-ia iš-mu-ma' ú-šal-lu-ú'*]<sup>52</sup> *be-lu-ti KÙ.GI KÙ.BABBAR*

32') [ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-ti ŠIM.ĪI.A DÙ-a-ma*] *ma-da-ta-šú-nu ki-i 1-en*

33') [*a-di maḥ-ri-ia ú-bi-lu-nim-ma' ú-na-áš-ši-qu*] *GÌR.II.MEŠ-ia*

Translation:

19'b-22'a) As for Samsi, queen of the Arabs,<sup>53</sup> at Mount Saqurri, [I de]feated 9,400 (of her people). I took away (from her) 1,000 people, 30,000 camels,<sup>54</sup> 20,000 oxen, [...] ..., 5,000 (pouches) of all types of aromatics, ...,<sup>55</sup> thrones of her gods, [the military equipment (and) staffs of her goddess(es)], (and) her property.

22'b-24'a) Moreover, she, in order to save her life, [... (and) set out] like a female onager [to the de]sert, a place (where one is always) thirsty. [I set the rest of her possessions] (and) her [ten]ts, her people's safeguard<sup>56</sup> within her camp, [on fire].

25'b-26'a) [Samsi] became startled [by] my mighty [weapon]s and she brought camels, she-camels, [with their young, to Assyria, befo]re me. I placed a representative (of mine) over her and [... 10,000 soldiers].

27'b-29') The people of the cities Mas'a (and) Tema, the (tribe) Saba,<sup>57</sup> the people of the cities [Ḥayappa, Badanu], (and) Ḥatte, (and) the (tribes) Idiba'ilu, [...], who are on the border of the western lands,<sup>58</sup>

30'-33') [whom none (of my predecessors) had known about, and whose country is remo]te, [heard about] the fame of my majesty (and) [my heroic deeds, and (thus) they beseeched] my lordship. As one, [they brought before me] gold, silver, [camels, she-camels, (and) all types of aromatics] as their payment [and they kissed] my feet.

This text is part of what Tadmor and Yamada have called as a 'summary' inscription, which recorded events in a geographical as opposed to a chronological

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<sup>52</sup> Tadmor & Yamada makes it clear that this is a conjectural reconstruction. Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 104-107.

<sup>53</sup> Here the determinative KUR makes it clear she was the ruler of the land where the 'Arab' people lived. See pages 1.4.3. for a discussion on the use of the determinatives LÚ and KUR and their impact on how we should understand the basis of power for the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

<sup>54</sup> All camels in this passage are dromedary camels, as opposed to Bactrians. See section 4.1.2. for a discussion on the dromedary and its importance to the Arabian Peninsula.

<sup>55</sup> The text has TU DU, but I am unable to ascertain the meaning.

<sup>56</sup> Tadmor & Yamada states this should be 'her people's safeguard', and should be taken metaphorically (Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 107) but I am unsure if this is the best translation. The CAD states it is a type of soldier, and I suggest here 'soldiers of her people' might be a better translation (CAD s.v. 'ḥuradu').

<sup>57</sup> Even though the nisbe ending indicates these people are tied to the location of Saba, the determinative makes it clear they were classified as a 'people', and thus the translation classifies them as a '(tribe)'.

<sup>58</sup> Literally the 'lands of the setting sun' (CAD, s.v. 'šulmu 4b').

sequence.<sup>59</sup> Although incomplete, this inscription is by far the best preserved of the five badly damaged texts detailing the events of this battle under Tiglath-pileser III. This particular inscription is part of a colossal pavement slab from Kalhu, but has been left in situ.<sup>60</sup> The contents of these inscriptions do not differ much, and it is likely that these texts were all based on a master copy.<sup>61</sup> The text described how the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi was defeated at a location called ‘Mount Saqurri’, and her property was taken as booty by the Assyrians. Samsi then fled the battlefield whilst Tiglath-pileser III set fire to her camp, and she sent dromedaries to Assyria as a sign of surrender. An Assyrian official was then placed over her, as well as a garrison of soldiers, and the text ends by saying that other ‘Arab’ people surrendered to the Assyrians after hearing of Samsi’s defeat.

The information in the inscriptions can provide an outline for how the battle with Samsi could have taken place.<sup>62</sup> What follows is an attempt to reconstruct the events recounted in this narrative, which will further illuminate the military role of Samsi.

The first problem is the location of this battle. I do not believe the modern translation of ‘at the mountain’ in Tadmor and Yamada quite conveys the Akkadian meaning.<sup>63</sup> The inscription begins by informing us the battle occurred ‘*ina KUR.sa-qu-ur-ri* ‘KUR-i’, or ‘in the mountainous Saqurri’.<sup>64</sup> As *ina* translates to ‘in/from/through’, this suggests the battle was fought within a mountain, which is an improbable situation. Eph’al has suggested that Mount Saqurri should be equated with modern Jebel al-Druz.<sup>65</sup> According to satellite imagery, Jebel al-Druz is actually more of a plateau rather than a traditionally peaked mountain (figure 10).

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<sup>59</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 94. For more regarding the royal inscriptions and the methodological problems of reading these texts, see chapter 2, section 2.1.1.

<sup>60</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 104.

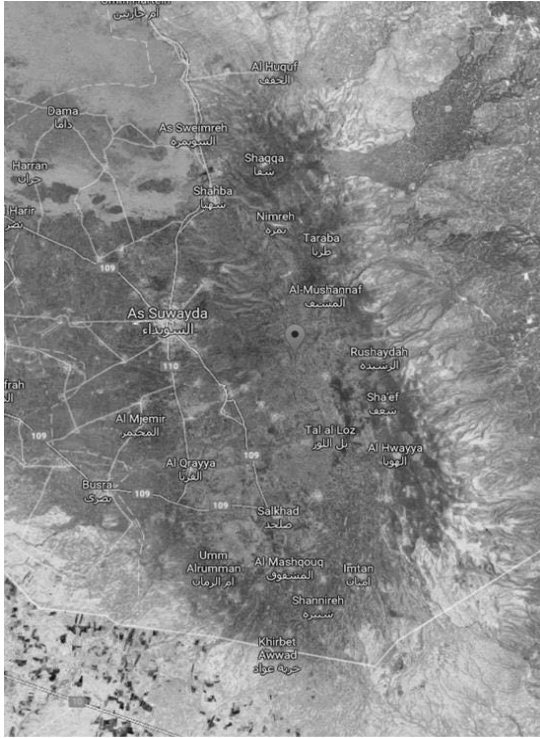
<sup>61</sup> Eph’al 1982: 33. Also see RINAP 1 44 3’-16’a; 47 r.1’-6’a; 48 24’b-27’; III 49 r.17-r.21. RINAP 53 14-18a may be another text that referred to Samsi, based on the line ‘as for her, the terrifying radiance of [Aššur, my lord, overwhelmed her’ (16-17). It is extremely fragmented and broken, so the events of this text cannot be attributed to Samsi with any certainty.

<sup>62</sup> The studies into Assyrian warfare rely upon the depictions of warfare on the palace reliefs. Texts rarely describe the details of a battle or campaign, but details are often depicted on palace reliefs. As most of the images are of sieges, studies have largely focussed on Assyrian siege warfare, as well as the equipment that adorns both the human and equid figures involved in this combat. For an overview of this, see Fuchs 2011. A new approach has been to attempt to reconstruct the open field battles of the Assyrian armies – for an example of this see Nadali 2010.

<sup>63</sup> Tadmor & Yamada 2011:106.

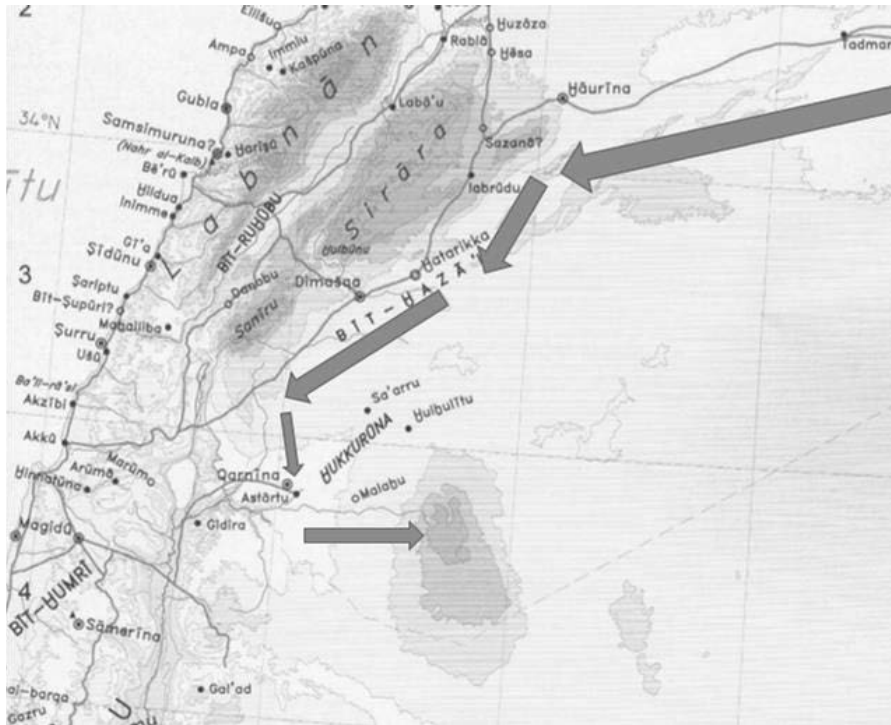
<sup>64</sup> RINAP 1 42 19b. CAD translates *ina* as ‘in, on, from, through’. CAD, s.v. ‘*ina*’.

<sup>65</sup> Eph’al 1982: 85. This identification was based on a part of the later text, which described how Samsi fled into the desert, so it had to be a mountain close to the desert.



**Figure 10** *Jebel al-Druz*. [Map] Taken from: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Jabal+al-Druze/@32.6639613,36.5326507,109439m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x1519877a2ac4d28d:0xb8837f97d5fc648a!8m2!3d32.666667!4d36.733333>, accessed 10th October 2017.

The battle could have been fought on top of this plateau, which would explain why the word *ina* was used in this text to describe where the battle took place, instead of a descriptive term to denote ‘at’ or ‘beside’. This lends some weight to the suggestion of Jebel al-Druz as the location for the battle against Samsi. The steep sides of Jebel al-Druz would have provided an excellent natural defence – at the very least slowing the approach of the Assyrian enemy and buying time for the ‘Arab’ force. There is also a large area of relatively flat land, ensuring plenty of space for a large-scale battle to take place.



**Figure 11** Proposed route to Jebel al-Druz. [Map] Map taken from Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8. Arrows added by myself.

After identifying the location of this battle to a reasonable degree of accuracy, the second stage of analysis is an attempt to reconstruct the route the Assyrian army could have taken to this plateau. An important factor in the surrounding geography of Jebel al-Druz is the lack of water sources, which would have been a severe limitation for the Assyrian army, and dictated the route of the Assyrian army to this mountain.<sup>66</sup> Directing the army to march across desert terrain was not an option, as this would have risked massive casualties due to dehydration.<sup>67</sup> Saggs explained that the army lived off the territory it was passing through whenever possible, with subsistence dictating the route, and using this logic I suggest the route as indicated by the arrows in figure 11.<sup>68</sup>

The lines in figure 11 are the main routes through the region as suggested in Parpola and Porter's *The Helsinki Atlas of the Near East in the Neo-Assyrian Period*.<sup>69</sup> The arrows are the route I suggest that followed these roads from the

<sup>66</sup> Eph'al 1982: 138.

<sup>67</sup> It was only under Esarhaddon that the Assyrians were able to cross the desert with success, as it needed 'Arab' knowledge to do so. For Esarhaddon needing to maintain the alliance of the 'Arabs' in order to invade Egypt, see chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

<sup>68</sup> Saggs 1963: 148. Map taken from Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8, modified by author.

<sup>69</sup> Parpola & Porter 2001.

heartland of Assyria, and visited sites where the army of Tiglath-pileser III could resupply. I have suggested a route that began at Tadmor, hugged the south of the modern Lebanese mountains, and turned further south to Qarnīna. This route had plenty of settlements and water supplies that would have kept the Assyrian army well fed and watered.<sup>70</sup> I suggest that at Qarnīna the army turned east along a river that originated at Jebel al-Druz, and flowed west towards Qarnīna – this river would have kept the army sustained with water throughout the difficult climb to the plateau.

**Table 4** *Table of proposed size of the Assyrian army under Sargon II. Fuchs 2011: 388.*

Troop type	Amount
Chariots	150
Cavalry	1,500
Bowmen on foot	20,000
Spearmen on foot	10,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>31, 650</b>

Re-supplying the army was of vital importance, as the standard army of the Neo-Assyrians was vast. Fuchs gave some tentative numbers in table 4 as the ideal composition of a late eighth-century army under Sargon II (the successor of Tiglath-pileser III).<sup>71</sup> Whilst these numbers are not exact, the sheer scale of the Assyrian army was enormous, with tens of thousands of soldiers. If Samsi was to stand any chance of defeating them, she needed either large numbers or a better strategy to out-smart Tiglath-pileser III’s generals. Unfortunately, there is no information regarding the battle itself, and thus we do not know if Samsi’s army matched these numbers or what her strategy was.<sup>72</sup> However, when Samsi was defeated, her casualties were listed as 9,400 in the Assyrian royal inscriptions.<sup>73</sup> These numbers cannot be taken at face value. As De Odorico made clear, this figure is an approximate number to represent the magnitude of the forces defeated.<sup>74</sup> In this case, I would say that 9,400 is clearly not the actual number of dead ‘Arabs’, but was a ‘rounding up’ of the actual figures to impress the audience

<sup>70</sup> If this was the ‘Royal Road’, then many of these settlements may have been obliged to cater to them, as they would have been outposts for the Assyrian administration (Kuhrt 2002: 535-537).

<sup>71</sup> These are tentative figures based on the inscriptions of the later king Sargon II, and as such these figures should not be taken literally. Instead these give an indication of the approximate scale of the force the Assyrian army could muster against the ‘Arabs’ (Fuchs 2011: 388).

<sup>72</sup> Cognitive science has demonstrated that people remember the beginnings and ends of events much better than the middle, and Portuese has demonstrated that this correlates with the narratives of battles on the palace reliefs (Portuese 2019: 75-76). I suggest this is evident in the royal inscriptions as well. There are very few occasions where the deeds on the battlefield are boasted about, but the great feats to reach them and the aftermath is almost always recorded.

<sup>73</sup> RINAP 1 42 20’.

<sup>74</sup> De Odorico 1995: 5. Also see chapter 2, section 2.1.1.

of the royal inscription with the great force Tiglath-pileser III was able to subdue. Tellingly, the two texts do not provide the figures of the Assyrian army, but if the figures suggested by Fuchs are used, the ‘Arab’ army could have been outnumbered perhaps as much as three times in favour of the Assyrians. Such a weighting in favour of the Assyrians is not mentioned in the Assyrian texts. This is an excellent example of a manipulation of the historical events through omission, as it painted a picture of an uncertain outcome against almost unsurmountable odds – when in reality it was beyond doubt the Assyrians defeated the ‘Arabs’ likely due solely to the numbers involved.

The scale of the numbers of Samsi’s casualties was not marginal, and attests to Samsi’s authority in the region. The thousands under Samsi’s command could indicate two scenarios. The first is that the ‘Arabs’ under Samsi’s command may have been forces from across the whole of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula who were coming to the aid of an ally. The second is that this force may have been recruited from the population group that Samsi ruled. I believe the latter is more likely, as there is no mention of other ‘Arab’ kings who joined Samsi’s campaign.<sup>75</sup> Samsi therefore ruled a group that was not small, and demonstrated she was instrumental in governing the region.

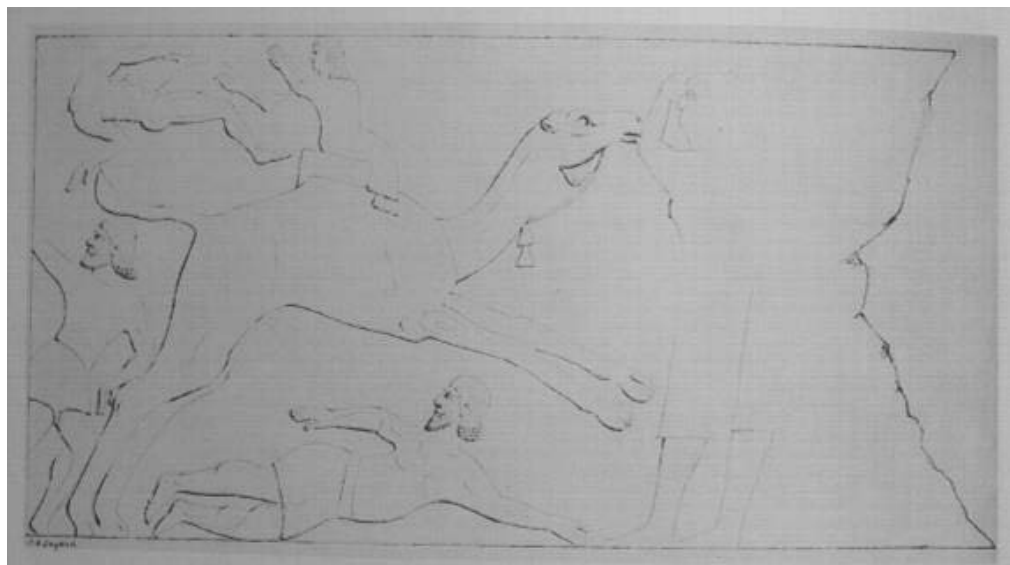
The text then described the immediate aftermath of the battle, beginning with the Assyrians taking loot from Samsi’s camp – an additional one thousand people and religious items.<sup>76</sup> The taking of booty and religious items had the intent of both demoralising the ‘Arabs’ and profiting from the battle. It is unclear why one thousand people were left alive after thousands were killed, and the motivations for keeping this group alive may explain their role in the military camp. As Samsi’s camp was later described as a ‘military camp’, these one thousand people were probably connected to the military. I believe they were not soldiers, or else they would have been described as such by the Assyrian scribes. It is possible that these individuals were representatives of other ‘Arab’ tribes in the region, who may have provided troops to Samsi for this battle. On the other hand, they may have simply been the support personnel in the military camp – the ones who ensured equipment was maintained, who kept the troops fed and watered, and who kept supplies fully stocked. It is unlikely the mystery of who these people were will ever be solved, and the above scenarios are speculations. What is certain is that more than the defeated soldiers were under her command, and whatever their role in the camp these survivors ultimately answered to her before they were captured by the Assyrians.

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<sup>75</sup> Although there is mention of rulers who heard of the outcome of this battle from the Arabian Peninsula (RINAP 1 47 27’-32’a).

<sup>76</sup> RINAP 1 42 20’-22’a.

A tantalizing glimpse as to whether Samsi had a role on the battlefield can be seen in a relief from the Central Palace of Tiglath-pileser III at Kalhu, found in the series dealing with the battle itself (figure 12).<sup>77</sup>



**Figure 12** *Line drawing by Layard depicting Samsi fleeing the battlefield.* [Line Drawing of palace relief] Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII.

In this relief is a figure in a long tunic sat atop a platform-like saddle on the back of a dromedary camel fleeing the battlefield, surrounded by dead and dying ‘Arab’ troops. In combination with the tassels on the accoutrements of the camel and the gesture this figure is making, I have suggested this figure is a depiction of Samsi.<sup>78</sup>

It is tempting to use this relief as evidence that Samsi was present on the battlefield against Tiglath-pileser III, but these images were meant to illuminate a wider message the Assyrian king wanted to send.<sup>79</sup> Samsi may not have been on the front line at all, but the artist had to depict the leader of the ‘Arabs’ fleeing in some manner. The solution may have been this shorthand image of Samsi fleeing the battlefield directly, even if this was not the case. However, since depictions of battles are broadly seen as accurate, Samsi was likely present on the battlefield.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Retsö 2003: 133. Unfortunately the original relief has not survived, and Layard’s line drawings to form my analysis. The accuracy of this relief is not likely to be complete, but until there is evidence to the contrary, I shall treat this line drawing as accurate. For more about this relief, and the identification of the figure as Samsi, see chapter 2, section 2.2.

<sup>78</sup> For more about this identification, see chapter 2, section 2.2.2.

<sup>79</sup> This is discussed in more detail in chapter 2, section 2.2.

<sup>80</sup> During the period of this relief’s creation we see pairs of scribes on the reliefs, indicating that they accompanied the king of every military engagement. It is not implausible that artists also accompanied the kings in order to create drawings in the field to base the reliefs on. Winter has described the effect of this as the equivalent of modern news photographs of actual military campaigns.

In the royal inscriptions, Samsi then fled the battlefield and her camp like a ‘female onager’.<sup>81</sup> This line is incredibly informative of both the Assyrian attitude towards Samsi and to her military role. Here a foreign ruler was equated to an animal, which was not uncommon to Assyrian royal inscriptions.<sup>82</sup> This was a form of othering foreign rulers in order to explain why the Assyrian kings had to conquer them – warfare was humanity imposing order on the chaotic animal kingdom of foreign rulers.<sup>83</sup> In this text the animal is preceded by the determinative MUNUS, whereas other animal similes relating to male foreign rulers do not include a *personenkeil*.<sup>84</sup> This indicates two aspects of the Assyrian mindset. The first is that the default gender of a ruler was male, and any other gender was worthy of note. The second is that ensuring the correct gender of a ruler was expressed in the royal inscriptions was important to the Assyrians. In fact, the MUNUS serves to emphasise that this movement is directly in relation to her – not to any male officials or male generals serving under her.

The equation of Samsi with a ‘female onager’ may also be an attempt to describe the movement of the defeated ‘queen’ across the desert. Similes were employed in the royal inscriptions in the description of movement of foreign rulers. Birds denoted swiftness, so here the onager may be denoting an aspect of her movement across the desert.<sup>85</sup> In the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib the people of Bīt-Yakīn were described as grovelling like wild asses. The usage of this animal in relation to Samsi may therefore have been used to reflect the physicality of how she fled from the battlefield, but the exact connotations of this simile are unknown.<sup>86</sup>

The fact Samsi could retreat from battle said she was able to discern when the tide was turning against her in battle. It is unclear whether this knowledge was from her own experience or was built upon any advisors surrounding her. There is so far nothing to indicate that she was reliant upon others for her strategic knowledge – at least, no more than is suspected for the Assyrian king, or in narratives about foreign male kings. What is important is that Samsi was able to draw upon the situation she and her soldiers were in, and was able to make a strategic decision with no indication of dissent from those serving under her.

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Therefore, whilst the overall message of the relief series may have been distorted, details were based on observations (Tadmor 1997: 329; Reade 1998: 329; Winter 1997: 362).

<sup>81</sup> RINAP 1 42 23’.

<sup>82</sup> For example: RINAP 1 8 1; 1 20 8’b-9’; 3 1 23; 3 4 52; 4 1 i78-79; 4 3 ii5’-6’.

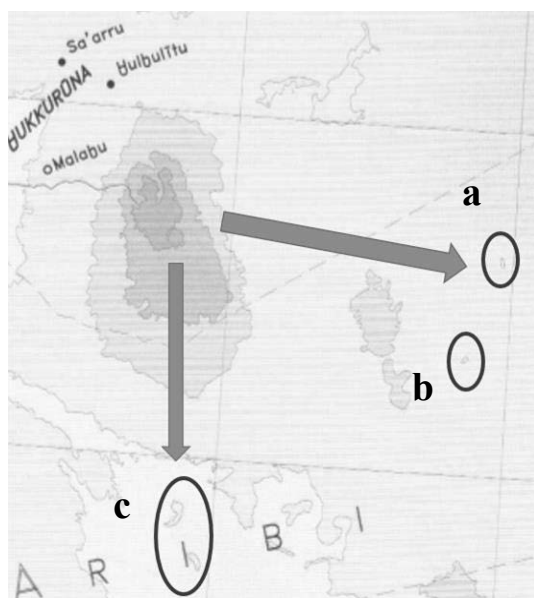
<sup>83</sup> For more regarding the ideological opposition of chaotic against ordered, see chapter 5, section 5.3.1.

<sup>84</sup> Examples of similes equating kings with animals but not explicitly expressing their gender include: RINAP 3 3 21; RINAP 3, 4, 52; RINAP 4 1 i57.

<sup>85</sup> For examples of birds being used to denote movement, see: RINAP 1 20, 8’b; RINAP 1 49, r 15b; RINAP 3 4, 52; RINAP 3 17, iii92; RINAP 4 1 iii20, v10; RINAP 4 3, ii 1’.

<sup>86</sup> In RINAP 3/1 22 iv 33-34 and RINAP 3/1 23 iv 27. There is also the possibility that this was used as a description of swift movement, as this simile was used in the Lugalbanda Epic (Vanstiphout 2003: 119, line 272-275). I am hesitant to suggest this with any certainty, as this is not paralleled in the Neo-Assyrian texts.

The ‘desert’ mentioned in the text means the direction of Samsi’s flight is somewhat ambiguous, but Eph’al has suggested that this route led to the Wadi Sirḥan.<sup>87</sup> This is a large area, and it is tempting to suggest Samsi fled all the way to Adummatu through this wadi. However, I find it very unlikely she would have fled 600 kilometres through this route.<sup>88</sup> Instead, I believe Samsi retreated with her entourage (or at least those who had survived the battle) in the direction of one of the small oases either to the very north of the Wadi (see figure 13c), or perhaps one to the east of the plateau, as seen in figure 13a and b. Both of these routes would tie in with the text, which said Samsi fled into the desert, but remained close enough to the plateau for Samsi to remain abreast of the aftermath of the battle and ultimately decide to surrender to Assyria.<sup>89</sup>



**Figure 13** Possible routes Samsi may have used to flee from the battle. [Annotated map] Map taken from Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8, modified by author.

Then followed a description of the aftermath of the battle in Samsi’s camp. The text described how Tiglath-pileser III’s army burned the camp and slaughtered her people alongside her *ḥurādāte* in the middle of the camp.<sup>90</sup> After

<sup>87</sup> Eph’al 1982: 85.

<sup>88</sup> A modern route would go along the river on figure 11 and then head south through the Wadi Sirḥan and would be roughly 600km. This would be too far for Samsi to know what was happening to her camp on the plateau, and so I suggest a closer location for her to retreat to.

<sup>89</sup> RINAP 1 42 23’.

<sup>90</sup> The CAD only translates this as ‘a type of soldier’ (CAD, s.v. ‘*ḥurādu*’).

this slaughter, Samsi sent male and female camels alongside their young to Assyria.<sup>91</sup> This gift was the signal that Samsi had surrendered to Tiglath-pileser III in the face of the destruction wrought by the Assyrian forces.<sup>92</sup> Samsi then became a vassal of the Assyrian empire, and the Assyrians understood this action as all of the ‘Arabs’ were now vassals. However, only the ‘Arabs’ under the leadership of Samsi were now ultimately answerable to Assyria. Samsi understood when she was fully defeated and was able to change her overall strategy with regards to the Assyrians. At this stage, she decided that being under the yoke of Assyria was far more amenable to the population she was leading than instigating further warfare against them. This was undoubtedly a decision made after witnessing (or hearing from a scout) the destruction wrought upon her camp and was made to avoid further destruction in the future. Samsi was making tactical decisions on the battlefield, as well as strategic decisions with wide-ranging consequences as was expected of a military leader.

Interestingly, Tiglath-pileser III decided not to remove Samsi from her position after her defeat. Instead, a *qēpu* (an administrator) was imposed over her, as well as a garrison of ten thousand men.<sup>93</sup> The exact status or functions of the *qēpu* are uncertain, but this title was generally given to Assyrian officials who supervised policy and administration in vassal states (and also within the Assyrian state apparatus).<sup>94</sup> This imposition of a state administrator over Samsi has been seen as an attempt to secure diplomatic and economic relations between Assyria and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>95</sup> Eph'al explained how this tied into a larger policy of placing local leaders as officials over regions, but also prevented Samsi from aiding Damascus or other powers against Assyria.<sup>96</sup>

However, this interpretation does not consider the gender of Samsi in these interactions. In the same inscription considered in this section there was a narration of the annexation of the cities of Damascus, Kašpuna, Gilead, and Abil-šitti, as well as the installation of eunuchs as provincial governors of these cities.<sup>97</sup> In contrast to Samsi, who was kept in power and allowed to rule under the watchful gaze of a *qēpu*, the fate of the rulers of these cities is not mentioned. In fact, the narrative of Paqaha, the ruler of Bit-Ḥumbria, is the only text where we know the fate of the ruler: he was killed and replaced by another male ruler, Hoshea.<sup>98</sup> It is striking that in the narrative that immediately follows that of Paqaha, Samsi was allowed to remain alive, and this juxtaposition might have

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<sup>91</sup> RINAP 1 42 25'b-26'a.

<sup>92</sup> For more regarding this gift, see chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

<sup>93</sup> RINAP 1 42 26'b-27'a. For a discussion of how this ties into the wider strategy of controlling the region, see chapter 4, section 4.4.

<sup>94</sup> Eph'al 1982: 86; Retsö 2003: 133. An overview of the *qēpu* in Assyria can be found in Dubovsky 2012.

<sup>95</sup> Magee 2014: 270.

<sup>96</sup> Eph'al 1982: 86, 93. For more regarding this and the motivations behind such an action towards Samsi, see chapter 4.

<sup>97</sup> RINAP 1 42 5'b-8'a.

<sup>98</sup> RINAP 1 42 17'b-19'a.

been intentional. By juxtaposing the treatment of a male ruler who transgressed against Assyria with next to the treatment of a female ruler who also transgressed against Assyria, the scribes of Tiglath-pileser III seemed to indicate the ‘proper’ way to treat a defeated female ruler. Even though Samsi had battled against Assyria, the scribes wanted to indicate that her gender protected her from any further physical harm (in accordance with Assyrian cultural norms).<sup>99</sup> This may have been an expression of Assyrian values regarding women in warfare, and the Assyrian need to protect women from physical harm may have influenced the scribes’ decision of where to place this narrative.<sup>100</sup> As Samsi does not appear in such detail in the Kalhu Annals, her placement in the Summary texts allowed for some manipulation in terms of framing her narrative.<sup>101</sup> So whilst Samsi’s gender was unlikely to have played a key role for her survival, it might have played a role in how her narrative was recorded by Assyrian scribes.

The survival of a foreign ruler might have undermined Tiglath-pileser III’s position in the royal court. To reconcile this problem with the overriding strategy of controlling the region, Tiglath-pileser III then imposed an official who would ensure that Samsi would act in the best interests of Assyria. This was a policy already in place in other parts of Assyria – as has been seen with Damascus.<sup>102</sup> Tiglath-pileser III could therefore subdue an enemy who could muster a large force against Assyria, whilst also being sensitive to the Assyrian cultural norms regarding women and military violence.

Samsi’s military role was clear: she was a woman in command of an army that battled against Assyria. She was able to make decisions about military tactics, by withdrawing in the face of total defeat in order to lead her people another day. This tactic was sound, as she kept her position as ‘Queen of the Arabs’ group until the reign of Sargon II.<sup>103</sup> The placement of Samsi’s narrative was also possibly an attempt by the scribes of Tiglath-pileser III to pay respect to her gender, whilst also minimising the violence enacted upon her in accordance to Assyrian sensibilities regarding women and violence. The combination of Samsi’s gender and her political position within the wider region also certainly aided in the decision to spare her life. Finally, the Assyrian artists viewed her gender as exceptional, as she was depicted as a commander on the battlefield itself. Samsi therefore has a clear military role and was even present on the battlefield.

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<sup>99</sup> These cultural norms are discussed in this chapter, section 3.1.

<sup>100</sup> Chapman has written about the Assyrian king’s role as protector, and how this role extended into the protection of women from the violence depicted in the visual record, which could be part of the reason for the lack of Assyrian women on the Assyrian palace reliefs (Chapman 2004: 29-32).

<sup>101</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.2.

<sup>102</sup> Eph’al 1982: 84.

<sup>103</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

### 3.2.2. TE'ELĤUNU

The battle between Te'elĥunu and Sennacherib demonstrated that the 'Arabs' were integral to Assyria's overall control system of Babylonia, as the 'Arabs' would then not be able to aid rebellions against Assyria.<sup>104</sup> This approach was completely in line with Sennacherib's aggressive policy towards the Babylonians.<sup>105</sup> Sennacherib would have hoped that the 'Arabs' would be completely loyal to Assyria after their subjugation – much in the same way Samsi was after her defeat by Tiglath-pileser III. The defeat of the 'Arabs' by Sennacherib served an important purpose – they were barred from becoming an important ally of the Babylonians, and became an ally of the Assyrians.

Unfortunately, there is little information regarding Sennacherib's campaign against Te'elĥunu. There is only one text referring to this event from Sennacherib's royal inscriptions:<sup>106</sup>

Rev.

53') [... <sup>f</sup>te-'e-el-ĥu<sup>2</sup>]- 'nu<sup>1</sup> šar-rat LÚ.a-ra-bi i-na qé-reb mad-ba-<sup>f</sup>ri<sup>1</sup>

54') [...] LIM ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ e-kim qa-tuš-šá ši-i it-ti <sup>m</sup>ĥa-<sup>f</sup>za-DINGIR<sup>1</sup>

55') [... ĥur-ba-šú ta-ĥa]- 'zi<sup>1</sup>-ia is-ĥup-šú-nu-ti kul-ta-ri-šú-nu ú-maš-še-<sup>f</sup>ru-ma<sup>1</sup>

56') [a-na ...] 'ú<sup>21</sup> URU.a-du-um-ma-te a-na nap-šá-a-ti in-nab-<sup>f</sup>tu<sup>1</sup>

57') [... URU.a]- 'du<sup>1</sup>-um-ma-tu ša qé-reb mad-ba-ri šit-ku-na-at šu-bat-<sup>f</sup>sún<sup>1</sup>

58') [... qaq]- 'qar<sup>2</sup> šu<sup>1</sup>-me ša ri-i-tu maš-qí-tú la ba-šú-ú qé-reb-šú-[un]

59') [...] x x x x x x (x)

Lacuna

1'') [... i-na] 'šuk<sup>1</sup>-bu-us 'a<sup>1</sup>-ram-<sup>f</sup>me<sup>1</sup> [...]

2'') [...] -x-ma<sup>2</sup> man-da-at-ta-šú-nu 'ka<sup>1</sup>-[bit-tu am-ĥur<sup>2</sup>...]

3'') [...] -lu<sup>2</sup>-ni URU.ka-pa-a-nu URU.[...]

4'') [...] a-šar ni-šir-ti-šá i-<sup>f</sup>na<sup>21</sup> [...]

5'') [... <sup>f</sup>te-'e-el-ĥu-nu<sup>2</sup> šar]-rat LÚ.a-ra-bi a-di DINGIR.[MEŠ-šá?...]

6'') [...] x-a-ti NA<sub>4</sub>.BABBAR.DILI.MEŠ NA<sub>4</sub>.  
'BABBAR<sup>21</sup>.[MIN<sub>5</sub><sup>2</sup>.MEŠ...]

7'') [...] 'ĥa<sup>21</sup>-šur-ru ŠIM.MEŠ ka-<sup>f</sup>la<sup>1</sup>-[ma...]

8'') [...] x-a-te ù LUGAL.MEŠ-ni x [...]

<sup>104</sup> Eph'al 1982: 112, 126. Some of the sources featured in this discussion refer to Te'elĥunu as 'Apkallatu'. As discussed in chapter 5, section 5.1, this was a misunderstanding by the Assyrians, who believed this title was actually her name. I shall therefore only be referring to this woman as 'Te'elĥunu'.

<sup>105</sup> Beaulieu 2018: 203-207.

<sup>106</sup> RINAP 3 35 r.53'-9''.

9') [... *áš-lu*]-*la* URU.MEŠ-*ni* šá-tu-<sup>r</sup>nu<sup>1</sup> [*ap-pu-ul aq-qur i-na*  
<sup>d</sup>GIŠ.BAR *aq-mu*]

Translation:

Rev.

53'-56') [... *Te'elḥu*]*nu*, queen of the Arabs, in the middle of the desert  
[...] I took away [...] thousand camels from her. She [...] with Hazael.  
[Terror of doing battle wi]th me overwhelmed them. They abandoned  
their tents and fled for (their) lives [to *the city* ...] *and* the city  
Adummatu.

57'-59') [(As for) *the city*... *and* the city Ad]ummatu, which are located  
in the desert, [... *a place of thirst* in whi[ch] there is no pasture (or)  
watering-place, [...] ...

Lacuna

1''-3''a) [... by having] ramp[s] trodden down [...] ... *and* [I received]  
their sub[stantial] payment [...] ... *to me*.

3''b-4'') (As for) the cities Kapānu, ... [...] its secret place, (which is) *in*  
[...]

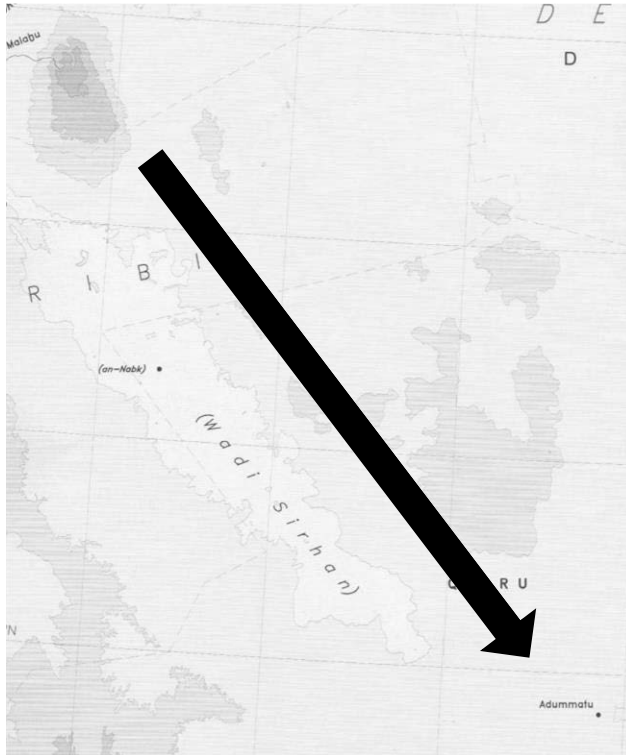
5''-9'') ... I carried] off [*Te'elḥunu*, que]en of the Arabs, together with  
[*her*] *god*[s, ...] ..., *pappardilû*-stones, *pappar*[*mīnu*]-stone[s, ...]  
*ḥašūru*-wood, all types [of] aromatics, [...] ... *and* kings ... [...] I  
destroyed, devastated, (and) burned with fire] those cities.

This text is from two stone tablet fragments from Nineveh, and it summarises the sixth, seventh, and eighth campaigns of Sennacherib, as well as a building project in Nineveh; they were probably inscribed between 690 and 689.<sup>107</sup> Due to the heavily broken surface of this text, only a small portion of the battle mentioned in line 55' can be reconstructed, but there are several fascinating details that reveal *Te'elḥunu*'s military role. The first of these details is the timing of this battle. The annals that described all eight of Sennacherib's campaigns end in 691 with no mention of the 'Arabs', nor do they mention the destruction of Babylon (in 689), and this is the basis of Eph'al's dating between 691 and 689 for this battle.<sup>108</sup> This battle with the 'Arabs' occurred just before the destruction of Babylon, and can only be read as a strategic decision by Sennacherib in order to remove a potential future ally for Babylonian rebels. This battle therefore played a role in ensuring the Assyrian victory over Babylon.

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<sup>107</sup> Grayson & Novotny 2012: 226-227.

<sup>108</sup> Eph'al 1982: 118.



**Figure 14** Possible route Te'elḥunu took to retreat to Adummatu. [Annotated map] Parpola & Porter 2001: fig. 8, modified by author.

The text does not allow for a full reconstruction of the battle, as the narrative began after the main open field battle took place. After a retreat from an undisclosed location, both Te'elḥunu and Ḥazā-il fled to Adummatu where they were besieged by the Assyrians. Towns like Adummatu and Kapānu were surrounded by desert, and there were very few routes from the Assyrian heartland that allowed for a large Assyrian military force to cross the desert safely.<sup>109</sup> Sennacherib may have known of the route that Tiglath-pileser III took to Mount Saqurri to battle Samsi, and used this to access the Wadi Sirhan.<sup>110</sup> If undertaken in the rainy season (roughly in the Spring), the campaign of Sennacherib would easily have access to water supplies during its passage through the wadi.<sup>111</sup> This would ensure the army was able to sustain a prolonged conflict against Te'elḥunu. For Te'elḥunu and Ḥazā-il, this route would mean that in order to flee to Adummatu, the location of the initial clash had to be somewhere that such a

<sup>109</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.3.1 for more regarding the importance of Adummatu and the significance of Kapānu.

<sup>110</sup> See section 3.2.1 in this chapter.

<sup>111</sup> See figure 14 for this.

retreat was possible. I suggest that they were initially found by the Assyrians close to the Northwest entrance of Wadi Sirḥan, and then fled southeast to Adummatu to find shelter – with the army of Sennacherib in pursuit.

Upon reaching Adummatu, the text suggested a ramp was present, but its purpose or why it was being stamped (literally ‘trampled’) into place is difficult to determine.<sup>112</sup> It could have been a siege ramp, or part of the architecture and infrastructure of Adummatu, so it is difficult to infer the role of this ramp or the actions of either the Assyrians or the ‘Arabs’ in Adummatu. This fragmentary mention hinted at a narrative about the siege and defeat of this city in the original inscription.

Much like the Pazarçik stele and Sammu-rāmat, this battle narrative excluded Te’elḥunu from the violence of the battle. In the texts from the reign of Esarhaddon, Te’elḥunu is described not on the battlefield, but as fleeing from the battle.<sup>113</sup> This exclusion from the violence of battle can be compared to the Pazarçik stele and Sammu-rāmat, where a female leader was excluded from the possibility of physical harm through a change in grammatical form that excluded her from the action.<sup>114</sup> The narrative of Te’elḥunu went further than the Pazarçik stele, as the action that included Te’elḥunu also physically removed her from the violence of battle. This does not mean that she played no role in the ensuing siege at Adummatu, as the broken text may have expanded on this, and her role may not have been evident to the Assyrians. Eph’al has an interesting suggestion about this role, that both Te’elḥunu and another ‘Queen of the Arabs’, Adiyē, were kept at the rear of their camps in order to be kept out of danger.<sup>115</sup> There is no evidence that this was a practice amongst other male foreign rulers, nor amongst the male ‘Arab’ rulers. I believe this suggestion was Eph’al’s modern perspective that ancient women in military contexts were to be protected because of their gender. This may not have been the same viewpoint as the ‘Arabs’ towards women, where I have shown Samsi played an active role in warfare. They may even have had active roles in warfare that were either invisible to the Assyrians, or the Assyrians chose not to depict.<sup>116</sup> Without further evidence to support any of these claims, I can only use the information found in this broken text. Therefore, Te’elḥunu might not have played an explicitly active role that was visible to the Assyrians, and the Assyrian scribes used grammar to try to exclude women from the violence of battle.

The final section of the text described ‘sub[stantial] tribute’ sent to Sennacherib. The senders and items have not been preserved, but this was part of

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<sup>112</sup> RINAP 3 35 r1”.

<sup>113</sup> See later in this section for this text.

<sup>114</sup> RINAP 3 35 r. 55’-56’.

<sup>115</sup> Eph’al 1982: 153.

<sup>116</sup> This may have included supporting roles for the organisation of the logistics of the army, potentially forming military strategies from a distance, playing a role in any religious rituals carried out, or maybe another role that was specific to ‘Arab’ culture that was not visible in the sources.

the consequences of the battle with Te'elḥunu. Te'elḥunu is mentioned, and she was taken with the booty to Assyria by Sennacherib. This is confirmed by a later text from the reign of Esarhaddon.<sup>117</sup> Finally, Sennacherib's royal inscriptions claimed '[... I destroyed, devastated, (and) burned with fire] those cities'.<sup>118</sup> Clearly, the cities referred to here were Adummatu and the settlements like Kapānu that were under its purview.<sup>119</sup> These settlements were viewed by the Assyrians as under the control of the Adummatu, and so the destruction of Adummatu deprived the smaller settlements of its protection. The only actions smaller settlements could take was to send tribute to Assyria in a bid to minimise further hostilities.

The physical removal of Te'elḥunu and Ḥazā-il left Adummatu's population without a leader. Sennacherib therefore removed the 'Arabs' as an effective ally to future potential Assyrian enemies. It is useful to compare this with the case of Basqānu, the brother of Iati'e. He was captured alive with other allies of the Babylonian rebel Marduk-apla-iddina, and the leaders of Marduk-apla-iddina's rebellion were kept alive and brought to Assyria.<sup>120</sup> Te'elḥunu, a potential future ally of Marduk-apla-iddina, was taken to Assyria as a pre-emptive measure. This removal of Te'elḥunu to Assyria was therefore in line with this wider policy of the Assyrians. I suggest that Te'elḥunu's role as leader of Adummatu, and as a potential future ally of Babylonian rebels, was the deciding factor in her treatment after the battle.

**Table 5** *Tentative figures for the initial force of Te'elḥunu and Ḥazā-il based in Table 4.*

Figures given in text regarding Samsi <sup>121</sup>	Proposed minimum figures for Te'elḥunu
30,000 camels	1,000 camels
10,000 people	333 people

The size of Te'elḥunu's initial force could indicate why Te'elḥunu and Ḥazā-il were initially fighting a battle away from Adummatu. Rough estimates of this force can be calculated based on the minimum number of camels recorded in Sennacherib's fragmentary text. The text said there were at least one thousand camels under the control of Te'elḥunu, which were taken away after the initial confrontation in the middle of the desert.<sup>122</sup> By using the figures given for the camels and population under the control of Samsi, I calculated a rough minimum figure of how many

<sup>117</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 1-8.

<sup>118</sup> RINAP 3 35 r9'.

<sup>119</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.4.1.

<sup>120</sup> RINAP 3 1 27. Also see chapter 1, section 1.4.2 for a discussion regarding the title of Basqānu.

<sup>121</sup> RINAP 1 42 20'.

<sup>122</sup> RINAP 3 35 r. 54'.

individuals were under the command of Te'elḫunu and Ḥazā-il.<sup>123</sup> Tiglath-pileser III's royal inscriptions recorded that Samsi had at least ten thousand people under her command, as well as thirty thousand camels.<sup>124</sup> This creates a ratio of approximately three camels to one person, and when we apply this ratio to the texts of Te'elḫunu she had at least three hundred and thirty-three people under her control. This was considerably smaller than Samsi's force of ten thousand, but there is the possibility that Sennacherib took more than one thousand camels – this would drastically change this tentative figure. I also want to stress that these figures are still only indicators of scale. Samsi had a force numbering in the thousands, but Te'elḫunu's force likely numbered in the hundreds. The low rough figure indicates that the army of Te'elḫunu was unlikely to have mustered with the intention to defeat the Assyrian army in a pitched battle, and so they fled to Adummatu where they held the upper hand within a fortress.<sup>125</sup>

Other texts relating to Te'elḫunu are from the reigns of later Neo-Assyrian kings. Four texts originate from the time of Esarhaddon, all of which are copies from an original text, and state she was taken to Assyria as a hostage:<sup>126</sup>

Col. iv

- 1) URU.a-du-ma-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 2) ša <sup>md</sup>30-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba-nu-u-a
- 3) ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
- 4) a-di <sup>t</sup>ap-kal-la-tú šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 5) iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš-šur.KI il-qa-a
- 6) <sup>m</sup>ḥa-za-DINGIR 'LUGAL' LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-tú
- 7) a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia
- 8) il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia
- 9) áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma
- 10) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a <sup>d</sup>nu-ḥa-a-a
- 11) <sup>d</sup>ru-ul-da-a-a-ú <sup>d</sup>a-bi-ri-il-lu
- 12) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-qu-ru-ma-a DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 13) an-ḥu-su-nu ud-diš-ma da-na-an <sup>d</sup>aš-šur EN-ia
- 14) ù ši-ṭir MU-ia UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma ut-ter-ma ad-din-šú
- 15) <sup>t</sup>ta-bu-u-a tar-bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti

<sup>123</sup> RINAP 1 42 20'.

<sup>124</sup> 9,400 dead were recorded, and a further 1,000 people were captured. See section 3.2.1 of this chapter.

<sup>125</sup> This opens up the possibilities of why this force was there. It may have been a bodyguard to travel with Te'elḫunu. It may have been to accompany the travels of Ḥazā-il. These two individuals may have been sending a force to lead the Assyrians to Adummatu as a military tactic. These speculations have no evidence, but serve to illustrate this initial contact may not have been with a fully prepared military contingent.

<sup>126</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 1-8. For the discussion regarding the incorrect name 'Apkallatu' in this text, see chapter 5, section 5.1. For the consequence of this event and the imposition of Tabū'a, see chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

16) UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma it-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-šá a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši

Translation:

Col. iv.

1-4) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs,

5-8) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city,<sup>127</sup> with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet.

Ḥazā-il, 'king of the 'Arab' people', is introduced as an 'Arab' ruler for the first time in this text. Whilst Ḥazā-il was mentioned in RINAP 3 35 54', his title was not preserved, and it cannot be discerned what his position in 'Arab' society was – nor is it possible to determine his relationship with Te'elḥunu. It may be a case of different knowledge levels of the different Assyrian scribes about 'Arab' culture. The title has been preserved here, whilst it was omitted in Sennacherib's text. It is also possible that he was a member of the elite under Te'elḥunu and rose to become king after her capture created a power vacuum – particularly since he is viewed as speaking for the population that Te'elḥunu ruled previously. From this point, Ḥazā-il is named as the start of a line of kings in Arabia, and he is explicitly labelled as 'King of the Arabs'.<sup>128</sup> We can therefore say that the leadership of the 'Arabs', in Assyrian eyes, had transferred from Te'elḥunu to Ḥazā-il, and to Ḥazā-il's sons.

The military role of Te'elḥunu is not preserved in as much detail as Samsi, and the evidence only points to Sennacherib viewing the 'Arabs' as a potential ally with the Babylonian rebels. As such, Sennacherib wanted to negate a potential military force available to Babylonian rebels, The 'Arabs' under Te'elḥunu's control were located in the desert of the Arabian Peninsula surrounding the fortified city Adummatu, not in arable areas that could be used for grazing. Te'elḥunu's movement from her initial camp to Adummatu prompted Sennacherib to follow, probably via the Wadi Sirḥan. Based on the number of camels in the text, we have an indication of the scale of the force that accompanied Te'elḥunu in this initial stage. It was a small force numbering in the hundreds, and would not have withstood the Assyrian army.

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<sup>127</sup> Literally 'the city of my lordship'.

<sup>128</sup> Eph'al suggests that due to Ḥazā-il's son Iata' being called 'King of the Qedarites', that Ḥazā-il was in fact the founder of this confederation (Eph'al 1982: 55).

### 3.2.3. IAPA' AND BASLU

Following Te'elḫunu, two further 'Queens of the Arabs' with military roles were recorded in the Assyrian texts. These women are Iapa' and Baslu, and their existence alongside each other in the same text raises several questions about the nature of leadership in 'Arab' society, and especially the leadership of women in combat. Of particular interest is their inclusion in a total which refers to them as 'kings':<sup>129</sup>

Col. iv

- 53) KUR.ba-a-zu na-gu-ú šá a-šar-šú ru-u-qu  
 54) mi-šit na-ba-li qa-qar MUN a-šar šu-ma-a-me  
 55) 1 ME 20 KASKAL.GÍD<sup>130</sup> qa-qar ba-a-ši pu-qut-ti u  
 NA<sub>4</sub>.ZÚ.MAŠ.DÀ<sup>131</sup>  
 56) a-šar MUŠ u GÍR.TAB ki-ma kul-ba-bi ma-lu-u A.GÀR  
 57) 20 KASKAL.GÍD KUR.ḫa-zu-ú šad-di NA<sub>4</sub>.SAG.GIL.MUD  
 58) a-na EGIR-ia ú-maš-šir-ma e-ti<sub>7</sub>-iq  
 59) na-gu-ú šu-a-tú ša ul-tu u<sub>4</sub>-me ul-lu-ti  
 60) la il-li-ku LUGAL pa-ni maḫ-ri-ia  
 61) ina qí-bit <sup>da</sup>aš-šur EN-ia ina qé-reb-e-šú šal-ṭa-niš at-tal-lak  
 62) <sup>m</sup>ki-i-su LUGAL URU.ḫal-di-su <sup>m</sup>ak-ba-ru LUGAL URU.il-pi-a-tú  
 63) <sup>m</sup>ma-an-sa-ku LUGAL URU.ma-gal-a-ni  
 64) <sup>f</sup>ia-pa-a' šar-rat URU.di-iḫ-ra-a-ni  
 65) <sup>m</sup>ḫa-bi-su LUGAL URU.qa-da-ba-a'  
 66) <sup>m</sup>ni-ḫa-ru LUGAL URU.ga-a'-u-a-ni  
 67) <sup>f</sup>ba-as-lu šar-rat URU.i-ḫi-lum  
 68) <sup>m</sup>ḫa-ba-zi-ru LUGAL URU.pu-da-a'  
 69) 8 LUGAL.MEŠ-ni<sup>132</sup> ša qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú a-duk  
 70) ki-ma MUNU<sub>4</sub> áš-ta-ṭi pa-gar LÚ.qu-ra-di-šú-un  
 71) DINGIR.MEŠ-šú-nu NÍG.ŠU-šú-nu NÍG.GA-šú-nu ù UN.MEŠ-šú-  
 nu  
 72) áš-lu-la a-na qé-reb KUR aš-šur.KI <sup>m</sup>la-a-a-le-e  
 73) LUGAL URU.ia-di-i' šá la-pa-an GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia in-nab-tú  
 74) ḫa-at-tu ra-ma-ni-šú im-qut-su-ma a-na URU.ni-na-a  
 75) a-di maḫ-ri-ia il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-šiq GÍR.II-ia

<sup>129</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv53-77.

<sup>130</sup> This should be read as *bēru*.

<sup>131</sup> Borger simply translates this as a 'stone', but it is a type of stone that has some sort of connotation to gazelles and teeth (Borger 2004: 256).

<sup>132</sup> In this total there is no separate tally for the 'kings' with female names. Here the normalisation should read *šarrāni*, and is in the masculine plural. As this is a total of eight, including the women Iapa' and Baslu, the two women in this list were categorised as 'kings', rather than 'queens'.

76) *re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma na-ge-e URU.ba-zi*<sup>133</sup> *šu-a-tum*  
77) *ú-šad-gíl pa-nu-uš-šú*

Translation:

Col. iv.

53-54) (As for) the land Bāzu, a district in a remote place, a forgotten place of dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst,

55-59) one hundred and twenty leagues of desert, thistles, and gazelle-tooth stones, where snakes and scorpions fill the plain like ants — I left Mount Ḥazû, the mountain of *saggilmud*-stone, twenty leagues behind me and crossed over to that district to which

60-64) no king before me had gone since earliest days. By the command of the god Aššur, my lord, I marched triumphantly in its midst. I defeated Kīsu, king of the city Ḥaldisu, Akbaru, king of the city Iḫpiatu, Mansāku, king of the city Magalani, Iapa', queen of the city Diḥrāni,

65-69) Ḥabīsu, king of the city Qadaba', Niḥaru, king of the city Ga'uani, Baslu, queen of the city Iḫilum, (and) Ḥabaziru, king of the city Puda', eight kings from that district

70-77) (and) laid out the bodies of their warriors like (drying) malt. I carried off their gods, their goods, their possessions, and their people to Assyria. (As for) Laialê, king of the city Iadi', who had fled before my weapons, unprovoked fear fell upon him, and he came to Nineveh, before me, and kissed my feet. I had pity on him and put that province of Bāzu under him.

This text is part of a larger annalistic inscription detailing the military campaigns of Esarhaddon, as well as the construction of the armoury at Nineveh, and was written in 673 or 672.<sup>134</sup> Eph'al gives a date of no later than 677 for the events within this text as happening.<sup>135</sup> This particular section described a campaign against rulers in the province of Bāzu, including 'Iapa', queen of the city Diḥrani' and 'Baslu, queen of the city Iḫilum'. The location of Bāzu is the first problem of interpreting this text, as the location of these 'queens' could drastically change our interpretation and analysis of where female rulers could exist. Several possibilities have been suggested, all of which have been based on the above text as well as the Sargon Geography.<sup>136</sup>

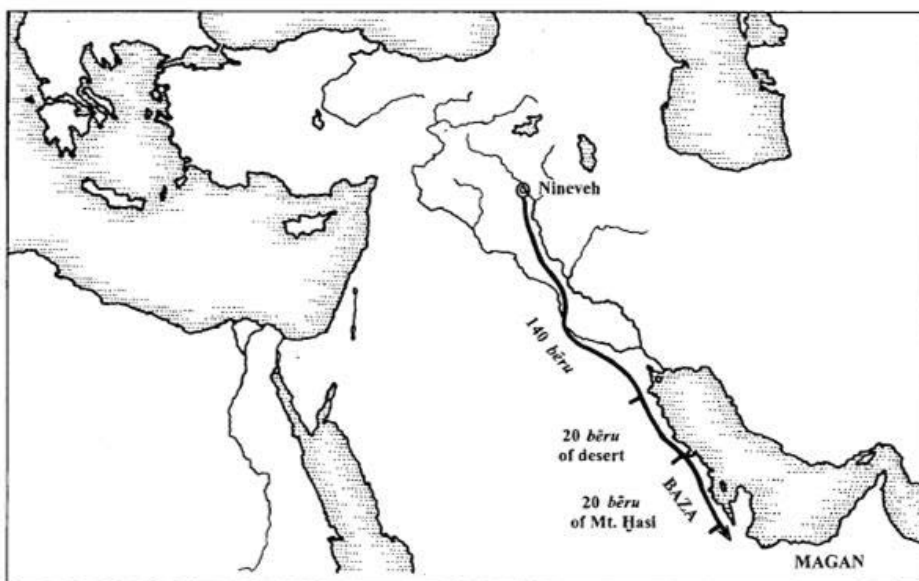
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<sup>133</sup> Leichty states that other versions have the determinative KUR for Bāzu, so it is possible that it is still the 'land' that is referred to as opposed to the 'city' (Leichty 2011: 21).

<sup>134</sup> Leichty 2011: 9.

<sup>135</sup> Eph'al 1982: 130.

<sup>136</sup> For the edited version of the Sargon Geography used in this dissertation, see Grayson 1982.



**Figure 15** *Liverani's suggested route of Esarhaddon to Bāzu.* [Map] Liverani 1999-2000: 74.

In Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions Bāzu is described as a 'district in a remote place, a forgotten place of dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst'. In order to reach the province Esarhaddon had to move his army through a land of sand, thorns and 'gazelle-tooth stones', and was filled with snakes and scorpions.<sup>137</sup> When thinking of the modern geography of the area, it is easy to correlate this area with the Northwest Arabian Peninsula. Yet we cannot rely simply upon modern conceptions of the Arabian Peninsula to locate Bāzu. The location of Bāzu on the coast on the Northeast of the Arabian Peninsula, on the western coast of the Persian Gulf, is widely accepted in modern scholarship and is cited

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<sup>137</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 53-56.

in the fourth RINAP volume.<sup>138</sup> This argument drew on the Sargon Geography's mention of the sites Meluḥḥa and Magan:<sup>139</sup>

1) [ultu .....] x ti-tur-ri Ba-za<sup>ki</sup> šá pāt(zag) ḥarrān(kaskal) māṭ Me-luḥ-ḥ[<sup>ki</sup>]

Translation:

1) [From .....] ... the bridge of Baza on the edge of the road to the land Meluḥḥa,

Liverani placed Magan and Meluḥḥa in the Northeast of the Arabian Peninsula, and used the measurements given in Esarhaddon's text to bolster his argument.<sup>140</sup> These measurements are key to the location of Bāzu, as in the Assyrian annals it further emphasised just how far the distance was between the Assyrian heartland and Bāzu, and gave a boundary for where the province was. Esarhaddon's annals said that his army travelled 140 *bēru* ('double-hours') to Mount Ḥazu.<sup>141</sup> Once there, Esarhaddon marched a further 20 *bēru* to finally reach Bāzu.<sup>142</sup> Liverani calculated this would be a distance of 1,500 km, and traced this route from Nineveh, down the Tigris and to the Gulf.<sup>143</sup> Interestingly, the final 20 *bēru* (Liverani gives this as 220 km) of this route goes through a hilly land now called Jebel Hasa.<sup>144</sup> This matches the description of the land given in the texts, and Liverani uses the previous point of exaggeration to explain the literary use of snakes and scorpions – they were used here to emphasise how inhospitable the land was, and therefore how uncivilised and un-Assyrian the land was.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Leichty 2011: 20, n. iv 53. There were two other competing arguments for the location of Bāzu. The first was Musil's suggestion that Bāzu was located between Wadi Sirḥan and the Valley of Lebanon (Eph'al 1982: 136, Potts 1982: 280). The problem with relying upon Musil is that his writings were based on his own personal experience with the modern Peninsula, which may not have correlated with the ancient reality. Such evidence plays into the orientalist trope of the never-changing Arabian Peninsula. The second suggestion is from Potts, who suggested a location for these cities somewhere in or around the Wadi Sirḥan based on the previous interactions between the Assyrians and Te'elḥunu (Potts 1982: 284). In Esarhaddon's annals Bāzu was described as a location where 'no king before me had traversed since the distant days' (RINAP 4 1 iv60). Eph'al has took this as solid proof that Bāzu cannot be located in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula, as previous kings (both Tiglath-pileser III and Sennacherib) had undertaken military campaigns in this difficult terrain (Eph'al 1982: 137). Even if this was a literary motif intended to demonstrate the far reach of Esarhaddon, if Bāzu was a region close to Adummatu, this reach was already shown in the interaction with Ḥazā-il and the imposition of Tabū'a. This would make the emphasis of how far Bāzu was rather strange, when the land of Ḥazā-il was not described in the same manner.

<sup>139</sup> Grayson 1982: 60, line 1. Here I am following Grayson's interpretation of the Sargon Geography as a Babylonian scribe's attempt to interpret the geography of Sargon of Akkad for the praise of Sargon II in contemporary terms (Grayson 1982: 57).

<sup>140</sup> Liverani 1999-2000: 72-76.

<sup>141</sup> CAD, s.v. 'bēru'; RINAP 4 2 iii11. This is different in RINAP 4 1 iv55, where the distance is given as 120 *bēru*. This is 20 *bēru* less, but still places Bāzu on the Persian Gulf coast in the Eastern Arabian Peninsula.

<sup>142</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 53-60.

<sup>143</sup> Liverani 1999-2000: 73.

<sup>144</sup> Liverani 1999-2000: 73.

<sup>145</sup> Liverani 1999-2000: 73.

This location for Bāzu has interesting ramifications for the women Iapa' and Baslu. The first is that this location explains why their cities were not mentioned elsewhere in the Assyrian annals. They were too far away for constant campaigning into the region, and were only included in extreme circumstances. The area in which women could rule 'Arab' populations was therefore far larger than previously thought, spanning across the Northern Arabian Peninsula.

Esarhaddon had to defeat the 'Arabs' across the Arabian Peninsula in order to secure their knowledge of the Arabian Peninsula to aid Esarhaddon's campaign to Egypt.<sup>146</sup> In order to find the best route through the desert, Esarhaddon needed to have as many 'Arab' leaders at his disposal as possible. These rulers had knowledge of the safest routes, and the locations of water supplies. Assuming Esarhaddon had the support of the 'Arabs' surrounding Adummatu, then it would have made sense to secure the support of 'Arabs' on the other side of the Peninsula to ensure he did in fact have the best route to Egypt.<sup>147</sup> With such inhospitable terrain between Assyria and Egypt, Esarhaddon may have been hoping for a more accessible route that went further south into the Peninsula. Such a route would also prevent the Assyrian army from coming into contact with other hostile groups in the region, ensuring an intact army for the Egyptian campaign. As the 'Arabs' in Bāzu were further south in the Arabian Peninsula, Esarhaddon may have believed that this population might have had knowledge of such a route, and thus this campaign to Bāzu was to gain intelligence to ensure the optimum route into Egypt. This would also have the effect of securing the alliance between the 'Arabs' and the Assyrians. If all the populations within the Arabian Peninsula (at least, those the Assyrians knew and recognised) were peaceful, then there would be fewer disruptions that could adversely affect Esarhaddon's in his campaign to Egypt. Ultimately Esarhaddon failed in these goals, as there would have been no route to traverse to Egypt via the east or south of Adummatu, but as this is the last narrative in the accounts of Esarhaddon's dealings with the 'Arabs', afterwards the Assyrian king believed he had the alliance of all 'Arab' populations.

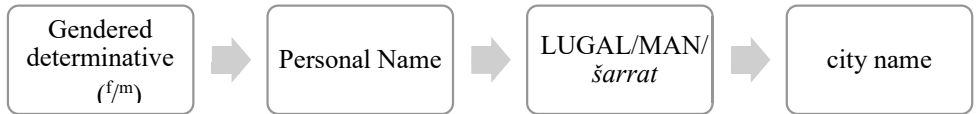
This text is also evidence that there could be multiple rulers of the 'Arabs' operating at the same time. Iapa' and Baslu are featured in a list with six other male leaders from Bāzu, all with the same title formula consisting of the gendered determinative, the personal name of the ruler, LUGAL, MAN, or *šarrat*, and finally the name of the city.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Frahm 2017: 305.

<sup>147</sup> As suggested in RINAP 4 1 iv 1-31.

<sup>148</sup> As seen in figure 16.



**Figure 16** Title formula of the rulers in the list that includes Iapa' and Baslu.

This title formula for both the male and female leaders revealed that to the Assyrians, foreign male and female leaders had the same standing and status. This is further evidenced by the total given after the list:<sup>149</sup>

- 65) *m̄ha-bi-su LUGAL URU.qa-da-ba-a'*  
 66) *m̄ni-ḥa-ru LUGAL URU.ga-a'-u-a-ni*  
 67) *'ba-as-lu šar-rat URU.i-ḥi-lum*  
 68) *m̄ha-ba-zi-ru LUGAL URU.pu-da-a'*  
 69) 8 LUGAL.MEŠ-ni ša qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú

Translation:

Col. iv.

65-69) Ḥabīsu, king of the city Qadaba', Niḥaru, king of the city Ga'uani, Baslu, queen of the city Iḥilum, (and) Ḥabaziru, king of the city Puda', eight kings from that district

I expected eight male leaders to be included in this total of *šarrāni*, but instead six male leaders and two female rulers Iapa' and Baslu were included. Whilst it was grammatically correct to include these women in a masculine total, it is interesting that Iapa' and Baslu were categorised as the same type of ruler as the male *šarrāni*. We can only conclude that the Assyrians saw these women as 'kings'.<sup>150</sup> This is further evidenced by the use of the word *šarratu* in the titles of both Iapa' and Baslu. This is definitive proof that Iapa' and Baslu were seen as 'female kings' by the Assyrians, and were seen as operating in the same manner as their male counterparts.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>149</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv69.

<sup>150</sup> This follows the definition given in CAD (CAD s.v. 'šarru').

<sup>151</sup> I have chosen the term 'female kings' to describe these rulers because 'kings' had a specific role in Assyria. A more gender-neutral term might be 'ruler', but this would need to be applied to the titles of Assyrian kings as well. The term 'ruler' would disguise the subtly different aspects of rule 'kingship' entailed in comparison to that of the 'sheikhs' also found in the Assyrian texts. It would also erase Iapa''s and Baslu's gender, which is key to emphasise in this historical context.

In terms of the explicit military roles of Iapa' and Baslu, they were part of a coalition of leaders from local cities who were defeated by Esarhaddon's army.<sup>152</sup> All that can be determined is that Iapa' and Baslu were in the position to form military alliances, and were recognised as such in the Assyrian royal inscriptions.

The region Bāzu was in the Northeast Arabian Peninsula, and the 'Arabs' who occupied this area posed a threat to the future campaign of Esarhaddon against Egypt. In order to create a completely safe journey through the Arabian Desert, Esarhaddon had to defeat and conquer these potentially hostile leaders. Not only that, but the defeat of the Northeastern 'Arabs' would allow for Esarhaddon to draw upon their knowledge of the Arabian Desert and water sources for his army. This text also demonstrated that the 'Queens of the Arabs' in the Northeast could operate at the same time as other 'Queens of the Arabs' in the Northwest, or even other male leaders of the 'Arabs'. The titles of these women and their inclusion in the total number of kings Esarhaddon defeated is evidence that they were seen as equal to the other 'Arab' male leaders in the Assyrians' eyes. Finally, the fact that the same title formula has been used for both male and female leaders of the 'Arabs' demonstrates that this group of leaders was a coalition of equals that included female rulers.

### 3.2.4. ADIYE

Adiye had two different military roles: she was as a military leader and a spouse of a male ruler. In one version of the annals of Assurbanipal she was described as having been defeated, much like the previous 'Queens of the Arabs' discussed thus far. Adiye was therefore in control of some sort of armed force. Yet in another version of this text she was described as the spouse of an 'Arab' king who was present at the battle, in a manner similar to Sammu-rāmat.<sup>153</sup> She seemed to embody the ability to be a military leader as well as a spouse to an 'Arab' king. Her appearance in the Assyrian texts appears to have catalysed a turning point in terms of how the Assyrian palace reliefs depicting battles with 'Arabs'. From Assurbanipal's palace a unique relief depicted dead, dying, and tortured 'Arab' women in camp. This was a direct statement about the 'Arab' groups ruled by women, and was focussed on the military role of Adiye.

The first text regarding Adiye described her as a 'Queen of the Arabs' who was involved in a military alliance with a male 'Arab' king who was defeated:<sup>154</sup>

Col. ix

1'') <sup>f1</sup>a-[*dī-ia-a šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi*]

2'') *dī-ik-ta<sup>1</sup>-[šá ma-a 'as-su a-duk]*

<sup>152</sup> Frahm 2017: 304.

<sup>153</sup> This is discussed in more detail in chapter 2, section 2.1.1.7.

<sup>154</sup> RINAP 5 8 ix 1''-6''.

- 3") *kul-ta-re-e-<sup>r</sup>šá<sup>1</sup>* [*ina* <sup>d</sup>GIŠ.BAR *aq-mu*]  
 4") *šá-a-šá bal-tu-us-*[*sa ina* ŠU.II *aš-bat*]  
 5") *it-ti hu-bu-ut* [KUR-šá<sup>2</sup>]  
 6") *al-qa-áš-ši* [*a-na* KUR *aš-šur*.KI]

Translation:

Col. ix.

1"-6") [I inflicted a heavy] defeat on A[diya, the queen of the land of the Arabs. I burned] her tents [with fire. I captured] her alive (and) brought her [to Assyria], together with the plunder of [*her land*].

Assurbanipal defeated the army of Ammi-ladin, 'king of Qedar' in the first 'Arab' campaign.<sup>155</sup> Adiyē was mentioned as being taken captive alive and brought to Assyria alongside Ammi-ladin. Adiyē was described in a similar manner as previous 'Queens of the Arabs', as when she was defeated, her tents were burnt, and she was taken to Assyria. Yet there is another version of events where Adiyē was not only described as 'defeated', but was explicitly described as the 'wife of Uaiate':<sup>156</sup>

Col. viii

- 15) *ù šu-u* <sup>m</sup>*am-mu-la-di* MAN KUR.*qé-ed-ri*  
 16) *it-ba-am-ma a-na mit-hu-ši* LUGAL.MEŠ KUR MAR.TU.KI  
 17) *ša* AN.ŠÁR <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *u* DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ  
 18) *ú-šad-gi-lu pa-nu-u-a*  
 19) *ina tukul-ti* AN.ŠÁR <sup>d</sup><sub>30</sub> <sup>d</sup>UTU <sup>d</sup>IŠKUR  
 20) <sup>d</sup>EN <sup>d</sup>AG <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *šá* NINA.KI  
 21) <sup>d</sup>GAŠAN-*kid-mu-ri* <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *šá* URU.LÍMMU-DINGIR  
 22) <sup>d</sup>MAŠ <sup>d</sup>U.GUR <sup>d</sup>*nusku*  
 23) BAD<sub>5</sub>.BAD<sub>5</sub>-šú *áš-kun*  
 24) *šá-a-šú bal-tu-us-su it-ti* <sup>f</sup>*a-di-ia-a*  
 25) DAM <sup>m</sup>*ú-a-a-te-e* MAN KUR.*a-ri-bi*  
 26) *iš-ba-tu-nim-ma ú-bil-u-ni a-di* <sup>r</sup>*maḥ<sup>1</sup>-ri-ia*  
 27) *ina qí-bit* DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ EN.MEŠ-*ia*  
 28) *ul-li* UR.GI<sub>7</sub> *áš-kun-šú-ma*  
 29) *ú-šá-an-šir-šú* GIŠ.š*i-ga-ru*

Translation:

Col. viii.

<sup>155</sup> The chronology of these campaigns has been very difficult to ascertain, but Gerardi 1992 outlined the two separate campaigns under Assurbanipal. Gerardi explained how some of the sources recorded only one campaign, but others recorded two separate campaigns. Adiyē was mentioned in all versions of the 'Arab' campaigns, and as such her defeat and capture should be in the first campaign (Gerardi 1992: 71, 84).

<sup>156</sup> RINAP 5 11 viii 15-26.

15-19) Moreover, he, Ammu-ladī(n), the king of the land Qedar, set out to fight with the kings of the land Amurru whom (the god) Aššur, the goddess Ištar, and the great gods had entrusted to me. With the support of the deities Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Adad,  
20-24) Bēl (Marduk), Nabû, Ištar of Nineveh, Šarrat-Kidmuri, Ištar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal, (and) Nusku, I brought about his defeat.  
25-29) They (my troops) seized him alive together with Adiya, wife of Uaite' (Iauta'), the king of the land of the Arabs, and brought (him) before me. By the command of the great gods, my lords, I placed him (Ammu-ladīn) in a dog collar and made him guard the gate.

Thus far the marital status of the 'Queens of the Arabs' have not been mentioned in the Assyrian texts. In this text is information that not only was Adiyē part of the first military campaign of Assurbanipal against the 'Arabs' and she had her own military force, but she was married to another male ruler and the military forces were separate from each other. The ability for Adiyē to control her own military forces separately from the forces of her husband opens the possibility that she had her own sovereignty from that of her husband Uaiate'. There is also the possibility that this was an armed force like the military units of the 'woman of the palace' in the Assyrian court. Finally, this arrangement might have been a diplomatic marriage aimed at strengthening ties between two groups of 'Arabs'. It is unlikely to know the accuracy of any of these scenarios.

The inability to fully understand this scenario is compounded by the possibility that this was simply a misunderstanding by the Assyrians. The Assyrians may have seen a woman in control of a military unit and believed it was the same system as was used in Assyria, and thus this woman was the wife of a male ruler. Yet Te'elḫunu, Iapa', and Baslu were all in alliances with male rulers or high-ranking officials and were not described as being 'wives' of these men. As Adiyē, Uaiate', and Ammi-ladīn were taken to Assyria and presented before Assurbanipal, it is likely that Assurbanipal and the scribes who wrote this text knew and understood the relationship between each ruler.<sup>157</sup> As Assurbanipal saw and interacted with these leaders, he was likely to have a greater understanding of their interpersonal relationships than if he had simply heard of a woman in control of an armed force fighting alongside male rulers. It is therefore unlikely that this particular instance was an Assyrian misunderstanding. Adiyē was therefore married to Uaiate', her troops were present on the battlefield, and Assurbanipal defeated her.

Like Samsi, a palace relief relevant to Adiyē has been preserved (figure 17). It is possible that Adiyē was included in the scene, but it is currently impossible to

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<sup>157</sup> RINAP 5 11 viii 15-29.

identify her.<sup>158</sup> The image was made in response to Assurbanipal's conflict with a female military leader, but was built upon the Assyrian king's knowledge of previous 'Arab' female leaders who could rebel against the empire. This relief is also evidence of the conflict the Assyrian artists had to contend with in terms of the norms of Assyrian artwork and the depiction of reality. They struggled with the subject of dead, dying, and tortured women – as opposed to the men they were used to depicting.<sup>159</sup> The relief was a clear message to future 'Arab' leaders, and more generally to foreign rulers.



**Figure 17** *Assyrian palace relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured 'Arab' women.* [Palace relief] BM 124927. Photo © Eleanor Bennett. Taken courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

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<sup>158</sup> The relief depicts the raid of an 'Arab' camp, and is unique in that it represents dead, dying, and tortured women. It could have been intended to depict the moment of Adiyē's capture, but there is no differentiation between the female figures preserved. The figures may have been originally painted in order to highlight the woman portraying Adiyē, but this is speculation, and as such we cannot say that Adiyē was included in this scene.

<sup>159</sup> For an overview of why brutal scenes were depicted, see Bagg 2016.

The relief BM 124927 was part of a larger series that covered the walls of Room L of the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh.<sup>160</sup> The reliefs depicted the two ‘Arab’ campaigns of Assurbanipal across three registers, and the room they were originally in is called the ‘Arab room’.<sup>161</sup> BM 124927 portrays Assyrian soldiers raiding an ‘Arab’ camp, and it remarkably depicts these soldiers killing women and men. The content of the scene is one of shocking physical violence, with four ‘Arab’ women portrayed as being killed, five ‘Arabs’ as dead (one of whom is a man), and one woman who is about to be killed (on the left of the middle register). In the first scene, an Assyrian soldier attacked a woman on the floor with a spear, who had her hands raised.<sup>162</sup> In the lower register, the aftermath of this conflict is depicted, with the bodies of dead women alongside those of dead ‘Arab’ men.<sup>163</sup> Dubovsky has argued that this particular relief is part of a series of reliefs that depicted the second ‘Arab’ campaign of Assurbanipal.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 395.

<sup>161</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 400, 413.

<sup>162</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 413.

<sup>163</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 415.

<sup>164</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 400-412. If Adiyē was present in this relief, it would have gone against Gerardi’s chronology of the ‘Arab’ campaigns, as Adiyē was part of the first campaign, not the second. It would not be the first instance of the artists of Assurbanipal’s palace reliefs playing with the chronology of events in order to present a specific overarching message (Novotny & Watanabe 2018: 94).

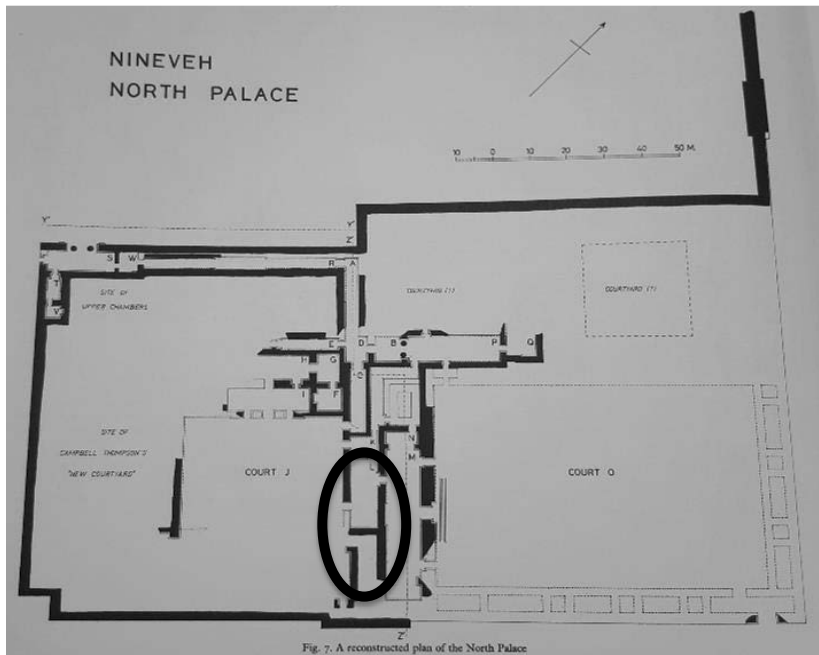
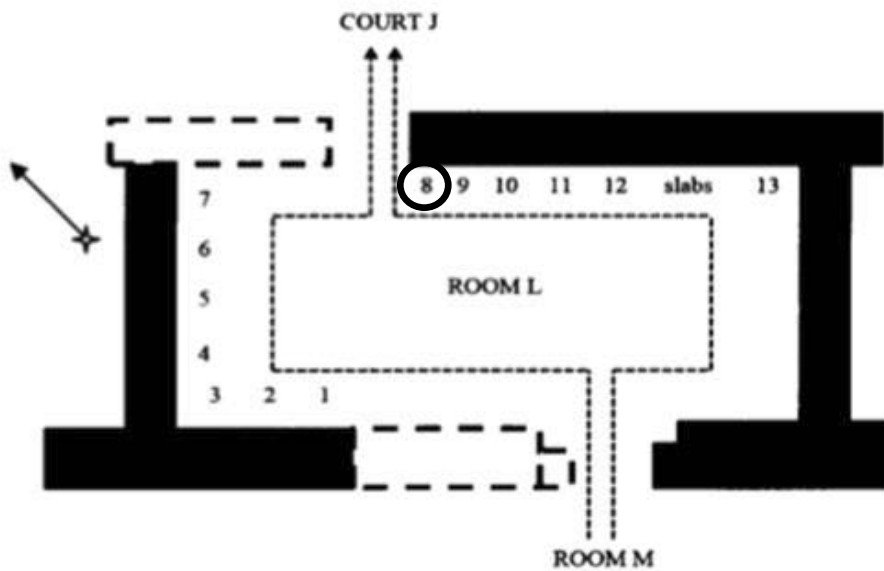


Fig. 7. A reconstructed plan of the North Palace

**Figure 18** *Layout of Assurbanipal's North Palace, with Room L highlighted. [Annotated floorplan] Barnett 1976: 28.*



**Figure 19** *Layout of reliefs in Room L as suggested by Dubovsky. BM 124927 is highlighted. [Annotated floorplan] Dubovsky 2009: 395.*

The relief was found in Room L of the North Palace of Assurbanipal at Nineveh.<sup>165</sup> This was adjacent to Court J, and then led to room M that linked to another court (Court Q in figure 18). Barnett identified this room as part of the throne room suite, and Kertai identified Room M and niche N as the throneroom.<sup>166</sup> As Room L directly connected to this important room, why was this unusual relief part of such an important complex in the palace? Reade has pointed out that the intention of these reliefs and architecture of palaces was to impress a sense of awe on those who looked upon it, which would reflect the power wielded by the Assyrian king.<sup>167</sup> In Dubovsky's analysis of this series of reliefs, this relief (called 'slab 9') was in an impactful position near the doorway leading to Court J. As can be seen in figure 19, the narrative of both 'Arab' campaigns began at the doorway of Room M, then followed around the room, culminating with the aftermath of these wars at the doorway to Court J.<sup>168</sup> BM 124927 would therefore have been one of the first and last images seen when walking from the throneroom to Court J. Its position was so prominent it would have been visible from the entrance from Room M (the throneroom), and would have been in view until the viewer left for Court J. BM 124927 was therefore designed to have a high impact in an important complex in the royal palace, and was designed to be seen by any person who had to walk through Room L from Room M.

This relief is a unique exception to a very simple rule in Assyrian palace art: women were not depicted in scenes of physical violence or military scenes.<sup>169</sup> There are four direct attacks in this relief against 'Arab' women, as well as two scenes with dead female bodies – another subject which is simply not seen in Assyrian art.<sup>170</sup> Several have noted this exception, but none of the previous analyses of this relief have tackled its gendered messaging. Dubovsky's excellent piece on the relief is an analysis of the Assyrian narrative dynamics in the artwork itself, but only addressed the violence towards the 'Arab' women briefly.<sup>171</sup> Albenda in a brief article addressed the relief's exceptional nature, but stated it was exceptional due to its depiction of an attack on tents as opposed to permanent fortifications – the message being that attackers should 'not be ill-prepared' when fighting the Assyrians.<sup>172</sup> Neither of these fully addressed the gender conventions that the artists were playing with, nor did they address the specific gendered

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<sup>165</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 395.

<sup>166</sup> Figure 18; Barnett 1976: 29-30; Kertai 2015: 173-175.

<sup>167</sup> Reade 1979: 336.

<sup>168</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 412.

<sup>169</sup> Women were rarely visually depicted outside of the equally violent aftermath of warfare, as evidenced by the three monumental depictions of Assyrian royal women outside seal imagery (Macgregor 2012: 87-93, 109-118). So whilst these deportees – women being led away from sieges – were close to violence, they were still being led away from the scenes of battle and physical violence.

<sup>170</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 394.

<sup>171</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 412-418.

<sup>172</sup> Albenda 1983: 84.

message being sent to Adiyeh, to other 'Queens of the Arabs', and to other foreign rulers.

BM 124927 depicted the slaughter of civilians in a camp located away from the battlefield. This is a horrific act of warfare, but to the Assyrians the very concept of 'war crimes' were completely unknown.<sup>173</sup> The Assyrian belief was that every action of the king was legitimate and approved of by the gods. Rebellions against the king were seen as criminal and sinful acts, and allowed the king to punish and mistreat them in ways that strike a modern audience as barbaric.<sup>174</sup> Severed heads were collected from enemy soldiers; noses, lips, ears, hands, and feet were cut off victims whilst still alive; enemies were blinded, burned or beheaded; and the leaders were humiliated in public parades followed by painful or even more humiliating punishments.<sup>175</sup> Cifarelli explained that this tied into the previous point – a violent and painful death was a natural consequence of violating Assyrian values, and portraying these on the palace walls gave a powerful message to foreign visitors to the Assyrian palace.<sup>176</sup> Dubovsky concluded that this message about the 'Arabs' having been sinful was the reason behind the treatment of the women in BM 124927.<sup>177</sup> Liverani explained how this fed into the wider Assyrian mindset that rebellion was a sin, as it meant differentiation from the ordered world of the Assyrian heartland.<sup>178</sup> Whilst I believe this plays a part in BM 124927, I am unsure this message alone explains the prominent position of this relief in Room L.

So far I have not raised the most sensational scene of this relief – the 'forced abortion' and murder in the middle register.<sup>179</sup> After viewing the relief in person, it is clear to me that this relief depicts in fact a 'forced abortion', with the Assyrian soldier to the left gripping a foot of the foetus with his right hand and holding the woman's stomach in place with his left. The leg of the foetus, which is partially removed from the woman's body, is visible just under the soldier's right hand. The 'Arab' woman is held in place by another Assyrian soldier, who holds back her arms and head. I do not agree with Dubovsky, however, who claimed the partial

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<sup>173</sup> Fuchs 2011: 396. For an overview of studying violence in the ancient Near East, see Bahrani 2008: 9-22.

<sup>174</sup> Fuchs 2011: 396.

<sup>175</sup> Fuchs 2011: 396-398.

<sup>176</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 210.

<sup>177</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 417-418.

<sup>178</sup> Liverani 1979: 311.

<sup>179</sup> The term 'forced abortion' carries a political weight in the modern world. It has been weaponised as a concept by conservative pro-life groups as a reason for banning abortions and limiting the rights of women. In order to ensure some distance from this modern connotation, I considered using the term 'foeticide'. However, this term refers to the killing of the foetus. The scene under discussion depicted the removal of the foetus from the womb, and not the explicit killing of the foetus (even though the removal would have killed the foetus). The act depicted in the palace relief was the removal a foetus from the uterus, without the mother's consent. I found that 'forced abortion' was the best term to describe this action, and I use it in it's descriptive sense. The only scholar thus far to offer a critique of this scene is Dubovsky, but unfortunately the images in his critical article are not very clear. This means many of the assertions are difficult to believe, raising the question of whether this was in fact a 'forced abortion', or a removal of the intestines.

removal of the womb was visible.<sup>180</sup> I believe what Dubovsky saw was the upper leg of the foetus. This scene is clearly depicting an attack not only on these women, but also an attack on the reproductive ability of ‘Arab’ women in general through the removal of the foetus.



**Figure 20** *The forced abortion scene. BM 124927. [Palace relief] Photo © Eleanor Bennett. Taken courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.*

This relief was a statement about the punishment of the ‘Arab’ women, and its content was inspired by the previous existence of ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Assurbanipal was aware of previous ‘Queens of the Arabs’ Te’elḫunu. She was referred to as a priestess of the ‘Arab’ goddess Dilbad in Assurbanipal’s annals.<sup>181</sup> This is proof that there was an active memory of the ‘Queens of the ‘Arabs’ that outlasted their lifetime.<sup>182</sup> Not only were these ‘Arab’ female leaders remembered by Assurbanipal, but so was their leading role within ‘Arab’ society. Assurbanipal

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<sup>180</sup> Dubovsky 2009: 414.

<sup>181</sup> Borger 1996 K 3087 || K 3405 || Rm2,558 line 12, my translation: *Míte-’e-el-ḫu-nu Miku-mir-ta-šá*, ‘her priestess, Te’elḫunu’. See chapter 5, section 5.1. for discussion about this.

<sup>182</sup> The potential that these women are still remembered today through the figure of the Queen of Sheba is discussed in Appendix C.

must have been acutely aware of their military roles in his campaigns against the 'Arabs'. This explains the need to depict such gendered violence in his royal palace reliefs against 'Arab' women.

The punishment of the violent forced abortion to kill both the foetus and the woman is not seen anywhere else in the Assyrian palace reliefs, which could relate to the fact that this is the only relief depicting women being physically harmed in an act of war.<sup>183</sup> There is an assumption that war-time rape and other gendered punishments were actually widespread during Assyrian campaigns, and this scene may be part of a wider treatment of women in war not normally admitted to in Assyrian art and texts. This relief's message goes beyond this. BM 124927 depicted an attack on the future prosperity and security of the 'Arabs'. The removal of a foetus from a pregnant woman was the removal of the future generation of potential leaders from the 'Arabs' as a whole. The Assyrians therefore had total control over the future of the 'Arabs'. Any foreign leader who walked through Room L received the message that the Assyrians had total control over the futures of the people they defeated and subjugated. This relief was therefore not only a pointed attack on the potential female leaders of the 'Arabs', but also an attack on their future.

Finally, the treatment of the female dead bodies is an important element of this message. I believe here we see the tension of the Assyrian artist attempting to depict a subject never before represented in the palace reliefs, whilst also maintaining the Assyrian norm that women should be protected from the humiliation and degradation of warfare. Male dead bodies were traditionally depicted as naked, but here the dead women in this scene are as fully clothed.<sup>184</sup> Why then were these women depicted fully clothed? Cifarelli indicated that clothing was the sign of a sophisticated person, and that women who had transgressed social norms were humiliated and degraded by stripping these women in a public display.<sup>185</sup> In fact, this relief points to the opposite – that women had to be clothed in all situations, even in the humiliating and degrading situation of execution by the Assyrian soldiers. The male 'Arab' soldiers are all unclothed, so there was clearly some form of degradation in death at the hands of the Assyrians. There was a change of status, from powerful male soldiers to dead bodies with no trappings or protection such as armour. Women in Assyria did not have to protect themselves with armour as they would not normally be on the

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<sup>183</sup> There are no depictions of pregnant women in the palace reliefs, either.

<sup>184</sup> This tension has led to a confusion in the initial interpretation of this relief, as the reliefs were initially seen as the Assyrians catching sleeping 'Arabs' by surprise, or even that these were eunuchs (Dubovsky 2009: 412; Reade 1998: 227). When looking at the relief, it is very clear that neither of these are the case, as the prone figures who are clothed are in front of tents which are burning, which indicate the aftermath of battle. The figures are also clothed in the same manner as the women in the higher registers who are certainly alive and are certainly women – as seen in the forced abortion scene.

<sup>185</sup> Cifarelli 1998: 219. This assertion is based on observations of all Mesopotamian societies, but Cifarelli specifically points to the Gilgamesh epic for this view about nudity (Cifarelli 1998: 219).

battlefield. There was therefore nothing to strip from them, and thus were depicted clothed.

An alternative theory is that this content was already a challenge for the Assyrian artists – they had to depict dead, dying and tortured women within the confines of the conventions of palace reliefs. Perhaps the depiction of naked female dead bodies was a step too far. The artists rarely had to depict royal women – either foreign or domestic. There are only three monumental images of royal women from the Neo-Assyrian period, and the only explicit depiction of a foreign royal woman is the previously discussed images of Samsi.<sup>186</sup> The live woman undergoing the forced abortion was a difficult subject to render. Judging by the ability of the Assyrian soldier to grasp a foot of the foetus, the pregnancy must have been in the later stages – yet the woman herself is depicted with the same body type as the other women in the relief, with no sign of a pregnant stomach. I suspect that in the absence of a fully formed convention of depicting women in conflict, the artists decided to use the conventions of live foreign women and used the standard figure of a foreign woman (a beardless figure with a long tunic or robe). This difference in the treatment of dead bodies due to gender made it clear to the viewer that these were women who were being killed – if they were naked, they may not have stood out in such contrast to the dead male bodies alongside them. Therefore, this difference in the depiction of dead bodies helped to serve the overall message of BM 124927. The gender of those who rebelled against the Assyrians would not save them from the harshest of treatment against themselves or their future descendants. This difference ultimately served the overall message of similarity – no matter what the difference was between the rebels of Assyria, they were all treated in the same harsh manner.

Adiye therefore illustrates two different points for us. The first is that she was described as a wife to another ‘Arab’ male ruler, Uaiate’. The second is that she was able to be a wife, but also be in control of her own military force. Assurbanipal knew of previous ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and his interaction with Adiye was the catalyst for the creation of a remarkable palace relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured ‘Arab’ women in the second ‘Arab’ campaign. Assurbanipal knew of the military role of these female leaders, and when faced with one his response was to send a very deliberate message through the royal palace reliefs. The relief was in a prominent position within his North Palace, so that not only would any ‘Arab’ dignitaries see it, but anyone who passed through Room L would as well. The palace relief played upon Assyrian expectations through the remarkable depiction of a forced abortion in which neither the foetus nor the woman were expected to survive. The message this sent to the ‘Arabs’ was that the Assyrians were in control of the future of the ‘Arabs’, no matter how much they might resist. The gender of

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<sup>186</sup> For the depictions of Assyrian royal women, see Macgregor 2012: 87-93, 109-118. For the identification of Samsi in the Assyrian palace reliefs, see chapter 2, section 2.2.1, section 2.2.2, and this chapter section 3.2.1.

the women in the relief helped send a more general message to both any future ‘Arab’ female rulers, but also any foreign rulers who thought of rebelling against Assyria: no matter how different their society was – even if they were ruled by women – they would be treated harshly if they resisted, coming under the Assyrian yoke.

### 3.3. SUMMARY

The ‘military’ sphere of power is the third aspect of power identified by Mann in his ‘IEMP’ model. According to Mann this could be both concentrated and coercive, as the military could be used both in battles to carry out violence on behalf of those in power, whilst also coercing the general populace into submission during times of peace.<sup>187</sup> With regards to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ there is only evidence of their military roles when there was a need for concentrated military power in campaigns and rebellions against the Assyrians.

I used the comparative case study of Sammu-rāmat, as she was probably involved in a military campaign of her son, Adad-nērārī III. Yet as soon as the Pazarçik stele moved to the narrative of the battle itself, Sammu-rāmat was excluded from the action. Some Neo-Assyrian royal women also fielded military units – but the exact nature and function of these units are unknown to us. Based on this overview, I expected to see very little mention of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in violent scenarios – let alone leading armies into battle against the Assyrians.

Samsi, the second ‘Queen of the Arabs’ in the Assyrian records, was not only involved in conflict but led ‘Arab’ forces on the battlefield. There is even enough information to create a tentative reconstruction of the immediate lead-up and aftermath of the battle. Her involvement in battle made such an impression upon the Assyrians that the artists included her image on a relief depicting her fleeing from the combat. Te’elḫunu’s role in military affairs is less certain, as the text that gave the most details about her military role is very damaged. Te’elḫunu probably ruled the population based at Adummatu, and the fate of cities in the surrounding area were clearly tied to the fate of Adummatu. Te’elḫunu clearly had influence over a relatively large area, and her military role played a large role in the fate of a large population.

Iapa’ and Baslu were discussed together, as they appeared together in the same passage of Esarhaddon’s royal inscriptions, which described how he defeated several ‘Arab’ rulers. They were from the eastern part of the Peninsula, which demonstrated that the phenomenon of female rulership was not restricted to the Northwest of Arabia. Iapa’ and Baslu’s inclusion in a list with male rulers demonstrated two aspects of their military roles. The first is that two female rulers

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<sup>187</sup> Mann 2012: 26.

could operate at the same time in the same region in a military campaign. They were also included and grouped together as male 'kings'. To the Assyrians, they were therefore acting as male 'kings', and were classified as such.

Adiye was described as both a wife of the 'Arab' king Uaiate', as well as having been defeated. She had her own military unit whilst married to another 'Arab' ruler – but there is no evidence regarding the functioning of this unit. Assurbanipal was aware of the previous 'Queens of the Arabs', and after his first 'Arab' campaign (where he came face to face with Adiye), reacted by commissioning an extraordinary palace relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured 'Arab' women. This was done to send two messages: one to the 'Arabs', saying that their future was under the control of the Assyrians; and a more general one saying to all foreign rulers that no matter how different their society was, their rebellion would be met with the same harsh treatment.

The military roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs' were generally depicted as far more active than those of the Neo-Assyrian royal women, but generalisations cannot be made based on such a small number of cases. Samsi's role in military affairs was an active one, leading her troops on the battlefield. This is less clear with Te'elhunu, but her role is seen to be far-reaching in the wider region – her defeat meant the defeat of smaller towns around Adummatu. Iapa' and Baslu were active at the same time as each other as 'female kings' in the eastern Peninsula. Female leaders were not restricted to the Northwest Arabian Peninsula, and more than one woman could be known as a 'Queen of the Arabs'. The Assyrians classified these women as 'kings' as they were acting as 'male kings'. Adiye was both a wife and a commander of a military unit, and her involvement against Assurbanipal led to the creation of the unique relief of dead, dying, and tortured women. It was a clear demonstration of the total control the Assyrians held over foreign societies, both in the present and in the future. Despite every 'Queen of the Arabs' inhabiting different roles in military contexts, it is clear that military roles were important for at least some of these women.

## 4 ECONOMIC ROLES

The ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were described in the Assyrian textual sources as in control over the resources of the ‘Arabs’. Whilst there are other examples in the ancient Near East of women owning personal wealth, the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ owned both personal wealth and could distribute the resources of the ‘Arabs’. The ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were able to decide what resources could be sent to the Assyrians in order to facilitate friendly relations. The trade of these resources played a vital role in the political situation of the region, as seen in the royal inscriptions of the Assyrians.

The two most famous items originating from the Arabian Peninsula were aromatics and dromedary camels, and their impact on inter-regional trade and politics of the Arabian Peninsula cannot be overstated.<sup>1</sup> Both of these were mentioned in the tribute lists that included the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and they played an important role in the analysis of the ‘economic’ role of these women. Control over the overland trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula – as well as minimising disruption along these routes – was the main motivation for the interactions between ‘Arab’ leaders and the Assyrian kings. A discussion of these items is vital for understanding the wider context within which the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ existed. The final section in this chapter will examine the evidence for the economic roles of these women, and the impact of their access to these expensive items in the Arabian Peninsula.

In this chapter I have adopted Larsen’s theory of ‘centre and periphery’, and Liverani’s ‘static’ and ‘dynamic’ model, to explain the Assyrian need and desire for the resources under the control of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.<sup>2</sup> I believe Larsen’s model has great explanatory potential in this context. In this theory, the imperial economy of Assyria was dependent upon the resources of the peripheral vassal states.<sup>3</sup> These could include raw materials, but also manufactured items such as purple cloth and skilled deportees.<sup>4</sup> According to Larsen, this was because Mesopotamia had very few natural resources and had to import commodities such as metals, stone and timber.<sup>5</sup>

In this model, Assyria would impose taxation and receive resources in regions directly under its control – as evidenced by Assyrian officials’ vast estates in the provinces.<sup>6</sup> Larsen said the economic and political systems in zones under the indirect rule of Assyria were based on the loyalty of a local ruler who was under

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<sup>1</sup> Bronze was also produced in the region (Magee 2014: 233-234).

<sup>2</sup> Larsen 1979 96-99; Liverani 1979: 312-314.

<sup>3</sup> Siddall provides an excellent summary of Larsen’s theory (Siddall 2013: 166).

<sup>4</sup> Siddall 2013: 167. Purple cloth is included in the tribute list from rulers including Zabibê, and fugitives were returned to Samsi (RINAP 1 15 3-4; SAA 11 162).

<sup>5</sup> Larsen 1979: 98.

<sup>6</sup> Larsen 1979: 97.

constant surveillance by Assyrian officials.<sup>7</sup> Samsi was defeated by Tiglath-pileser III and then a *qēpu* was placed over her to ensure that she acted in Assyria's best interests.<sup>8</sup> After this point, 'Arabs' sent tribute to Assyria, as Samsi sent items to Sargon II.<sup>9</sup> Key to the success of this tactic was the absence of disruptions in the supply chain. To counter such disturbances, the Assyrian kings had three options: it could find another source for the item or service in question, suffer a shortage, or intervene directly.<sup>10</sup> The last of these options is evident in the tribute list of Zabibê, 'Queen of the Arabs' to Tiglath-pileser III, and Esarhaddon's interactions with the 'Arabs'. Zabibê sent gifts to Tiglath-pileser III in the hope of placating the Assyrian king in order to avoid warfare and ensure minimal disturbances along the trade route through her region. Esarhaddon also pursued non-violent strategies in order to avoid warfare, as he placed Tabū'a as ruler over all of the 'Arabs'.<sup>11</sup> As she was raised in Sennacherib's palace, Tabū'a was socialised as an Assyrian. Tabū'a was therefore expected to act in an Assyria-friendly manner. However, her gender also meant she was socialised as an Assyrian royal woman, and therefore would have wished to avoid violence at all costs.<sup>12</sup> The imposition of a foreign ruler acting in favour of Assyria allowed for stability in the region. The 'Arabs' had access to luxury goods, and the 'Arabs' and Assyrians intervened to minimise disruptions to this supply line.<sup>13</sup>

Liverani has also provided a model for the interaction of Assyria with peripheral regions, and framed this as a tension between 'static' and 'dynamic' elements.<sup>14</sup> The 'static' element in this model was essentially Larsen's model, where the Assyrian heartland was the central zone for processed goods – as Liverani explained, it was where the raw materials and services of the chaotic periphery was transformed into the ordered, final product.<sup>15</sup> The 'dynamic' element of the model was that these peripheral materials were exchanged for political and cultural services from Assyria.<sup>16</sup> This element can be seen in the 'palace of king Uperi' in Dilmun (modern Bahrain), where coffins in the same style as Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian ones were found.<sup>17</sup> There is further evidence of

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<sup>7</sup> Larsen 1979: 97. See also Samsi who is placed under surveillance of a *qēpu* after sending items to Tiglath-pileser III (RINAP 1 47 r1'-2').

<sup>8</sup> RINAP 1 42 19'b-33'. See also chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>9</sup> Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11, 6b-8a.

<sup>10</sup> Larsen 1979: 99.

<sup>11</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv1-16.

<sup>12</sup> The relationship between Assyrian royal women and violence is discussed in more detail in chapter 3, section 3.1.

<sup>13</sup> See section 4.4 in this chapter, as well as chapter 3, section 3.2 for more on these interventions, and how they relate to the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

<sup>14</sup> Liverani 1979: 312-314.

<sup>15</sup> Liverani 1979: 313.

<sup>16</sup> Liverani 1979: 313.

<sup>17</sup> Potts 1990: 320. Whilst not located in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula like Adummatu, it is worth briefly discussing the links between Dilmun and Assyria. Dilmun is another location that benefitted greatly from trade that flowed through the Arabian Peninsula, as it was able to take advantage of both the overland and oversea trade routes to Mesopotamia and the Arabian Peninsula. It is likely that this trade was how the Assyrian kings heard of Dilmun, and from the Sargon Geography

cultural exchange at this site, though not with Mesopotamia. An Egyptianised signet ring found within a silver hoard was found beneath the lowest floor of building 1 at this site, and was given a date of post-650.<sup>18</sup> The silver hoard illustrates further cultural relationships with the Arabian Peninsula and other Near Eastern polities. The strength of Liverani's model was the demonstration that material goods could be exchanged for cultural ideas, and the impact of this direct contact extended well beyond the regions in immediate contact with Mesopotamia.

Liverani pointed out that this was an unequal exchange, as the Assyrians gained more in terms of material wealth and power, whilst those on the periphery gained more intangible benefits such as cultural norms, influences, and safety from Assyrian military ventures.<sup>19</sup> This was certainly the case with Zabibê, 'Queen of the Arabs', who sent a gift to Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>20</sup> The unequal exchange materially benefitted Tiglath-pileser III and the Assyrian empire, whilst Zabibê and the 'Arabs' received the promise of safety in return.<sup>21</sup> This interaction yielded a one-sided acquisition of goods by the Assyrians, and in Assyrian royal ideology this resulted in the view that the Assyrian heartland was the centre of order. Therefore, interactions with peripheral regions was ideologically carried out in order to impose order on the chaotic peripheral regions, and acted as a partial legitimisation for intervening in peripheral regions to the empire.<sup>22</sup>

## 4.1. THE WEALTH OF ARABIA

The discussion of the wealth of Arabia has been subject to orientalism, and there is a danger of assessing Arabian trade from only an Assyrian perspective. This would produce an image where commodities were only traded from the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant and Assyria.<sup>23</sup> Magee explained how the anachronistic story of the 'Queen of Sheba', and later Roman evidence such as Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* has influenced discussions on this subject. Such evidence has

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it is clear this location was used to demonstrate the fame of Assyrian kings (Potts 1990: 336). For more regarding the Sargon Geography, see Liverani 1999 2000. After Sennacherib's conquest of Babylon, the city's soil was sent to Dilmun. This scared the rulers of Dilmun into sending soldiers with tools to help Sennacherib rebuild Babylon, and thus created a political ally (Potts 1990: 339; RINAP 3 168 36b-44a). By the time of Assurbanipal, Dilmun was not only a political ally, but was taxed by Assyria (Potts 1990: 342. ABL 458; ABL 791; AAA XX.C).

<sup>18</sup> Potts 1990: 321-322; Boucharlat 1995: 1349. This date can only indicate when the ring was created, not the burial of the hoard.

<sup>19</sup> Liverani 1979: 313.

<sup>20</sup> RINAP 1 14 10b-15 5a.

<sup>21</sup> Tiglath-pileser III appears to have held true to his promise, as he did not attack Zabibê, but Samsi, 'Queen of the Arabs'.

<sup>22</sup> Liverani 1979: 314. Recently the notion of 'centre' and 'periphery' have been problematized. Arabia may have been on the periphery to the Assyrians, but to the 'Arabs' it was the centre. See Rova 2020: 7-10 for a brief discussion of this, and an alternative to this view.

<sup>23</sup> Magee 2014: 263.

been used uncritically to justify trade in the earlier periods of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>24</sup> As Magee argued, this perspective implied the Arabian economy was unchanging across time.<sup>25</sup> Due to this orientalist view of an unchanging Arabian economic landscape, few scholars have discussed why the ‘Arabs’ would participate in trade with Assyria to begin with.<sup>26</sup> Until recently, it has been thought that trade was carried out to provide the ‘Arabs’ with much-needed supplies or foodstuffs, but this has remained unproven up to now.<sup>27</sup> This is where Liverani’s ‘dynamic’ element will prove fruitful, as this provides an explanation for this interaction rooted in the material culture and textual evidence.

The Arabian Peninsula was famous for its trade in high value raw materials such as aromatics, copper, and volcanic materials.<sup>28</sup> These were transported on beasts of burden such as donkeys and dromedary camels over the difficult terrain of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>29</sup> However, the basis of much of the Arabian Peninsula was actually agriculture, particularly in South Arabia.<sup>30</sup> As de Maigret explained, without this agricultural success, the region would not have had a stable enough economy in order to start commercial ventures outside of South Arabia.<sup>31</sup> Whilst this chapter will be focussing on the trade in luxury items from the Arabian Peninsula, it is important to remember that it was not the only aspect of the Arabian economy – particularly in the South.

The Assyrians saw the Arabian Peninsula as a place that had access to luxury items, and the Assyrians seemed to be under the impression it was a wealthy region. The Assyrians did not necessarily know the origins of these items, but they associated them with the ‘Arabs’. This knowledge motivated trade with the ‘Arabs’. This can be seen in both the archaeological material in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the Assyrian texts. The two commodities that formed the basis of this reputation were aromatics and the dromedary camel. Aromatics were an expensive luxury good that was traded with the great powers of the ancient Near East, and dromedary camels facilitated the transport of goods across the dangerous and hostile terrain of the Arabian Desert.

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<sup>24</sup> Magee 2014: 263. An example of this is Groom 1981: 52-54, who used the ‘Queen of Sheba’ as an indicator of the items at the disposal of all Sabaean and South Arabian rulers in pre-Islamic Arabia in general.

<sup>25</sup> Magee 2014: 263. There was over nine hundred years between the activities of the ‘Queen of Sheba’ and the Roman era, and it would be unreasonable to suggest that any society had not changed over this length of time. For the ‘Queen of Sheba’, see Appendix C.

<sup>26</sup> Magee 2014: 263.

<sup>27</sup> Magee 2014: 263.

<sup>28</sup> Although aromatics and dromedaries are the focus of this chapter, other high-value luxury items were produced in the Arabian Peninsula (Sanlaville 2012: 68).

<sup>29</sup> Sanlaville 2012: 68.

<sup>30</sup> Beeston 1972: 257; de Maigret 1998: 223; Wilkinson 2002: 104.

<sup>31</sup> This was possible due to the development of hydraulic technologies that took advantage of seasonal floods, traditional wells, and springs in the region (de Maigret 1998: 223; Wilkinson 2002: 104).

### 4.1.1. AROMATICS

The value of frankincense and myrrh given by Pliny the Elder is often used to explain just how valuable these aromatics were in the time of the Neo-Babylonians and the Neo-Assyrians, when this was the value of aromatics in the Roman period.<sup>32</sup> I am not going to discuss these Roman sources in detail, as it would add to the false impression that the Arabian Peninsula as a single, unchanging region.<sup>33</sup> However, I believe that aromatics were expensive during the Neo-Assyrian period for the following reasons: the large demand for frankincense and myrrh in the ancient Near East; the quality of the product; the limited locations where they were grown; the manufacturing process; and the transportation costs of transporting aromatics overland.

This section will focus on the aromatic gum-resins frankincense and myrrh. These are the two most well-known aromatics that were grown in southern Arabia, and were obtained from ‘tapping’ the bark of trees.<sup>34</sup> This process is outlined by Van Beek, and results in a resin – frankincense ranges from pale yellow to yellowish-brown in colour, whilst myrrh was a reddish-brown colour.<sup>35</sup> Both give off a scented smoke when burned.<sup>36</sup> The logograms ŠIM.ĦI.A and ŠIM.MEŠ were used for ‘aromatics’ in Akkadian texts for such aromatics and were not restricted to frankincense and myrrh (in Akkadian *labānatu* and *murru* respectively).<sup>37</sup> If inhabitants of the Levant and Mesopotamia could not afford these, or did not have access to them, then they probably used cheaper substitutes from local plants.<sup>38</sup> This is an important reminder that frankincense and myrrh from South Arabia were luxury items, and were not in every day usage except in the most wealthy members of society.

The trees that produce frankincense and myrrh can only be found in South Arabia, Somalia, and some parts of Ethiopia.<sup>39</sup> Groom believed that the aromatic gums grown in South Arabia were of a higher quality than those from Somalia and Ethiopia, and suggested that the frankincense depicted in a fresco in Hatshepsut’s temple at Deir-al-Bahri (dated to approximately 1500) about the expedition to Punt was frankincense or myrrh from Eritrea.<sup>40</sup> The limited number of sites

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<sup>32</sup> Pliny the Elder gave a range of three to sixteen denarii per pound (Pliny the Elder *The Natural History* XII.32, 35). Pliny provided an explanation that has been used by modern scholars as well (Pliny the Elder *The Natural History* XII.30, 32; Groom 1981: 10; Murphy 2004: 104; Van Beek 1960, 1974).

<sup>33</sup> Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History* was written in the first century CE – seven to nine centuries later than the Neo-Assyrian period. Breton 1999 is an example of modern scholarship where such material is used, as Breton used classical sources, sources from the sixth century CE, as well as evidence from the nineteenth century CE. This provided an orientalist impression that the Arabian Peninsula is unchanging, and played into the ‘enduring exotic Orient’ stereotype of the Middle East.

<sup>34</sup> Van Beek 1960: 72.

<sup>35</sup> Van Beek 1960: 72; Van Beek 1974: 45, 71.

<sup>36</sup> Van Beek 1960: 71.

<sup>37</sup> Groom 1981: 35; 2002: 93; *CAD*, s.v. ‘riqqu’, ‘labānatu’, ‘murru’.

<sup>38</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1357. For example, Oppenheim suggested juniper resin could be used in the same manner as frankincense and myrrh (Oppenheim 1967: 243).

<sup>39</sup> Groom 1981: 9.

<sup>40</sup> Groom 2002: 88; Van Beek 1960: 72-75.

where the trees of frankincense and myrrh could be grown was a limiting factor in the supply of these goods. Therefore as the demand for these aromatics increased, the price would as well.

There is no direct evidence for trade in South Arabian aromatics, but incense of some sort was being used in Palestine and Syria in the second millennium.<sup>41</sup> This does not mean that incense specifically from South Arabia was being used in Syria and Palestine at this time, but it does demonstrate a general interest in aromatics in this region. It seems plausible that those with the means to do so could have demonstrated their wealth by using incense that originated from further away – resulting in the start of a trade network where frankincense and myrrh played a vital role.<sup>42</sup> It is difficult to determine when this started, and Groom believed that the trade in incense was not significant before the first millennium.<sup>43</sup> I believe the trade of aromatics was established by the early first millennium, as ‘aromatics’ were mentioned in lists of booty and tribute from the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.<sup>44</sup>

Aromatics were used in both religious rituals and in perfumes in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Religious rituals largely used frankincense, which was not generally used in perfumes or cosmetics.<sup>45</sup> Groom explained that the movement of the white smoke that frankincense gives off when it smoulders was symbolic of prayers, and linked the heavens to the humans on Earth.<sup>46</sup> Incense of some sort was burnt for gods in tall incense burners in the Assyrian palace reliefs, and I do not doubt that frankincense was used this way.<sup>47</sup> Neumann has discussed how important the sensory experience was for rituals, and the divine image in the *pīt-pî* ceremony needed to experience the smell of burning aromatics.<sup>48</sup> Aromatics had a clear demand in religious activities in Assyria.

In comparison, myrrh was an agent in cosmetics and perfumes. Egyptian evidence demonstrated that myrrh was used for cosmetics and mummification.<sup>49</sup> The usage of the word *murru* indicates a wider usage of the myrrh resin in Mesopotamia, where it was used in medicines, rituals, perfumes, and in

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<sup>41</sup> In fifteenth-century Hazor a drainage channel was partly made up of disused incense stands (Groom 1981: 32).

<sup>42</sup> It was not simply the distance involved that influenced the price. Inter-regional politics would have influenced the prices of aromatics from different regions. For example, if the relations between Egypt and the Assyrians turned sour, this would have driven up the price of aromatics from Somalia and Ethiopia. This might have made these items more desirable as a demonstration of wealth, but there is no evidence for this.

<sup>43</sup> Groom 1981: 37.

<sup>44</sup> For example, see Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11, 7; RINAP 1 42 21'. Mentioning aromatics in tribute lists implies these women had access to the trade routes transporting these goods.

<sup>45</sup> Van Beek 1960: 82-83.

<sup>46</sup> Groom 1981: 2.

<sup>47</sup> Barnett 1976. Pl. LVII; Groom 1981: 1.

<sup>48</sup> Neumann 2017: 14-15.

<sup>49</sup> Van Beek 1960: 84.

tanning.<sup>50</sup> The market for these gum-resins was therefore based on their usage in religious rituals, medicine, perfume, and manufacturing processes.

The Assyrians were interested in aromatics, and in the ninth century the royal inscriptions of Tukulti-Ninurta II report how his army took aromatics from Ḫindanu as well as other places along the Euphrates.<sup>51</sup> Edens and Bawden have used this to explain that the aromatics trade was done through the King's Highway, and not across the Arabian Peninsula. I doubt that only the official system of 'royal roads' were used for everyday trade, as the merchants carrying these items would have required written royal authorisation to trade on this route.<sup>52</sup> There is no evidence that trade in aromatics was a state-organised activity. Instead, trade in aromatics seemed to have been organised through local merchants, and as such less official routes were used. Trade may have contacted Ḫindanu by the ninth century, but by the appearance of the 'Queens of the Arabs' in the eighth century aromatics were perceived by the Assyrians to be controlled by those who had access to the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>53</sup> From the ninth century aromatics were included in tribute lists to Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal by leaders of the 'Arabs'.<sup>54</sup> As tribute could be imposed upon a population group, such lists could be interpreted as the Assyrians understanding that the 'Arab' groups had access to high-quality aromatics. This scenario will be explored in relation to the 'Queens of the Arabs' in sections 4.5.1., 4.5.2., and 4.5.3. in this chapter. Requests for such tribute would have brought a vast amount of material wealth to the Assyrian empire, and was a major motivation for the Assyrians to interact with the 'Arab' populations.

#### 4.1.2. DROMEDARIES

There are few animals that are so intimately tied with the Arabian Peninsula as the dromedary camel. Bulliet has stated that the dromedary is perfectly suited to the harsh conditions found there, and its domestication ultimately allowed for the overland incense trade to flourish.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> CAD, s.v. 'murrū A'.

<sup>51</sup> RIMA 2 A.O.100.5 77. Hausleiter 2012: 820

<sup>52</sup> Parpola 1987b: xiv; Kuhrt 1995: 535.

<sup>53</sup> The evidence for this is in the tribute list including Zabibê, 'Queen of the Arabs'. This shall be discussed in more detail in section 4.5.1. of this chapter.

<sup>54</sup> Edens & Bawden 1989: 91.

<sup>55</sup> Bulliet 1990: 57. Due to its impact on the Arabian Peninsula, the date of the domestication of the dromedary camel has caused great debate. The exact date of when the dromedary was domesticated is very difficult to determine through archaeological remains, but Magee uses linguistic evidence from Assyrian texts to suggest that the dromedary camel was in use as a domestic animal by the thirteenth and twelfth centuries (Magee 2014: 203). Magee's argument rests on the fact that there was a differentiation made between Bactrian camels (AM.SI.KUR.RA) and dromedary camels (ANŠE.A.AB.BA), but he is clear to point out that even this gives little clarity as to when the dromedary was domesticated. In contrast, Almathen et al 2016 used an increase in the size of dromedary bones at settlements, in combination with an increase in representations of domesticated dromedaries, to give a rough date of the second millennium (Almathen et al 2016). There is also the possibility of using the

The most prominent depictions of camels are on Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs and monuments, and have been collated by Mitchell in detail.<sup>56</sup> Dromedary camels are also recorded in texts from the Assyrian period. ANŠE.AB.BA is equated to *gamallu*, and then later to *ibilu*, both of which were loan words from the Arabian spoken in the Arabian Peninsula at the time.<sup>57</sup> Al-Zaidi has expanded on this, and explained the development of the terms referring to camels in Akkadian.<sup>58</sup> Unless there is a qualifier for two humps, then the term *udru* referred to dromedaries, and therefore the dromedary was seen as the standard breed of camel in Assyrian texts. Al-Zaidi also explained that different types of dromedaries were referred to with different terms. Male camels were described using the logogram ANŠE.A.AB.BA.A; female dromedaries were called SAL/MUNUS ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te; and foals were called ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri. These terms were used from the time of Tiglath-pileser III, after the first contact with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This adds to the overall image that over time, the Assyrians gained more knowledge of ‘Arab’ culture and society.<sup>59</sup>

Irwin provided an overview of precisely how well this animal has evolved to the Arabian Peninsula, and here I shall summarise. Its third eyelid helped against blowing sand, and to protect itself further it has small ears that are fur-lined, as well as a nose that can be closed. The height of a dromedary means it can graze off trees or tall bushes, and the tough inner surface of its mouth means it can eat thorny plants that other animals will not be able to eat. The dromedary also had the ability to drink a large amount of water in a short time and could then go thirty days without any (if they still had access to food). In fact, a dromedary camel can survive five to seven days without either food or water. The storage of fat in its hump allows the dromedary to stay cool, its long legs keep it above the hot sands of the Arabian Desert, and finally the dromedary starts sweating at a higher temperature than humans. All these characteristics mean the dromedary camel is uniquely suited to the Arabian Peninsula, and its ability to comfortably carry over 250kg meant it was an excellent beast of burden for transporting goods across the Peninsula.<sup>60</sup>

Dromedary camels were not only valuable for their ability to transport commodities across the desert, but were also kept for their milk, fur, and meat. It is unknown whether this was done before or after their domestication, because fur and meat could be used at an earlier stage of this process – including whilst

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Book of Genesis to date the domestication of the dromedary to approximately 1100 to 1000 (Bulliet 1990: 35-6; Genesis 12:16). However, this last argument tends to ignore the archaeological evidence for the domestication of the dromedary.

<sup>56</sup> Mitchell 2000. A similar overview of attestations in textual and visual material for the first millennium has been collated by Cousin 2020.

<sup>57</sup> Mitchell 2000: 188. *CAD*, s.v. ‘ibilu’.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Zaidi 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Zaidi 2017: 14-15.

<sup>60</sup> Irwin used the measurement of 600 pounds, which converts to 273kg (Irwin 2010: 16-24). See also later in this section regarding the importance of the saddle concerning carrying this capacity.

the dromedary was still wild.<sup>61</sup> Rock drawings from Southwest Arabia show the hunting of camels. The dromedary camel in the Southwest of the Arabian Peninsula was an animal of prestige, and was culturally important for the 'Arabs'.<sup>62</sup> By the ninth century, dromedary camels were used as beasts of burden, as a dromedary is depicted with a pack being led by a rope on the Balawat Gates of Shalmeneser III.<sup>63</sup> This development from an animal kept for the commodities it could produce to a beast of burden had a profound effect on trade in the Arabian Peninsula.

The palace reliefs of the Neo-Assyrian kings depict dromedary camels involved in warfare, but it is important to stress that these were primarily beasts of burden, not of combat. They were not very practical on the battlefield, as their manoeuvrability was low in confined spaces, and their long legs were a target for the swords and spears of Assyrian foot soldiers.<sup>64</sup> Macdonald stated the evidence from Assyrian reliefs point to the 'Arabs' largely fighting on foot, who retreated to their camels if they were defeated in order to flee the battlefield.<sup>65</sup> Dromedaries were therefore used to manoeuvre troops to and from the battlefield, and they were depicted in the palace reliefs fleeing from battle as an othering technique to depict the 'Arabs' as cowards.<sup>66</sup>

The final use of the dromedary stems from an interesting account that described an extreme situation. In the royal inscriptions of Ashurbanipal is a brief description of how the confederation of Abi-Iate', 'the Qedarite', was suffering from a lack of water due to the actions of Assurbanipal. In order to survive, the 'Arabs' cut open the stomachs of their camels, and drank the contents.<sup>67</sup> This seems like a dramatic motif to demonstrate the barbarism of the 'Arabs', but Potts has used an ethnographic account of the 'Awamir tribe in Abu Dhabi to demonstrate that this is not beyond the realm of possibility.<sup>68</sup> The 'Awamir tribe would take a single camel and forced it to drink a large amount of water. The camel would then have its tongue removed to stop it from eating, and it would be loaded with water skins.<sup>69</sup> When these skins were empty, the camel would be forced to vomit any water in its stomach, and when that was exhausted the camel was killed, and the members of this tribe would drink the water found inside its

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<sup>61</sup> Bulliet 1990: 38.

<sup>62</sup> Macdonald suggested another interpretation for these images, where they depict the good outcome of a raid. This is based on evidence from later populations of 'Arabs' in the Arabian Peninsula who would engage in raids where the item they touch first with their lance was claimed as theirs (Macdonald 1990: 24-5).

<sup>63</sup> Magee has speculated this was because of 'Arab' merchants returning from economic trips to Mesopotamia. From the Middle Assyrian period onwards, Bactrian camels were used as beasts of burden in this region, and Magee suggests that the 'Arab' merchants saw this use and brought this idea back to Arabia for their dromedaries (Magee 2014: 207, 210).

<sup>64</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1363.

<sup>65</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1363.

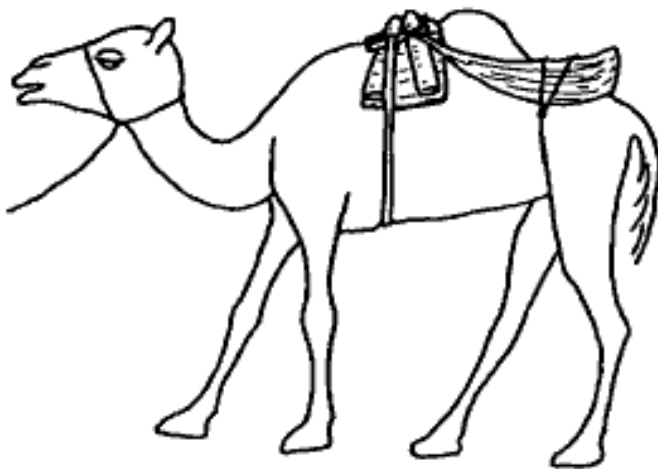
<sup>66</sup> Bulliet 1990: 84; Macdonald 1995: 1363; Retsö 2003: 123.

<sup>67</sup> Potts 2006: 24; RINAP 5 11 ix 25-37.

<sup>68</sup> Potts 2006: 25.

<sup>69</sup> Potts 2006: 25.

body.<sup>70</sup> Even though this is a fully-formed practice amongst the ‘Awamir tribe’, I believe the account of the Neo-Assyrian ‘Arabs’ was a desperate act of severely dehydrated people.<sup>71</sup> This points to the importance of the dromedary camel for the survival of ‘Arabs’ in extreme conditions – specifically when there was little or no water.



**Figure 21** *Schematic drawing of a South Arabian saddle, drawn by Bulliet. [Line drawing] Bulliet 1990: 74.*

The development in the usages of the dromedary camel can be seen in the changes of saddle design of the dromedary. Bulliet explains that the earliest ‘saddle’ was designed with the intention of allowing the camel to carry as much as possible by laying several mats on top of one another.<sup>72</sup> The change to riding the dromedary required a change in saddle design to what Bulliet calls the ‘South Arabian’ type (see figure 21). The rider sat behind the hump, and the cargo would sit in front of it. This allowed for a better weight distribution of the cargo, and therefore the dromedary could carry more weight.<sup>73</sup> Finally, a third type of saddle has been identified by Bulliet called the ‘cushion’ saddle – a saddle that sat on top of the hump of the camel (see figure 22). Bulliet has identified this as the saddle used in warfare and military affairs, and suggested this was because the ‘South Arabian’ saddle lacked the control necessary for guiding a dromedary toward or around

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<sup>70</sup> Potts 2006: 25.

<sup>71</sup> That is, if this incident was a historical event, and not a literary motif to further the ‘Arabs’ as non-Assyrian.

<sup>72</sup> Bulliet 1990: 68.

<sup>73</sup> Bulliet 1990: 68-83.

combat.<sup>74</sup> These technological developments demonstrate the flexible nature of the dromedary and the unique connection between the 'Arabs' at this time and this important animal. Additionally, the different saddle designs can determine the use of the dromedaries in the palace reliefs.

The use of the dromedary camel as a beast of burden was a revolutionary step, and the 'Arabs' developed new saddles in order to maximise the amount a camel could carry.<sup>75</sup> The dromedary transported the expensive aromatics from South Arabia to the trade centres towards the North of the Peninsula. The 'Arabs' were the only ones who had access to this valuable resource that enabled transport across the Arabian Peninsula, and they became vital for any control of Arabia. This can be seen in the letter SAA 1 175 where a governor gives the excuse that he could not chase the 'Arabs' as the ground was unsuited to the horses and chariots



**Figure 22**      *Example of a depiction of a 'cushion saddle'.* [Photo of figurine] Bulliet 1990: 86.

at his disposal, whilst the 'Arabs' on dromedaries were able to sprint away. The royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon record that he took camels from the 'Arabs' in order to cross the Sinai desert in for the campaign against Egypt in 671.<sup>76</sup> The ability of these animals to cross the desert in a more successful manner than horses was clearly not lost on the Assyrian kings.

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<sup>74</sup> Bulliet 1990: 84.

<sup>75</sup> Al-Fassi has calculated that by the Nabataean period, one caravan of 4,125 camels could carry approximately 748 tons of frankincense and other goods (Al-Fassi 2007: 69). Each camel would be carrying roughly 184kg. The Nabataean era, fourth century BCE to the second century CE, should not be read as evidence for the Neo-Assyrian period.

<sup>76</sup> Elat 1978: 21; RINAP 4 34 r.1-8.

30,000 camels were taken as booty from Samsi.<sup>77</sup> This is a ‘round number’ in reference to booty, and as such this number was likely inflated to suit the overall message of Tiglath-pileser III. He wanted to be seen as being able to control a vast amount of resources.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, this figure was a rough idea of scale as opposed to an accurate number. The message of the text was therefore a large number of dromedaries were taken as booty. Bulliet stated that this hinted at a breeding centre for dromedaries in North Arabia.<sup>79</sup> This demonstrates another motivation behind the Assyrian interventions with the ‘Arabs’: control of the ‘Arabs’ would mean the Assyrians would have access to dromedaries, and would therefore be able to use camels for crossing the desert. This leaves little doubt as to the importance of dromedaries to the region, and alongside aromatics they were a key motivation for the control of the ‘Arabs’.

Whilst aromatics and dromedaries were not the foundations of the economy of the societies in the Arabian Peninsula, Assyria saw these as the most valuable items from the region. Trade of aromatics from the Peninsula was the basis for later claims regarding its wealth as a region in the Roman period. In comparison, the dromedary camel was the beast of burden that allowed for this lucrative trade, and Assyria recognised the importance of this animal for crossing otherwise formidable terrain. Control of these two resources was the main motivation for control over the ‘Arab’ populations, and was the reason for Assyrian interaction with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

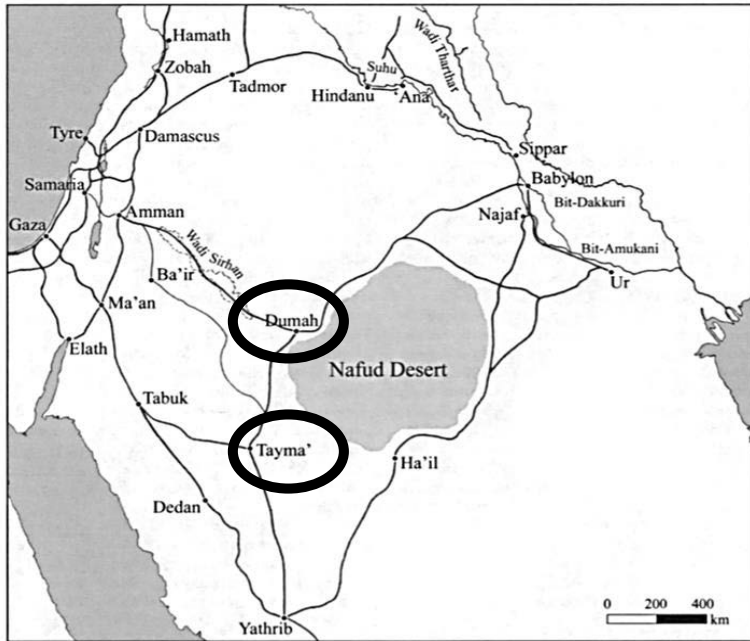
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<sup>77</sup> RINAP 1 42 20’; Bulliet 1990: 78.

<sup>78</sup> De Odorico 1995: 12. Also see chapter 2, section 2.1.1.

<sup>79</sup> Bulliet 1990: 78. This seems highly likely, and it may be possible to take this further and suggest that there may have been a centre in North Arabia with an economy based solely on the trade of dromedaries. These scenarios would be difficult to prove, but they certainly should not be completely discounted.

## 4.2. TRADE ROUTES



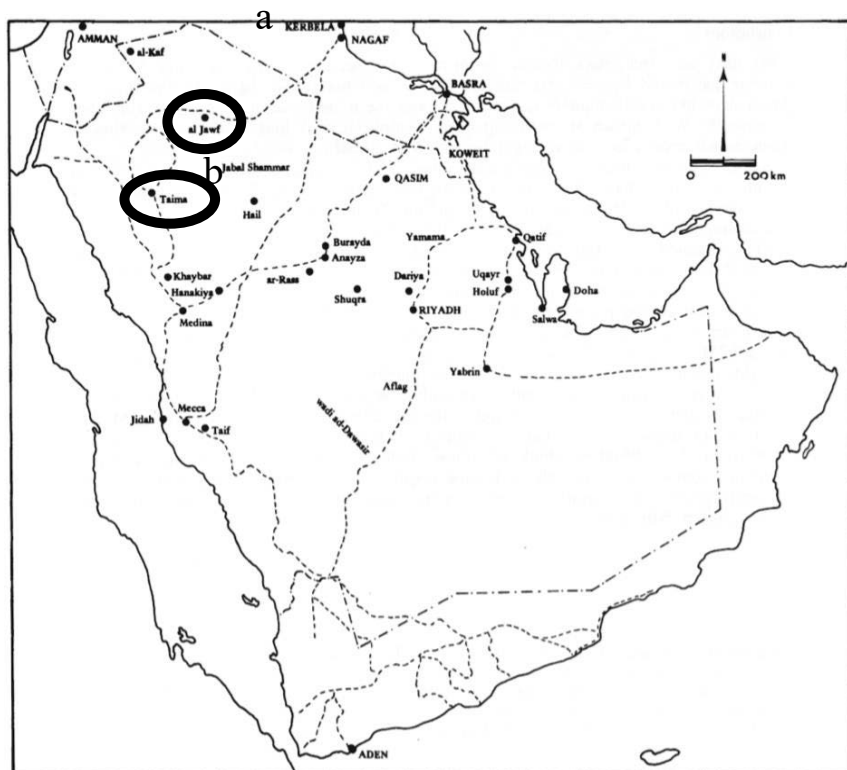
**Figure 23** *Map of important overland trade centres, with a suggested reconstruction by Byrne. In addition, the two oasis towns under discussion have been circled and annotated.* [Annotated map] Byrne 2003: 13.

Modern scholars have attempted to reconstruct the overland trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula, but there is very little direct evidence to map these routes with precision, so the majority of these suggestions have been speculative.<sup>80</sup> With little direct evidence, figures 23 and 24 demonstrate the different conclusions that could be reached, with Byrne and Potts suggesting very different trade routes surrounding Adummatu and Tayma.<sup>81</sup> I shall not offer such a reconstruction, as the ability to do so is severely limited due to a lack of textual sources from the ‘Arab’ perspective for the Neo-Assyrian period. Instead I will offer an alternative pattern of trade through the Arabian Peninsula. This alternative method of trading resources I have called the ‘staged’ model. I believe this best reflects that any route across the Arabian Peninsula could change drastically over time due to

<sup>80</sup> Examples of reconstructing this route can be seen in Van Beek 1960: 76; Potts 1988; Bulliet 1990: 65; Byrne 2003; Magee 2014: 267.

<sup>81</sup> Byrne 2003: 13; Potts 1988: 127, 138. Potts’ attempt to reconstruct trade routes within the North Arabian Peninsula mapped out the routes best accessible to the Assyrian army to conduct a military campaign against the ‘Arabs’ (Potts 1988: 128–131). This is not the same as the overland trade routes known to the ‘Arabs’ to conduct trade, and without any textual evidence from the Arabian Peninsula during Neo-Assyrian period that explicitly details this, trade routes cannot be reconstructed with any precision.

a variety of factors, and merchants had to adapt to these new situations.<sup>82</sup> Yet there were two main oasis towns in Northwest Arabia that played a major role in trade across the Arabian Peninsula: Adummatu and Tayma. These will be discussed in detail to further contextualise the economic role of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.



**Figure 24** *Alternative reconstruction of the overland trade routes across the Arabian Peninsula. Note the different routes suggested in the Northwest of the region. Adummatu (here labelled al Jawf) and Tayma have been circled and annotated by myself. [Annotated map] Pott 1988: 138.*

Overland trade through the Arabian Peninsula was underway by the eighth century.<sup>83</sup> Yet the fundamental question of why the ‘Arabs’ would trade over land at all, when the Peninsula was surrounded by seas that accessed Egypt and Mesopotamia, has not been discussed in detail.

<sup>82</sup> Potts has an excellent overview as to this, and explained how both weather and political allegiances could dictate the route taken by a merchant across the Peninsula. Such a route could be very different to the route of another merchant travelling in the same direction (Potts 1988: 127-128).

<sup>83</sup> The letter from the governor of Suḥu which explains how he raided a caravan of Taymanites and presumably Sabaeans was written in the eighth century (Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: 346-351). For an outline of the problems regarding the dating of the start of this trade, see Magee 2014: 262.

The East coast of the Arabian Peninsula and the Red Sea were governed by monsoons, so travel at the wrong time could be disastrous.<sup>84</sup> Maritime trade required a merchant to access a boat, as well as a crew skilled enough to navigate such dangerous areas. Experience in even the most basic sailing skills could only have been gained by coastal communities, and crewmen who were skilled and experienced enough to navigate the dangerous seas would have been a scarce commodity in the Peninsula's mainland. Access to maritime trade may have been restricted to those groups who controlled the coastline. In comparison, there would have been many communities in localities throughout the Peninsula who would know how to survive the desert conditions, as well as how to use the dromedary as a beast of burden. There were therefore more opportunities for 'Arabs' to trade overland across the Arabian Peninsula than in maritime trade.

The initial investment for a boat and experienced crew for maritime trade would have been expensive. In order to make the money of this investment back and to make a profit, the returns had to be large for this method of trade. In comparison, the overland trade routes were a relatively cheap investment that could yield a very large profit margin. Instead of an initial investment of an expensive ship and crew, traders only needed to invest in the considerably cheaper dromedary camel. Merchants would see a return on their investment significantly quicker than if they invested in maritime transport. As there are no firm figures for the cost of such trips, we can compare evidence with that of the Nabataean period (in the Late Hellenistic and Roman period). The risk of maritime and overland trade were roughly the same during this period due to the terrain and the time involved in both routes, and this was not likely to have changed from the Neo-Assyrian period. Overland trade from the South to the North of the Arabian Peninsula cost roughly sixty times more than the same trip done by maritime transport, and ten times more than transport through rivers.<sup>85</sup> The vast difference in price indicates that during the Neo-Assyrian period overland trade would have been the most expensive option for trade. Merchants would be able to make this money back by increasing the cost of the products they sold, and thus would have been able to easily make back their initial investment. With the prices involved, and the ability to make money relatively quickly, this may have acted as an incentive for 'Arab' merchants to become involved in overland trade.

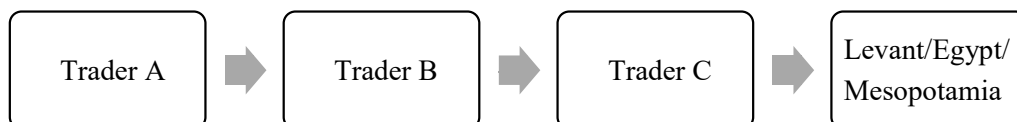
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<sup>84</sup> Bulliet 1990: 65-66; Van Beek 1960: 79.

<sup>85</sup> Al-Fassi 2007: 67.



**Figure 25** *Method one of trade through the Arabian Peninsula, where the resources were taken by one trader to a northern nexus point which could take the items on to other important markets like Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Levant.*



**Figure 26** *Method two of trade through the Arabian Peninsula, where resources are taken via a series of traders travelling North in 'stages', where it would then end up in the markets of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Levant.*

One view of trade across the Arabian Peninsula sees goods produced in the South of Arabia, and then travelled with a single trader to the North Peninsula where they were traded (as demonstrated in figure 25). The time it would take for a merchant to travel from South Arabia to al-‘Ula in the Northwest would be two months.<sup>86</sup> Four months would have to be set aside for a return journey, and al-Fassi has determined a month of rest was needed at either end of this journey.<sup>87</sup> In total that would require six months for a return journey, assuming there were no delays like a raid or bad weather.<sup>88</sup> It would have taken longer to reach Tayma, and even longer to Adummatu, both of which were further North in the Arabian Peninsula than al-‘Ula.<sup>89</sup> Not every ‘Arab’ merchant would have had the resources for the supplies needed for this long journey, and Oppenheim also pointed to the small profit margins this would mean for these merchants.<sup>90</sup> What was more feasible was that goods could be carried by one merchant to a town in the direction of one of these key cities. At that point it would be traded with another merchant, who would take those goods to another town towards the end of the overall route, and these goods would be traded again – as illustrated in figure 26. This process was not necessarily part of an overarching strategy, and I believe this model

<sup>86</sup> See figure 24 for the location of al-‘Ula, where it is labelled as Dedan.

<sup>87</sup> Al-Fassi 2007: 68.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Fassi 2007: 68.

<sup>89</sup> See figure 24 for the locations of Tayma and Adummatu.

<sup>90</sup> Oppenheim provided an alternative model where the ‘Arabs’ may have been commissioned by a central administration for this long journey, and were paid via commission and bonuses. Another alternative Oppenheim suggested was that the merchants bought shares of the goods themselves before embarking on this journey. These are both viable alternatives to the ‘stages’ approach of trade, but there is very little evidence of these methods (Oppenheim 1967: 239-240).

should be seen as opportunistic. This process would continue until the goods were traded at the other end of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, it is difficult to suggest an overall time for a commodity to reach one end of the Peninsula from the other, as certain stages of the journey may take longer than others, or the goods stayed in one location for a long time before a suitable merchant could take it further North. The important aspect here is that this was a long journey based on the movements of multiple merchants and potentially significantly longer than current estimates based on a single-journey model of trade.<sup>91</sup>

‘Arab’ merchants could travel beyond the North of the Arabian Peninsula, as we see a caravan attacked by the governor of Suḥu and Mari:<sup>92</sup>

- 26b) *ana-ku* <sup>ld</sup>MAŠ.NÍG.DU.PAP  
 27) <sup>lu</sup>GAR KUR *su-ḥi u KUR ma-ri* <sup>lu</sup>te-ma-’a-a-a <sup>lu</sup>šá-ba-’a-a-a  
 28) *šá a-šar-šú-nu ru-qu* <sup>lu</sup>A.KIN-šú-nu a-na muḥ-ḥi-ia ul DU<sup>ku</sup>  
 29) *ù a-na muḥ-ḥi-ia ul it-ti-qu-ú-nu a-na muḥ-ḥi x*  
 30) PÚ *mar-tu u PÚ ḥa-la-tum a-lak-ta-šú-nu* TE *u it-ti-iq-ma*  
 31) *u a-na* <sup>uru</sup>ḥi-in-da-a-nu *ir-ru-bu-nu ina* <sup>uru</sup>kar-<sup>d</sup>A.<sup>d</sup>IM *i-na*  
 32) AN.BAR<sub>7</sub> *ši-mu-su-nu áš-mi-e-ma ni-ri aš-mid ina* MI ÍD  
 33) *e-bir-ma ina šá-ni-i u<sub>4</sub>-me a-di la* AN.BAR<sub>7</sub> *a-na* <sup>uru</sup>az-la-a-a-nu  
 34) *ak-šu-ud-ma 3 u<sub>4</sub>-mi i-na* <sup>uru</sup>az-la-a-nu *ú-šib-ma ina 3-šú u<sub>4</sub>-me*  
 35) *ik-šu-du-nim-ma 1* ME-šú-nu *bal-ṭu-su’-nu ŠU<sup>2</sup> ik-šu-ud 2* ME  
*gam-ma-lu-šú-nu*  
 36) *a’-di* GÚ.UN-šú-nu SIKI *ta-kil-tum* SIKI KASKAL? AN.BAR  
<sup>na</sup><sub>4</sub><BABBAR>.DIL<sup>meš</sup><sub>93</sub> *mim-ma mi-reš-ti DÙ.A.BI*  
 37) *ik-šu-ud ŠU<sup>2</sup>-a-a* NAM.RI-*su-nu ka-bit-ti áš-lu-lam’* (EL)-*ma*  
 38) *ú-še-rib a-na qé-reb* KUR *su-ḥi* MU 7 KÁM  
 39) <sup>ld</sup>MAŠ.NÍG.DU.PAP <sup>lu</sup>GAR KUR *su-ḥi u KUR ma-ri da-ba-ba*  
 40) *an-na-a da-bi-ib ba-a-ri*

Translation:

- 26b) I, Ninurta-kudurrī-ušur,  
 27) governor of Suḥu and Mari; the people of Tayma and Šaba’a,  
 28) whose remote place, whose messenger did not come before me,  
 29) and had previously not come before me, towards...

<sup>91</sup> This runs slightly counter to Larsen’s concept of the centre and periphery, as this does not include an Assyrian influence guiding the goods to Assyria. Instead this model is based on the whims of traders, whose sole goal was to transport goods they believed they could profit from. Further critiques of the centre and periphery model in general can be found in Rova 2020.

<sup>92</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: Tablet 2, col. iv p. 346-351.

<sup>93</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail suggest this could possibly be a reference to the statues of the ‘Arab’ gods, but here I have chosen to provide the translation of ‘pappardillu-stones’. This is because I believe that Ninurta-kudurrī-ušur would have explicitly stated if these were in fact divine statues, and as this appears to be a merchant caravan it would be more likely to contain semi-precious stones in their raw form to trade with craftsmen (Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: 356).

30) they went to the well of Martu and Ḫalatu, and in addition their caravan had gone  
 31) and entered the city Ḫindanu. In Kar-apla-Adad at  
 32) midday I heard their message. I made the yokes ready.  
 33a) I crossed the river at night. On the second day before midday  
 33b-34) I arrived at Azlayanu. I dwelled (for) 3 days in Azlayanu. They arrived on the third day.  
 35) I captured 100 hands alive; I obtained 200 (of) their camels,  
 36) whilst I obtained their baggage, blue-purple wool, *kaskallu*-wool, iron, *pappadillu*-stones, white semi-precious stones, anything I might possibly need,  
 37) I plundered their substantial booty. I  
 38) brought (this) into the nearby land of Suḫu. (In) year 7  
 39) of Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur, governor of Suḫu and Mari, (these) words  
 40) (were) spoken and checked.

In this letter, the governor of Suḫu and Mari, Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur, described how he targeted a caravan of southern ‘Arabs’ from Tayma and Šaba in the middle of the eighth century.<sup>94</sup> It is unclear where the merchants from Tayma and Šaba were travelling to, only that they entered the city of Ḫindanu.<sup>95</sup> Hausleiter suggested that because aromatics were not included in this text, then they must have already been traded and this caravan was travelling back to Arabia.<sup>96</sup> This would assume that every merchant from the Arabian Peninsula always traded in aromatics, and there is no evidence that this was the case. However, camels were amongst the property seized by the governor of Suḫu and Mari, as well as different kinds of precious and semi-precious stones. What is most interesting is the inclusion of ‘blue-purple wool’.<sup>97</sup> This is not a traditionally ‘Arab’ good, but instead suggests a Phoenician textile.<sup>98</sup> The blue-purple dye was mainly from Tyre, which made it scarce and was therefore a luxury product outside of the Levant.<sup>99</sup> This does not mean that the ‘Arabs’ traded with the Phoenicians directly, and these textiles may have been on a second ‘stage’ of a trade route from the Levant.<sup>100</sup> There is also the possibility that if these merchants were ethnically

<sup>94</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: 321; text 2, iv 27.

<sup>95</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: line 31. These merchants may have originated from the South of the Peninsula, and thus would be merchants who could afford the ‘single journey’ method in figure 25. There is also the possibility that they were ethnically Taymanite or Sabaeen, but were based in the North Arabian Peninsula, thus indicating the ‘staged’ method in figure 26.

<sup>96</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 106.

<sup>97</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: 35-36.

<sup>98</sup> Byrne 2003: 15.

<sup>99</sup> It is also interesting to note another parallel between these garments and aromatics, as they were both used in religious rituals (Oppenheim 1967: 246-247, 253).

<sup>100</sup> In other words, the blue-purple dye was acquired from a Phoenician, and then was traded from that merchant to another merchant or this ‘Arab’ caravan. Magee pointed out that a merchant could have acquired blue-purple dye from the following locations: Tell Halaf, Hama or Carchemish (Magee 2014: 266).

Taymanite and Sabaeen, and thus from further South in the Arabian Peninsula, they might have had access to the purple dye production centres in modern Qatar.<sup>101</sup> Yet this is based on evidence from the thirteenth century, and there is no evidence that this continued into the ninth. Whichever location is correct for the origin of this 'blue-purple wool', we can see here the truly multicultural nature of the trade the 'Arabs' participated in. They had access to luxury goods from the Arabian Peninsula, the Levant, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, that could be traded in different regions for their luxury commodity of aromatics, and could then be traded in a different region for another region-specific luxury good.



**Figure 27** *Egyptianised scarab seal from Qaryat al-Faw.* [Scarab seal] Al-Ansari 2010: 350. pl. 185.

There was also a less material aspect of this trade. There is evidence for a cultural exchange following Liverani's model, as demonstrated by the Egyptianised scarab seal from Qaryat al-Faw dating from the first millennium.<sup>102</sup> To find such an item roughly 700km to the South-South-West of Riyadh points to an interest in Egyptian culture, such as the stylised inscription, and enhances Liverani's concept of cultural ideas exchanged for resources.<sup>103</sup> Cultural ideas were exchanged between the powers and cultures in the region, which could only have

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<sup>101</sup> Edens 1999 discussed the production of a purple dyestuff in the site Khor Ile-Sud in modern Qatar, and has dated the remains of ground shellfish to the thirteenth century. The shellfish species is one that could be used in the production of 'purple'. Edens is keen to remind the reader that this colour is subjective, and could range from blue to red (Edens 1999: 83). Singer 2014: 24.

<sup>102</sup> Figure 27. al-Ansari 2010: 350; Hausleiter 2012: 820.

<sup>103</sup> Liverani 1979: 313.

been facilitated through communication with these powers through long-distance overland trade.<sup>104</sup>

Oasis towns located along overland trade routes were important to the resupply of traders. Their placement along these routes were largely determined by the location of the oases where they were built.<sup>105</sup> A symbiotic relationship between caravans and these oasis towns developed, as the towns needed the caravans to maintain their economies. Caravans had to pay tolls for passage through them, as well as fees to gain supplies like water and food during their stay.<sup>106</sup> There was likely competition between towns to entice the caravans into their area of control, and thus to gain revenue through their need to resupply.<sup>107</sup>

Adummatu and Tayma were oasis towns that provide information for the interactions between the Assyrians and the ‘Arabs’. Adummatu is mentioned in the Assyrian royal inscriptions in explicit relation to ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Te’elḥunu, and is described as a fortified city with another city called Kapānu in its vicinity. Adummatu has been identified as the modern town Dumat al-Jandal (or Dumah, or al-Jawf in Figures 23 and 24), but without excavations reaching the Neo-Assyrian layer, we cannot say any more about this oasis town. A full overview of Adummatu has been provided in chapter 2, sections 2.1.1.8. and 2.3.1. However, the city Tayma can act as a comparison, and can suggest what Adummatu might have been like during the Neo-Assyrian period. This includes walls dating from the second millennium, a temple, and several objects indicated cultural exchange with Assyria, Egypt, the Levant, and Babylonia. Tayma also had its own dialect, which was used by a leader in Carchemish to demonstrate how many languages he could speak. On overview of the evidence regarding Tayma can be found in chapter 2, section 2.3.2. These oasis cities help to dispel the idea that the Arabian Peninsula was inhabited solely by nomadic groups, and provide evidence that the Northwest Arabian Peninsula was a hub of cultural and material exchange.

The trade routes themselves were therefore just as important as the goods that flowed through them. Goods would gradually be transported through these trade routes, and expensive goods could eventually reach the markets of Assyria, the Levant, and Egypt. The dromedary camel was key for this trade, and the Assyrians quickly understood that the dromedary allowed for easier transit across this important region. These factors provided the motive for the Assyrians to control the region.

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<sup>104</sup> Al-Jallad provided further linguistic evidence for this, as demonstrated in the linguistic similarities and potential cultural influences of the ‘Arabs’ and surrounding areas during the first millennium (Al-Jallad 2020).

<sup>105</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1357.

<sup>106</sup> Al-Muaikel 1988: 46.

<sup>107</sup> Edens & Bawden 1989: 74.

### 4.3. 'ARAB' AND ASSYRIAN INTERACTIONS ON THE BORDER

'Arab' merchants were not only operating in the Arabian Peninsula, but also in Mesopotamia. In fact, in the Achaemenid archive of Nergal-iddin we see a locality in Nippur called the 'town of the Arabs'.<sup>108</sup> There is no evidence for any localities where the population was predominantly 'Arab' in the same manner during the Neo-Assyrian period, but there is evidence for interactions between 'Arab' groups and Assyrian administrators regarding grazing rights in the surrounding areas. In one letter, an official asked the Assyrian king Sargon II why the 'Arabs' were grazing in the desert, as this would only lead to raids and plunder on Assyrian-controlled territory.<sup>109</sup> In another letter, an official was chastised for not dealing with plundering 'Arabs' in a manner deemed 'appropriate' by Sargon II.<sup>110</sup> These letters are testament to a constant negotiation between the 'Arab' populations and the administrative powers of the Assyrian Empire who seemed to have had difficulty effectively dealing with the 'Arabs'.

Interactions with the 'Arab' groups would have meant that the Assyrians would have known about the goods the 'Arabs' traded, as well as the vital nature of the dromedary camels to the Arabian Peninsula. As the Assyrians learnt of the knowledge the 'Arabs' had of the best routes to travel across the desert, the Assyrians wished to control these populations in order to gain access to the all-important trade routes.<sup>111</sup> The lack of knowledge about the desert by the Assyrians is seen best with Esarhaddon, who asked 'Arab' populations to guide the Assyrian army through the Sinai desert in order to invade Egypt.<sup>112</sup> This illustrated the inability of the Assyrian kings to cross the desert successfully without this specialist knowledge, and the importance of local knowledge in such harsh terrain.

One aspect of this interaction with the 'Arabs' was the use of raids by both the 'Arabs' and the Assyrians. In letter SAA 1 175, a group of 'Arabs' attempted to raid a caravan heading to Damascus, but were chased off by the local provincial governor. Such letters have played into an erroneous modern misconception that the 'Arabs' were marauding raiders, when this behaviour was not unique to this group. Assyrian governors also participated in raiding 'Arab' caravans and boasted of this in letters to the king. This is seen in both SAA 1 175 and in the letter from the governor of Mari and Suḫu.<sup>113</sup> Whilst raiding and looting did play a role in the interactions between the Assyrians and the 'Arabs', raids were not the basis

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<sup>108</sup> Beaulieu suggested this was probably because of the number of 'Arabs' who had settled there (Beaulieu 2013: 48).

<sup>109</sup> SAA 1 81.

<sup>110</sup> SAA 1 84.

<sup>111</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1357.

<sup>112</sup> Byrne 2003: 11. RINAP 4 34 r.2.

<sup>113</sup> See section 4.2 of this chapter about this letter.

of the 'Arab' economy. These raids were opportunistic, and were carried out by both the 'Arabs' and the Assyrians.

A final, brief discussion is needed to address the idea that the overland trade was the reason for the rise of female rulers in the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Fassi suggested that the overland trade route in the Nabataean period would have resulted in a vacuum of male power in Arabian localities, which allowed for 'Arab' women to flourish in positions of power.<sup>114</sup> This has an interesting parallel with the Old Assyrian period, where women were more visible in letters whilst their husbands were away.<sup>115</sup> This is an interesting idea, but I am not sure that this is an accurate explanation of the rise of powerful women in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula, and Al-Fassi's theory is based on the 'single journey' model of trade across the Arabian Peninsula. Very few merchants would have been able to travel the route from the South to the North in one trip, and they would therefore be away from their homes for much shorter periods of time than that suggested by Al-Fassi. A second aspect which I am unsure about is the assumption by Al-Fassi that all the merchants were men. I have not come across any evidence to suggest this was the case. In fact, an 'Arab' woman was included in a discussion regarding business matters and trading interests in a letter from Nippur in the sixth century.<sup>116</sup> The idea that extensive trade meant the male population essentially disappeared therefore does not hold true. This plays into the next problem with this assertion, since we do not know what the societal structures in the towns and cities throughout the Arabian Peninsula were. It is unlikely they were all organised the same, and it is likely that some of these localities had women in leadership roles for reasons unconnected to trade (such as a cultic position or a position based on politics). Finally, I feel that Al-Fassi is ignoring that the basis of the South Arabian economy was agriculture and not inter-regional trade. This would require as much labour as possible, and anyone who was involved in this would be farming throughout the year. Therefore, we cannot apply this model to the rise of the 'Queens of the Arabs' in the Northwest of the Arabian Peninsula.

The Arabian Peninsula was home to a thriving agricultural economy in the South, and alongside this market was the production of aromatics that could fetch a very high price in markets such as Egypt, the Levant, and Mesopotamia. The wealth accrued from both the trade in aromatics and the control over the resource of the dromedary camel meant that control over these populations was incredibly important to the Assyrian kings. With this in mind it is clear that this was the driving force in the interactions between the Assyrian kings and the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

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<sup>114</sup> Al-Fassi 2007: 67-68.

<sup>115</sup> Van de Mieroop 2007: 96-97.

<sup>116</sup> Cole 1996: 53-55.

## 4.4. METHODS OF CONTROLLING THE TRADE THROUGH THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

Peace with the ‘Arabs’ was vital to both the overland trade routes, and to the ability of the Assyrians and Babylonians to effectively cross the desert. The ‘Arabs’ were a useful military resource who could enforce the borders of these empires.<sup>117</sup> Ensuring a stable and peaceful trade route with the ‘Arabs’ was one way in which both the Assyrians and the Babylonian rebels could keep a powerful ally on their side. The ‘Arabs’ were never exclusively the allies of either Assyria or Babylonia, and this was particularly evident during the hostilities between these two powers. During the reign of Sennacherib, the ‘Arabs’ were allied with the Babylonian rebel Marduk-apla-iddina.<sup>118</sup> During this time the Assyrians were engaged in hostile behaviour against the ‘Arabs’, whilst the Babylonian rebels were engaging in more peaceful relations with the ‘Arabs’, keeping the trade routes open and taking advantage of the ‘Arabs’ knowledge of the region.<sup>119</sup>

One way of maintaining stability in the region was to address the needs of the ‘Arabs’, and one of the best methods of this was through grazing rights. The ‘Arab’ merchants needed to feed their animals, such as the dromedary camels they used to carry their goods. Even though camels could survive in harsh conditions, they still needed to be fed, and if the ‘Arabs’ could not get enough food for their animals in the more arid regions of the Arabian Peninsula, local towns might allow the animals of the merchants to graze on their land at a price.<sup>120</sup> ‘Arab’ merchants could trade and restock whilst their animals grazed, but this arrangement had to be negotiated between the ‘Arab’ merchants and the local towns. Such negotiations were heavily reliant upon the regional politics of the local towns themselves. Negotiating grazing rights was clearly one method of preventing any hostilities, thus underscoring the importance of non-violent relations for trade from the perspective of both the ‘Arabs’ and the Mesopotamian powers.

Another non-military (or non-violent) method of control over these trade routes was the use of diplomatic treaties. There is only one such treaty between the Assyrians and the ‘Arabs’, which is from the reign of Assurbanipal:<sup>121</sup>

Obv.

Beginning (at least 5 lines) broken away

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<sup>117</sup> This was due both to their access to the dromedary camel, which allowed them to cover more difficult ground like the Syrian Desert than horses and chariots, as well as their local knowledge for where the best points would be for resupplying armed forces (Grayson 1991a: 78). As mentioned previously, the dromedaries of the ‘Arabs’ were used by Esarhaddon to attack Egypt through the Sinai (Macdonald 1995: 1366).

<sup>118</sup> In fact, it is in one of the attestations of the ‘Arabs’ allying with Marduk-apla-iddina where Iati’e, ‘Queen of the Arabs’, was mentioned (Elat 1998: 47). RINAP 3 1 27.

<sup>119</sup> For the references relating to Sennacherib’s campaigns, see RINAP 3 1 27-19, RINAP 3 213 27-29; Elat 1998: 47.

<sup>120</sup> Elat 1998: 51

<sup>121</sup> SAA 2 10.

- 1') [TA\* m<sub>x</sub> x x] A m<sup>f</sup>ia-ú<sup>1</sup>-[ta-a' x x x]  
 2') [(IGI) DINGIR.MEŠ KUR]-aš-šur DINGIR.MEŠ KUR.qi-id-[ri  
 DÛ-šú-nu]
- 

3') [aš-šur] <sup>d</sup>NI[N].LÍL <sup>d</sup>š[e<sup>1</sup>-ru-u-a]

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- 4') [pit<sup>2</sup>-ti<sup>2</sup> š]á m<sup>f</sup>ia-ú-ta-a' la MU[N-a-nu<sup>2</sup>]  
 5') [pi-i G]ÍR.AN.BAR a-na ha-lu-[qi o<sup>1</sup>]  
 6') [KUR.a-ru-b]u<sup>2</sup> gab-bu id-din-<sup>f</sup>u<sup>1</sup>-[ni o<sup>1</sup>]  
 7') [ina pi]- <sup>f</sup>i<sup>1</sup> GÍR.AN.BAR iš-kun-u-ka-nu-n[i]  
 8') [maš-šur]-<sup>f</sup>DÛ<sup>1</sup>-A <sup>f</sup>MAN<sup>1</sup> KUR-aš-šur EN-ku-nu  
 9') <sup>f</sup>I<sup>1</sup>.GIŠ iš-kun-ak-ka-nu-u-ni  
 10') pa-ni-šú SIG<sub>5</sub>.MEŠ ina UGU-<sup>h</sup>i-ku-nu  
 11') iš-kun-u-ni  
 12') šum-ma at-tu-nu TA\* m<sup>f</sup>ia-ú-ta-a'  
 13') a-na MUN ta-qar-rib-a-ni  
 14') šum-[ma TA\*] ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ku-nu ŠEŠ.ME A[D.MEŠ-ku-nu]  
 15') [x x x x]x tu KUR [x x x x]  
 16') [x x x x x]x is [x x x x]  
 Rest (at least 8) lines broken away

Rev.

Beginning (at least 6 lines) broken away

- 1') [x at]-tu-<sup>f</sup>nu<sup>1</sup> [x x x x x x x]  
 2') [šum-m]a GÍR.2-šú [x x x x x x x x]  
 3') [i-d]a-tu-uš-[šú x x x x x x x]  
 4') ina ŠU.2 me-me-ni ta-šap-pa[r]- <sup>f</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-[ni-(-šú-ni)]  
 5') ina pu-ut sa-an-ka-a-te šá e-p[u-šu-u-ni]  
 6') ina [U]GU du-a-ki-šú la ta-kap-pu-d[a-a-ni]  
 7') la ta-ša[r]-rim-a-ni
- 

- 8') [<sup>d</sup>aš-šur <sup>d</sup>NI]N.LÍL <sup>d</sup>30 <sup>d</sup>UTU  
 9') [<sup>d</sup>EN <sup>d</sup>P]A <sup>d</sup>f<sub>15</sub><sup>1</sup> [šá] NINA.[KI <sup>d</sup>1]5  
 10') [ša arba-<sup>il</sup> <sup>d</sup>]U.GUR x[x x x]  
 11') [x x x x x] x [x x x x]  
 Rest broken away

Translation:

Obv.

(Break)

1'-2') [The treaty of Assurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria, son of Esarhaddon, likewise king of the world, king of Assyria, with *Abi-yate' son of Te'ri*, his sons, grandsons, brothers and nephews, with all Qedarites, young and old, and with ...] son of Yau[ta', in the presence of all the gods of] Assyria and Qedar:

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3') [(*Swear* by) Aššur], Mullissu and Š[erua]:

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4'-7') [*Considering th*]at Yauta' (your) malef[actor] handed all [Arab]s over to destruction [through] the iron sword, and put you to the sword, 8'-11') [and that Assur]banipal, king of Assyria, your lord, put oil on you and turned his friendly face towards you, 12'-13') you shall not strive for peace with Yauta', 14') you shall not [... with] your brothers, [your] unc[les ... (Break)

Rev.

6 lines broken away at beginning.

1') You shall [.....];

2'-4') [you] sh[all keep] his feet [off ...], and shall not send [...] after him by the hand of anyone,

5'-7') (but), considering the *terrible* things which he did, you shall make every effort to kill him.

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8'-10') [May Aššur, Mu]llissu, Sin, Šamaš, [Bel, Na]bû, Ištar [of Nineveh, Iš]tar [of Arbela], Nergal [... (Rest destroyed)

Written just before the outbreak of Šamaš-šumu-ukin's rebellion in 652, the fragmentary treaty described a pact between Assurbanipal and a leader of the Qedarites. The agreement was to prevent a king of the Qedarites from allying or helping in any way Iata' or his son.<sup>122</sup> Parpola and Watanabe have restored this fragment, assuming this is regarding the king Abi-Iate', and there is no reason to doubt this.<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, Assurbanipal knew he was dealing with the 'Qedarites' as opposed to the 'Arabs'; the Assyrians had learned by this point the difference

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<sup>122</sup> Parpola & Watanabe 1998: XXXIII.

<sup>123</sup> SAA 2 10, 1'.

between these two terms, and believed the two groups had different leaders.<sup>124</sup> The specific terms of the treaty were simple: do not support Iata' or his allies, and make every effort to kill him.<sup>125</sup> This treaty was not intended to create a stable situation for trade to flourish, but was a way of creating a situation that was beneficial for the Assyrians in a military situation.

A final non-military method of controlling 'Arab' trade was the attempt to control the military capabilities of the 'Arabs'. By lessening their threat in warfare, the Assyrians ensured their defeat. A key aspect of this was controlling access of iron to the 'Arabs'. Populations in the Arabian Peninsula already certainly had access to bronze weapons, but in SAA 1 179 the 'Arabs' were accused of trying to access iron.<sup>126</sup> Trade appears to have been a very informal affair – there does not appear to have been any official sanction by any Assyrian or 'Arab' official for this trade. It appears that some opportunistic merchants (both within the town of Huzaza and those who were 'Arabs') decided to trade in a resource that fetched a high price amongst the 'Arabs'.<sup>127</sup> The response from the Assyrians was short and stern – iron should not be traded with the 'Arabs' under any circumstance, and the governor went out of his way to explain that it would not happen under his watch.<sup>128</sup> Control over this resource was seen as paramount to the Assyrian officials, as a monopoly over iron was capable of giving the Assyrian army an advantage in warfare.<sup>129</sup> Assyrian success in warfare was not secure if their enemies gained access to iron. SAA 1 179 is evidence for an overriding strategy for dealing with resources that would have given the Assyrians the upper hand in warfare by controlling trade.

There were several different methods non-'Arab' powers could control the 'Arab' populations and the trade they had access to. Aside from military intervention, non-military means such as treaties and negotiating grazing rights could ensure that the 'Arabs' remained on good terms with foreign powers. What follows is an exploration of the resources under the control of the 'Queens of the Arabs', and how they were used in the interactions between the 'Arabs' and Assyrians.

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<sup>124</sup> However, the 'land of Qedar' was mentioned in RINAP 1 35 iii2, so this knowledge was present during the period of Tiglath-pileser III as well. There is a significant gap between these two rulers, where there is no mention of Qedar in the royal inscriptions.

<sup>125</sup> SAA 2 10, 12'-r.7'.

<sup>126</sup> Hausleiter 2011: 112.

<sup>127</sup> This might have been akin to some sort of 'black market' operating outside the boundaries of state-sanctioned activities.

<sup>128</sup> SAA 1 179 obv.25b-rev.6.

<sup>129</sup> Although the precise reasons for the initial adoption for iron still under discussion, as Erb-Satullo described how it is likely due to several factors: the material properties; the economics involved in its production; and the social organisation involved in its production (Erb-Satullo 2019).

## 4.5. THE ‘QUEENS OF THE ARABS’

I have now discussed the economic background of the Arabian Peninsula, which further contextualised the economic roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Not all of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ have evidence in relation to their economic roles. This is largely due to the nature of the sources, as they mostly deal with military events, and rarely link economic actions with an individual leader. The importance of the ‘Arabs’ was in the actions of merchants and their access to specialist resources – not in official trade sanctioned by states. In this section the explicit evidence for the economic roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ will be discussed, particularly in reference to Zabibê and Samsi. I will also discuss Tabū’a, as her imposition as a ‘Queen of the Arabs’ by Esarhaddon was in order for the Assyrians to gain control of the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula.

### 4.5.1. ZABIBÊ

The evidence of Zabibê’s economic role comes from tribute lists in the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III. Tribute lists pose a problem, as they do not directly inform us regarding the trade of the ‘Arabs’.<sup>130</sup> However, Assyrian sources reveal what items and resources the Assyrians believed the ‘Arabs’ had access to, and as such which of these items the Assyrians deemed valuable enough to be sent to them as tribute. This is particularly the case in instances where tribute from foreign kings was demanded and stipulated by Assyrian kings, such as Esarhaddon’s order of an increase of sixty-five camels from the son of Ḥazā-il.<sup>131</sup> It is uncertain whether sixty-five camels were ordered historically, as De Odorico explained that the numbers given in tribute lists are often under one hundred, and as such cannot be seen as either ‘round’ or ‘exact’ numbers.<sup>132</sup> This makes it difficult to assess the accuracy of the numbers given in tribute lists. What makes this even harder is that only ‘extraordinary’ contributions paid by groups upon arrival into the Assyrian empire tended to be recorded, and as such were often labelled as *nāmurtu*, or ‘audience gifts’.<sup>133</sup> Due to this issue with quantifications

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<sup>130</sup> The difference between trade and tribute is subtle and difficult to determine in the royal inscriptions, but in general tribute was a single direction transaction from a subordinate to a superior in a hierarchical power structure. In comparison, trade involved a more tangible exchange largely reflecting their relative rank or differences in political power. This is particularly difficult to determine from the Assyrian texts, as a variety of terms with subtly different meanings were employed, such as *madattu* and *nāmurtu*. These have been discussed in more detail by Postgate 1974 (Saggs 1975:626-627). I will be careful in this chapter to use terms that describe the precise nature of payments between two leaders, rather than the blanket term of ‘tribute’.

<sup>131</sup> Eph’al 1982: 124. RINAP 4 1 iv17-18.

<sup>132</sup> De Odorico 1995: 6, 11.

<sup>133</sup> De Odorico 1995: 11. *CAD*, s.v. ‘*nāmurtu*’. Indeed Liverani has demonstrated the difficulty of labelling the exchange of items in the ancient world as ‘tribute’. In the case of Hatshepsut, items were taken from Punt and described as ‘tribute’ in the Egyptian sources, but items were given in exchange

of tribute items, I will focus on the items sent in tribute lists by ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and not the quantities.

Tribute lists therefore described what the Assyrians took from the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and the items that the Assyrian kings believed these women had control over. Based on this belief, the Assyrians then requested the items they believed the ‘Arabs’ could provide. This is particularly important to discuss in relation to Zabibê, ‘Queen of the Arabs’, as she is only mentioned in a tribute list from the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>134</sup> The format is a long list of rulers, as well as the places they were from, followed by a list of the items that they collectively sent to Tiglath-pileser III:<sup>135</sup>

Text No. 14

10b) *ma-da-at-tu ša mku-uš-ta-áš-pi URU.ku-um-mu-ḥa-a-a mra-ḥi-a-nu KUR.šá-ANŠE.NÍTA-šu-a-a*<sup>136</sup> *me-ni-ḥi-im-me URU.sa-me-ri-na-a-a*

11) [*mḥi-ru-um-mu URU*], *ṣur-a-a msi-bi-it-ṭi<sup>1</sup>-bi-ṭi<sup>1</sup>-li URU.gu-ub-la-a-a mú-ri-ik-ki KUR.qu-ú-a-a mpi-si-ri-is URU.gar-ga-miš-a-a me-ni-il*

12) [*URU.ḥa-am-ma*]-*ta-a-a mpa-na-ṭam-mu<sup>1</sup>-u URU.sa-am-ṭa-la-a-a mtar-ḥu-la-ra KUR.gúr-gu-ma-a-a msu-lu-ma-al KUR.me-lid-da-a-a mda-di-lu*

Text No. 15 (continued from text no.14)

1) *URU.kas-ka-a-a mú-as-sur-me KUR.ta-bal-a-a muš-ḥi-it-ti KUR.tu-na-a-a mur-bal-la-a KUR.tu-ḥa-na<sup>1</sup>-a-a mtu-ḥa-am<sup>1</sup>-[me URU.iš-tu-un-da-a-a]*

2) *mú-ri-im-mi-i URU.ḥu-bi-iš-na-a-a ṭza-ṭbi-bé<sup>1</sup>-e šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi KÙ.GI KÙ.BABBAR ṭAN.NA AN.BAR<sup>1</sup> KUŠ AM.SI ṭZÚ<sup>1</sup> [AM.SI]*

3) *lu-bul-ti bir-me TÚG.GADA SÍG.ta-ṭkil<sup>1</sup>-tu ṭSÍG<sup>1</sup>.[ár]-ga-man-nu GIŠ.ESI GIŠ.TÚG mim-ma aq-ru ni-ṣir-ti ṭLUGAL<sup>1</sup>-ú-ti UDU.NÍTA.MEŠ bal-ṭtu<sup>1</sup>-[ti ša SÍG.MEŠ-šú-nu]*

4) *ar-ga-man-nu*<sup>137</sup> *šar-pat iṣ-ṣur AN-e mut-tap-ri-šú-ti šá a-gap-pi-šú-nu a-na ta-kil-te šar-pu ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA.MEŠ GU<sub>4</sub>.NÍTA.MEŠ ṭú ṣe<sup>1</sup>-[e-ni ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ]*

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for them by the Egyptians. This posed an ideological conundrum for the Egyptian scribes, and required several visual and literary devices to enable this event to be seen as ideologically sound (Liverani 2001).

<sup>134</sup> Grayson 1992: 78. The event has been dated to 738.

<sup>135</sup> RINAP 1 14-15.

<sup>136</sup> It appears that this unusual name is specifically used to refer to the land or region of Damascus, as opposed to the city Damascus which in the RINAP corpus is otherwise always referred to as URU.di-maš-qa (e.g. RINAP 3/1 17 viii 88, and RINAP 5 11 ix 9).

<sup>137</sup> RINAP 1 15 notes that this was a scribal mistake, and the reconstruction in line 3 is the correct form based on text 27.

5a) MUNUS.ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-te a-di ANŠE.ba-<sup>1</sup>ak<sup>1</sup>-ka-ri-ši-na am-  
hur*

Translation:

Text No. 14

10b-12) The payment of Kuštašpi of the city Kummuḥu, Raḫiānu (Rezin) of the land Damascus, Menahem of the city Samaria, [Hiram of the city] Tyre, Sibitti-bi'il of the city Byblos, Urikki of the land Que, Pisīris of the city Carchemish, Ēnī-il of [the city Hama]th, Panammû of the city Sam'al, Tarḫulara of the land Gurgum, Sulumal of the land Melid, Dadīlu

Text No. 15 (continued from text no.14)

1-4) of the the city Kaska, Uassurme of the land Tabal, Ušḫitti of the land Tuna, Urballâ of the land Tuḫana, Tuḫam[me of the city Ištunda], Urimmi of the city Ḫubišna, (and) Zabibe, queen of the Arabs: gold, silver, tin, iron, elephant hides, ivo[ry], multi-colored garments, linen garments, blue-purple (and) [red]-purple wool, ebony, boxwood, all kinds of precious things from the royal treasure, li[ve] sheep [whose wool] is dyed red-purple, flying birds of the sky whose wings are dyed blue-purple, horses, mules, oxen and she[ep and goats, camels],

5a) she-camels, together with their young, I received (from them).

The inclusion of Zabibê in such a tribute list is puzzling, as the event recorded was in 738, before the 'Arabs' as a group were a vassal of Assyria. This episode is essentially a stand-alone episode included in the wider narrative to further emphasise Tiglath-pileser III's ability to control the world. It is possible that Zabibê had agreed to become a vassal of Assyria under Tiglath-pileser III, which would mean that the Assyrians could have interpreted the later queen Samsi as an oath breaker in her battle against Assyria.<sup>138</sup> Whilst this would be a legitimate reason for going to war, I am unsure whether this was this case, and instead I suggest an alternative.<sup>139</sup> I believe this was a gift to Tiglath-pileser III, given in an attempt to appeal to non-violent diplomacy. Zabibê would have seen the devastation caused by the rapid expansion of the empire under Tiglath-pileser III in the region of Jordan and Syria, and would have known that she was unlikely to defeat the Assyrian army.<sup>140</sup> By offering gifts to Tiglath-pileser III, Zabibê would be proposing that an economic relationship that could be established without bloodshed. Tiglath-pileser III would therefore achieve a greater sphere of influence for Assyria, without wasting any expensive resources on a potentially

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<sup>138</sup> This event is discussed in more detail in chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>139</sup> For more regarding the importance of oaths in Assyria, see chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>140</sup> For more detail regarding this expansion and the impact this had on the 'Arab' populations, see Eph'al 1982: 81-100.

drawn-out war with a relatively unknown enemy. Byrne has gone even further and suggested that this is more like a permit to continue autonomous operations in the region.<sup>141</sup> I would not go this far, but there does seem to be some acknowledgement that Zabibê had sent her gift in order to prevent a violent encounter with the Assyrian army.

The modern definition of ‘tribute’ has caused confusion as to the nature of this gift, as it implies that this was a regular payment made annually and where the rulers were seen as part of the wider empire. In the different versions of this text, the items sent by Zabibê and the other rulers were described as being ‘received’ (*amḥur*) or that they were ‘payment’ (*maddattu*).<sup>142</sup> In this version, the items were given by Zabibê and the other rulers were a gift given on one occasion, with no expectations that it would be given again. Yet in one version this gift is referred to as *biltu maddattu*, or ‘tribute payment’. Here, the gift is explicitly called tribute, and it is inferred that this was a regular payment made by the rulers in this text. This variation comes from a text found in Luristan in Iran, whilst the other attestations were all from Nimrud, and this must play a role in this version.<sup>143</sup> Without precise knowledge of the circumstances of this variation, I will follow the reading found in three out of the four attestations of this event, and call this a single event of a one-off ‘payment’ that Tiglath-pileser III ‘received’ in exchange for peaceful relations, rather than yearly tribute imposed upon these leaders.

The gifts given by Zabibê herself are rather elusive, as the items given to Tiglath-pileser III were listed collectively with the items given by the other rulers listed alongside Zabibê. It is therefore difficult to assign the items to individual rulers. The different types of dromedaries are the only items that were likely supplied by Zabibê. As they are at the end of the list of items, and Zabibê is at the end of the list of rulers, this raises the possibility that the items were therefore listed in the same order as the rulers who sent them, but this is far from certain. It is also possible for Zabibê to have contributed to all the items included here, but it is more likely that the Assyrian scribes simply collated all of the items into one list to make it more impressive.<sup>144</sup> There is also the tantalising possibility that Zabibê could have sent items such as the blue-dyed wool, which Oppenheim suggested might have originally come from the Levant, but may have also come from the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>145</sup> Yet access to luxury items such as the blue-dyed wool, gold, silver, and ebony in the tribute list does not mean that Zabibê gave these as part of her gift. What can be said with certainty is that Zabibê is the most

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<sup>141</sup> Byrne 2003: 21.

<sup>142</sup> RINAP 1 15, 1; 27, 2b; 32, 1. These were using the words ‘*maḥāru*’ (to receive) and ‘*maddattu*’ (payment) (*CAD*, s.v. ‘*maddattu*’, ‘*maḥāru*’).

<sup>143</sup> RINAP 1 35 iii20. For more on the potential reason for this variations, see chapter 2, section 2.1.1.1. This particular variation may be due to: a change in the description of the event as relayed to the scribes in Iran; a specific manipulation tailored to the local audience; or may simply have been a mistake.

<sup>144</sup> There is also the possibility that these gifts may have been sent by these leaders at different times, and were collated to create one event.

<sup>145</sup> Oppenheim 1967: 253; Edens 1999.

likely ruler to send the dromedary camels, and she had the power to control the resources of her population in order to influence other foreign powers like the Assyrian empire.

Zabibê had the ability and political power to direct the resources of her people in the manner she viewed as best for their continued flourishing. Zabibê was able to use these resources to manipulate Assyria into conditions conducive to the continuation of inter-regional overland trade, and for her continuation as leader of the ‘Arabs’.

#### 4.5.2. SAMSI

Samsi is the second ‘Queen of the Arabs’ mentioned in the textual sources, and the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III report he defeated her in 733 at Mount Saqurri (modern Jebel al-Druz).<sup>146</sup> After her defeat, Samsi used items to negotiate the survival of her and her people, and these items which can offer a glimpse into the resources that Samsi brought to a military operation. Like Zabibê, Samsi used her resources in order to secure peace with the Assyrians, when she could have decided to continue with the battle until her death.

The texts do not provide an explicit mention that Samsi surrendered after the battle, only a description of items she sent to Tiglath-pileser III after she witnessed the destruction of her camp. Male, female, and young dromedary camels were sent:<sup>147</sup>

25'b) [*sa-am-si la-pa-an* GIŠ.TUKUL].MEŠ-ia KAL.MEŠ *taš-ḥu-ut-ma* ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te  
 26') [*a-di* ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na a-na KUR aš-šur a-di maḥ]-ri-ia *taš-šá-a* LÚ.qe-e-pu ina muḥ-ḥi-šá áš-kun-ma  
 27'a) [10<sup>2</sup> LIM<sup>2</sup> LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ<sup>2</sup> ... ]

Translation:

25'b-27'a) [Samsi] became startled [by] my mighty [weapon]s and she brought camels, she-camels, [with their young, to Assyria, befo]re me. I placed a representative (of mine) over her and [... 10,000 soldiers].

This narrative provides a story of rapid flight, an escape which left Samsi with only dromedaries to bargain for her people’s safety. Aromatics are recorded as having been looted from her camp, which implies Samsi did not have time to return to the camp and retrieve this valuable item that could be used to bargain

<sup>146</sup> Byrne 2003: 17-18. For more on this military role of Samsi, see chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>147</sup> Eph'al 1982: 85. RINAP 1 42 25'b-26'a. Here I will be focussing on those items that were used by Samsi to ensure the best outcome for the people she ruled over. Looted items are therefore not going to be a large feature of this analysis, as these were items forcibly taken under duress and are not indicative of the items seen as stereotypical of the ‘Arabs’.

with the Assyrians alongside dromedaries.<sup>148</sup> As only dromedaries are mentioned in this gift to Tiglath-pileser III, Samsi likely fled on these animals with only essential items. Conversely, if Samsi had stayed in the camp she would have had time to identify, pack, and leave with more items that could have been offered to Tiglath-pileser III alongside the dromedary camels. These animals were not explicitly described as a ‘payment’, ‘tribute’ or ‘gift’, and the texts only say that Samsi sent these animals before Tiglath-pileser III in Assyria.<sup>149</sup> In the direst of circumstances, dromedary camels could therefore be used as a bargaining tool to ensure an ‘Arab’ leader’s life, and the preservation of their people.

The text explicitly states the sex and age of the dromedary camels sent to Tiglath-pileser III. The inclusion of these specifics indicate an intention by Tiglath-pileser III to set up his own camel breeding programme in Assyria. Other Assyrian kings were known to set up ‘zoos’ to house exotic animals, and it is certainly plausible that Tiglath-pileser III wanted to create one as well.<sup>150</sup> There may have also been a more practical benefit to this breeding centre. Their inclusion into the Assyrian military would have negated any technical advantage the ‘Arabs’ held over the Assyrians in future battles, as previously treacherous journeys became less dangerous.<sup>151</sup>

The aftermath of gifting dromedaries to the Assyrian king was in line with the method of control used in the wider region. During the reign of Tiglath-pileser III we see that the Levant was causing severe problems for the Assyrians, and Dubovsky has identified a range of tactics which ensured their political allegiance.<sup>152</sup> Dubovsky pointed to the administrative reorganisation of the local area with pro-Assyrian officials in a supervisory role in order to minimise the probability of a rebellion from the political classes.<sup>153</sup> This was the tactic used by Tiglath-pileser III with Samsi after her defeat, as an administrator called a *qēpu*

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<sup>148</sup> RINAP 1 42 21', 44 14', 47 5', and 49 r.18 mention aromatics taken away from Samsi's camp from which she fled, and RINAP 1 44 4', 48 27', 49 r.17 calls her camp *karāšu*, or ‘camp, encampment of an army’ CAD s.v. ‘*karāšu* A’. The precise need for aromatics in a military camp is difficult to determine, but one possibility is that aromatics were used for necessary religious rituals prior to the battle.

<sup>149</sup> This event was depicted in figure 7. See chapter 2, section 2.2.1 for a discussion of the identification of the figure as Samsi. The depiction of Samsi leading four dromedaries toward the Assyrian king further emphasised the importance of these animals in this episode of ‘Arab’ history.

<sup>150</sup> This included Assurnāširpal II, Shalmeneser III, and Sennacherib (Foster 1998: 323-325).

<sup>151</sup> However, the ‘Arab’ populations would have still known key locations such as springs, wells, oases, and towns in the desert, which would have still put the Assyrians at a disadvantage in any prolonged war.

<sup>152</sup> Dubovsky 2006: 156. The first of these was the destruction of cities in the region, accompanied by heavy tributes and extensive looting to debilitate the region (Dubovsky 2006: 168). This was certainly the method Tiglath-pileser III wished to use to control Samsi, and it appears he may have been simply following the pattern established in the Levant to control the Arabian trade. The second of Dubovsky's proposed methods was the famous mass deportation of locals in order to weaken local resistance (Dubovsky 2006: 168). The survivors of Samsi's population group may have been so demoralised that there was no possibility of a rebellion. This is not mentioned with regard to Samsi, and that may be because this was not necessary. Tiglath-pileser III does boast, after all, of killing nearly 10,000 in the battle (RINAP 1 42 20'a: [9 LIM 4 ME di-ik-ta-šú-nu a]-duk, [I] de[feated 9,400 (of her people)]').

<sup>153</sup> Dubovsky 2006: 168.

as well as a garrison of ten thousand Assyrian soldiers were imposed upon her.<sup>154</sup> This is in line with what Tiglath-pileser III does in the region, as we also see an Assyrian eunuch was appointed over Aram, and in Israel, the ruler Pekah was succeeded by a pro-Assyrian named Hoshea, with Gezer eventually becoming an Assyrian administrative centre at the end of the century.<sup>155</sup> With Samsi, the imposition of an official and a garrison limited the disruption to the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula to the Assyrian heartland. Even with a *qēpu* imposed upon her, Samsi would have continued to have a significant influence over the peoples residing in the Syrian Desert.<sup>156</sup> After all, she was still the primary ruler of a large population group. It appears the understanding between Samsi and Tiglath-pileser III was that this official was simply ensuring that her actions were in line with the wishes of the Assyrian king. This would have minimised the disruption to the social and governmental frameworks of the ‘Arabs’, thus maximising the potential for stable conditions to conduct trade.<sup>157</sup> The placement of a *qēpu* to oversee the activities of Samsi was therefore by no means extraordinary.<sup>158</sup>

During the reign of Sargon II there is further textual evidence of Samsi and her economic role. A tribute list provided evidence of the stable conditions that allowed Samsi to rule, and also demonstrated that she was still in control over access to luxury items:<sup>159</sup>

- 6b) *ša 1Pi-ir-[']i šār māt(kur) Mu-šu-ri munusSa-a[m]-si šar-ra\*\*t!*  
*māt(kur) A-ri†160-bi 1It-[']a-am-ra kurSa-ba-'a-a-a*  
 7) *šarrāni (lugal.meš-ni) ša a-ḥi! tam-tim ù mad-b<sup>o</sup>a!-ri!*  
*[ḥurāšu(kù.si<sub>22</sub>)] saḥar.bi kur.ra ni-siq-ti [abnī(n)a<sub>4</sub>.meš šinni(zú!)*  
*pīri(am.[s]i) zēr(numu\*\*n) ḡišuši(esi) riqqi(š[i]m.ḥá) ka-la-ma*  
*sīsī(anše.kur[ra].meš)*  
 8a) *ibilī(anše.a.ab.ba.meš) [m]a!-da-ta-šú-nu [a]m-ḥur†161*

<sup>154</sup> RINAP 1 42 26'a-27'b.

<sup>155</sup> Dubovsky 2006: 165-166; Summ. 4:7'-8'; 9:3-4; Summ. 4:17'; 9:10; 13:18';

<sup>156</sup> Byrne 2003: 18.

<sup>157</sup> Eph'al 1982: 87. This is almost a perfect example of Miller's outline of how the Assyrian empire functioned in the acquisition of empire on the periphery, when the rulers were allowed to remain: 'Should a native ruler decide that it was in his best interests to submit, his territory had regular payment of tribute imposed upon it, and he pledged political and military loyalty. He and his royal court were left in power and the state retained a great degree of autonomy, although the Assyrians would have spies at the foreign court to keep them apprised of developments there' (Miller 2009: 126).

<sup>158</sup> For an overview of the *qēpu* see Dubovsky 2012. Also see chapter 3, section 3.2.1 for a discussion about how the decision to keep Samsi alive was also an expression of Assyrian cultural norms regarding women and violence.

<sup>159</sup> Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11 6b-8a. My translation. Eph'al has dated this event to about 716 (Eph'al 1982: 86).

<sup>160</sup> Here Fuchs notes that this sign was incorrectly copied by Botta (Fuchs 1994: 12).

<sup>161</sup> Again, Fuchs noted that this sign was incorrectly copied by Botta (Fuchs 1994: 12).

Translation:<sup>162</sup>

6b) (Regarding) Pir'i, king of the land Mušri, Samsi, queen of the land of 'Arabs', It'amar, of Sabaya,

7) kings<sup>163</sup> of (the) ocean shore and of (the) desert, gold dust from the mountains, choice stones, elephant ivory, ebony seeds, all kinds of aromatics, horses,

8a) camels, their tribute I received.

In this tribute list the 'king of the land Mušri', Pir'i, is mentioned alongside 'Samsi, queen of the land of the Arabs' and 'It'amar, of Sabaya'.<sup>164</sup> Sargon II's scribes acknowledged in this list that there were two rulers from the vast area of the Arabian Peninsula. Not only that, but the Sabaeen population was viewed as a separate entity to the 'Arabs' under Samsi's rule. Kitchen identified It'amar as the Sabaeen ruler Yitha'amar.<sup>165</sup> It'amar's inclusion was clearly to demonstrate the sheer scale of Sargon II's influence. These rulers were called the 'kings of (the) ocean shore and of (the) desert', and after this designation there is a short list of the valuable commodities given in payment.<sup>166</sup> Sargon II wished to be depicted as the overall ruler of the kings who ruled the vast sea and desert. The inclusion of Samsi here means she was seen as an important ruler of a land far away, who was included in a demonstration of the vast distance Sargon II controlled.<sup>167</sup> Like the tribute list of Zabibê, there is no explicit statement of which ruler provided which resource, and therefore it is unknown which ruler sent which item. Eph'al even suggested that this list could be a combination of items received at different times and under different circumstances, and I am inclined to agree with this interpretation.<sup>168</sup> With a lack of any narrative regarding a battle with Samsi in Sargon II's royal inscriptions, the items sent by Samsi were probably a consequence of contemporary non-violent relations. This tribute was therefore a goodwill gesture made in order to continue the peaceful relations from the time of Tiglath-pileser III, but also demonstrated that Samsi understood that her place in the Assyrian empire was that of a vassal under the yoke of Sargon II.

The tribute list included rulers who were not vassals of Sargon II, and poses the problem of whether this was actually 'tribute'. Eph'al explained how neither It'amra nor Pir'i were under the direct control of Sargon II during his reign, and then suggested that all three of the rulers were therefore not sending 'tribute', but

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<sup>162</sup> The translations provided by Fuchs are in German, so for the sake of both accessibility and consistency, I have provided my own English translation.

<sup>163</sup> Here Samsi is included in this small summary of rulers as a *šarrum*, or 'king'. This is similar to the total including Iapa and Baslu as 'kings' in RINAP 4 2.

<sup>164</sup> Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11 6b.

<sup>165</sup> Kitchen 1994: 109. Magee agrees with this identification (Magee 2014: 270).

<sup>166</sup> Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11. 6b-8a.

<sup>167</sup> Eph'al 1982: 111.

<sup>168</sup> Eph'al 1982: 111. The items could be ordered according to who gave the items, their quantity, or in order of their value.

*tāmartu*, a ‘gift in honour of a special event’.<sup>169</sup> I agree that this is certainly the case with Pir’i and It’amra, as these appear to be goodwill gestures, much like Zabibé’s ‘tribute’. The payment would have ensured their survival in the face of the Assyrian army and avoided disruption to their trade routes.<sup>170</sup> I do not believe this was the case with Samsi, and I believe she was paying tribute. However, she was included with the gifts of It’amar and Pir’i by the scribes in order to emphasise the far reaches of Sargon II’s influence. This meant the phrase *maddatu amḥur* (‘payment I received’), included both single payments of gifts from Pir’i and It’amar, but also the yearly obligations Samsi had to pay to Sargon II.<sup>171</sup> This was further emphasised by the other Khorsabad texts, where this payment was explicitly described as ‘tribute’.<sup>172</sup> In these cases, the gifts of the other rulers were included in Samsi’s ‘tribute’ in order to provide the impression that all of these rulers were under the rule of Sargon II.

After Samsi’s surrender to Tiglath-pileser III, she acted as a vassal of the Assyrian empire. As there is no record of any battle between Sargon II and Samsi, this relationship continued into the reign of Sargon II. Samsi therefore recognised the benefits of becoming a vassal to Assyria after her surrender to Tiglath-pileser III, and decided that it was better to stay in the good graces of Sargon II than to fight for independence.

There is one final piece of textual evidence regarding Samsi’s economic role, and it is the only text that is not a royal inscription to mention a ‘Queen of the Arabs’. The fragmentary letter describes the delivery of a group of men to a woman named Samsi:<sup>173</sup>

Beginning broken away.

Obv.

1') [x x <sup>m</sup>ia]–ra-pa-a

2') [LÚ\*.GAL–k]i-šir

3') [x x] ša KUR.ar-ba-a-a

4') [ina UG]U' MÍ.sam-si

5') 'ú'-ba-al

6') [š]a MÍ.sam-si

7') ina UGU KUR.ar-ba-a-a

8') ú-ba-l[a]

<sup>169</sup> Eph'al 1982: 109-110; CAD, s.v. 'tāmartu 3'. Important in this inscription is the mention of Pir'i, the ruler of Mušri. This is not the place to debate the exact location of Mušri, and here I am following the interpretation found in Röllig 1993 that Mušri should be identified as Egypt. Eph'al has suggested three Egyptian rulers Pir'i could be – Osorkon IV, Tefnakhte, or Bocchoris. All of these kings would be concerned with a Nubian threat to Egypt, and would not be able to finance both a war against the Nubians and a war with the Assyrians (Eph'al 1982: 109).

<sup>170</sup> Eph'al 1982: 111.

<sup>171</sup> See the relevant text passage in Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11 8a.

<sup>172</sup> Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal X 3 3; Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal IV 11 10-11 & 9 1; Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VII 3 2-4; Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VIII 13 5-6.

<sup>173</sup> SAA 11 162.

9') <sup>m</sup>ia-ra-pa-a GAL-ki-<sup>r</sup>šir<sup>1</sup>

10') <sup>m</sup>ha-šil-a-nu GAL-ki-šir

11') <sup>m</sup>ga-na-bu

12') <sup>m</sup>ta-am-ra-a-nu

13') PAP 4 LÚ\*.ERIM.MEŠ

Rev.

1) a-na ZÁḤ.<sup>r</sup>MEŠ<sup>1</sup>

2) 6<sup>r</sup>2<sup>1</sup> <sup>m</sup>ha-šil-a-nu

3) 63 <sup>m</sup>ia-ra-pa-a

4) PAP 1-me-25 ANŠE.gam-mal.MEŠ

5) pa'-šu-u-te

Blank space of 4 lines.

6) [x]-te-si-ru

Blank space of 4 lines to break.

Translation:

(Beginning destroyed)

Obv.

1'-5') [... Ya]-rapâ, [cohort co]mmander, will bring the [fugitives] of the Arabs [up t]o the lady Samsi; (and) he will bring those [o]f the lady Samsi up to the Arabs.

9') Ya-rapâ, cohort commander;

10') Ḥašilanu, cohort commander;

11') Gannabu,

12') Tamranu;

13'-r.1) in all, four people for the fugitives.

Rev.

2) 62, Ḥašilanu;

3) 63, Ya-rapâ:

4-5) in all, 125 stray<sup>174</sup> camels.

6) [*They have been c*]ollected.

Two cohort commanders and two other individuals oversaw a group of 'Arab' fugitives and 125 camels. They were to be escorted to the 'woman Samsi', and '(those) from the woman Samsi' were to be taken 'to the land of the 'Arabs''.<sup>175</sup> The lack of a title for Samsi means Samsi was not immediately tied to the 'Arabs'. The author of this letter may not have seen her as part of the 'Arab' group, and could be an indication that this may not be the ruler Samsi, but another 'Arab' woman

<sup>174</sup> Although this attestation is listed in CAD as *pešû*, and so this should read as '125 white camels' (CAD s.v. '*pešû*').

<sup>175</sup> SAA 11 162 o.1'-8'. In the text Samsi is given the determinative '<sup>r</sup>', and as such I decided to translate this as 'the woman Samsi'. This is not a title but is simply a way to ensure the gender of Samsi is accurately expressed.

with the same name. Yet this may also be a simple development of the idea that the people Samsi ruled were not representative of all those who could be considered 'Arab'. We would have a fuller understanding of this if we knew the author of this text, as well as if this was someone involved in the peripheral administration of the Assyrian empire. Without this information, I have taken the approach that this woman was indeed the *šarratu* Samsi.<sup>176</sup> If this is the case, it is very interesting that her title is not included. It may be that by this point those who would read this letter would know who Samsi was, and therefore would not need her title. What also muddies the argument is the uncertain dating of this text – it can only be tied to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III through the name of Samsi and the assumption that this woman was in fact the 'Queen of the Arabs'.<sup>177</sup> It would be unlikely that this was another woman who was an 'Arab' and was responsible for overseeing the transfer of fugitives, so here I shall treat this as indeed Samsi, 'Queen of the Arabs'.

This letter is a clear indication that Samsi was involved in a cooperative relationship with the Assyrian authorities.<sup>178</sup> It demonstrates that Samsi had the authority to oversee the return of 'fugitives' as if they were her property. Such interaction needed a certain level of trust on behalf of the Assyrians, and indicates this was a period of friendly cooperation between the 'Arabs' and the Assyrians. This trust would have been a direct result of the loyalty Samsi had ensured through the 'gifts' given to both Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II. With loyalty to the Assyrians established, Samsi could deal with fugitives in a manner that the Assyrians would deem appropriate. This trust only went so far, as two military commanders escorted these fugitives.<sup>179</sup> This would serve two functions, with the first being the assurance that the fugitives and dromedaries made their way to Samsi. The other was that they could ensure Samsi was behaving as she should be, by checking that Samsi was still acting in the best interests of Assyria and not attempting to stir up any rebellious sentiments.

The documents relating to the 'economic' sphere of power of Samsi are the most numerous of those relating to the 'Queens of the Arabs'. In the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III she is could negotiate her surrender and her continual reign by using the dromedaries as leverage to prevent certain death at the hands of the Assyrian army. The tribute lists are difficult to decipher, and, it is difficult to determine what exactly Samsi contributed. Her economic power meant she was seen as a leader who was as important as the leaders of Egypt, and as such was used to demonstrate the extent of Sargon II's rule in royal inscriptions. Samsi is the only 'Queen of the Arabs' who is mentioned in an administrative letter, and demonstrates the fruits of the efforts towards peaceful relations with the Assyrians. Samsi had the authority to deal with 'Arab' fugitives as she saw fit, and

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<sup>176</sup> This has been tentatively suggested by Fales & Postgate 1995: XXIX, but it is certainly a very difficult problem to resolve.

<sup>177</sup> Fales & Postgate 1995: XXIX.

<sup>178</sup> Byrne 2003: 18.

<sup>179</sup> SAA 11 162 o.9'-10'.

therefore retained some independence due to these gifts and tribute to the Assyrians.

### 4.5.3. TABŪ'A

The final 'Queen of the Arabs' to be discussed in relation to her economic role is Tabū'a. There is no evidence as to the resources that she controlled, nor of any trade that may have been sanctioned by her. Instead, Tabū'a is the ideal case to illustrate how the Assyrians controlled the rulers of the 'Arabs' and their access to the overland trade routes and the resources of the Arabian Peninsula. Esarhaddon used a different tactic with Tabū'a, which was probably to avoid costly warfare, but with the goal of controlling the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula. The tactic was to impose a leader upon another group who would act in a manner that was friendly to the Assyrians. This is well attested and not unusual for the Assyrians, but with Tabū'a there was a twist – she was a woman.

Tabū'a has been an object of fascination for modern scholarship, with theories assigned to her with little or no basis in the present evidence. One theory describes Tabū'a as the daughter of Te'elḫunu.<sup>180</sup> Another suggested Tabū'a was born in Nineveh, potentially as the daughter of Te'elḫunu and Esarhaddon.<sup>181</sup> There is no evidence for these suggestions, and the following text is the most information about Tabū'a preserved in the textual sources.<sup>182</sup>

Col. iv

- 1) URU.a-du-ma-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 2) ša<sup>md30</sup>-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba-nu-u-a
- 3) ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
- 4) a-di<sup>f</sup>ap-kal-la-tú šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 5) iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš-šur.KI il-qa-a
- 6) mḥa-za-DINGIR<sup>f</sup> LUGAL<sup>f</sup> LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-tú
- 7) a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia
- 8) il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia
- 9) áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma
- 10) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a <sup>d</sup>nu-ḥa-a-a
- 11) <sup>d</sup>ru-ul-da-a-a-ú <sup>d</sup>a-bi-ri-il-lu
- 12) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-qu-ru-ma-a DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 13) an-ḥu-su-nu ud-diš-ma da-na-an <sup>d</sup>aš-šur EN-ia

<sup>180</sup> For an overview of the different theories formulating a relationship between Tabū'a and the prominent figures in the Assyrian inscriptions, see Eph'al 1982: 123.

<sup>181</sup> The need to tie Tabū'a to another prominent figure in the Assyrian annals is a theme that is even present in scholarship regarding these women (Abbott 1941: 5; Eph'al 1982: 123; Frahm 2017: 304).

<sup>182</sup> RINAP 4, 1, iv1-16. For a discussion regarding the gods mentioned in this list, see chapter 5, section 5.2.

- 14) *ù ši-ṭir MU-ia UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma ut-ter-ma ad-din-šú*  
 15) *ṫa-bu-u-a tar-bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti*  
 16) *UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma it-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-šá a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši*

Translation:

Col. iv.

1-4) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs,

5-9) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city,<sup>183</sup> with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him.

10-14) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-qurumâ, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him.

15-16) I placed the lady Tabūa,<sup>184</sup> who was raised in the palace of my father, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods.

This text is a brief description of the conquest of Adummatu by Sennacherib, Esarhaddon's father, and the political and religious aftermath. Goods, the property of the 'Arab' gods, and Te'elḥunu (mistakenly called 'Apkallatu' here) were taken to Assyria. During the reign of Esarhaddon, Ḥazā-il, 'King of the Arabs', visited the Assyrian king to ask for the 'Arab' gods to be returned.<sup>185</sup> Esarhaddon returned the gods to Ḥazā-il, but also sent 'Tabū'a, who was raised in the palace of my father' to be imposed as king.<sup>186</sup> Eph'al has suggested a date of 677 at the latest for this event.<sup>187</sup>

There is no evidence regarding Tabū'a's background. Eph'al suggested that Tabū'a was taken hostage from a previous altercation with the 'Arabs', and Sennacherib could have used her as leverage in future political dealings.<sup>188</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Literally 'the city of my lordship'.

<sup>184</sup> Whilst I agree that the gender of Tabū'a should be expressed in the translation, I do not believe the term 'lady' is appropriate, as it implies this was a title of hers in the Akkadian. Instead, her gender is only expressed through the determinative *ṫ*. I propose this should be read as 'the woman Tabua' instead.

<sup>185</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv6-12. See chapter 5, section 5.2. for more about these 'Arab' gods.

<sup>186</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv15-22. In this case she is being bestowed 'kingship', which would imply a masculine gender to this role. In combination with the inclusion of Iapa' and Baslu as 'kings', this can instead be read as a more gender-neutral term for 'leadership role normally fulfilled by men with masculine connotations'. See chapter 1, section 1.4.

<sup>187</sup> Eph'al 1982: 123.

<sup>188</sup> Eph'al 1982: 122.

However, there is no evidence for this scenario.<sup>189</sup> The most that can be surmised about Tabū'a's background is that because she was imposed as ruler over the 'Arabs', she was probably an 'Arab'.

Previous scholars have interpreted this event without taking Tabū'a's gender or the wider economic situation of the Arabian Peninsula into account, stating that her imposition as ruler was done purely to placate the 'Arabs'.<sup>190</sup> The ability to cross the desert was clearly a necessity if any military attempt towards Egypt was to be made, but this does not fully take into account the economic power the 'Arabs' held in the region. Assyrian dominance was already established over the 'Arabs' after the defeat of Te'elḥunu. The imposition of higher tribute and a new ruler after the return of their gods must have been to ensure Ḥazā-il did not interpret this gift as a sign of weakness.<sup>191</sup> The interaction was also an opportunity for Esarhaddon to guarantee a loyal relationship with an 'Arab' ruler who socialised as an Assyrian, and therefore sympathetic to Assyrian ideals. Political interactions between the two rulers would have been smoother, and therefore trade through the Arabian Peninsula to Assyria would not have been disrupted.

Eph'al has suggested that this alternative tactic for dealing with the 'Arabs' may have been used because the traditional tactic of attacking population centres was ineffective against them.<sup>192</sup> I suspect this was more opportunistic than assumed thus far. Tabū'a was already living in the palace of Sennacherib, and when Esarhaddon heard that Ḥazā-il was coming to Assyria, Esarhaddon probably thought it was a good opportunity to cement peace with the 'Arabs'. There had been no battle between Esarhaddon and the 'Arabs', and he had no reason to view the 'Arabs' as a volatile threat.<sup>193</sup> The imposition of Tabū'a as a more Assyria-friendly ruler would have meant that Esarhaddon had more control over the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula, and that Tabū'a would favour Assyria.<sup>194</sup>

Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions explicitly stated that Tabū'a was in the palace of Sennacherib during her childhood.<sup>195</sup> It was far from unusual for foreign children to be imposed as rulers in regions that had troubled relations with Assyria, as it created rulers who were sympathetic to Assyria. During the reign of Sennacherib, Bēl-ibni was installed as king of Babylon from 703 to 700.<sup>196</sup> The

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<sup>189</sup> If I could indulge myself in speculation, several other scenarios may have been the case. Tabū'a may have been given to the Assyrians by an 'Arab' group; she may have been sent to Assyria as part of a diplomatic agreement; she may have been a member of staff within the palace; or she may have been a daughter of a member of staff in the palace.

<sup>190</sup> For example, see Grayson 1991: 126; Frahm, 2017: 304.

<sup>191</sup> RINAP 4 6 iii' 11'-20' describes this episode in detail.

<sup>192</sup> Eph'al 1982: 122.

<sup>193</sup> Esarhaddon did not consider the female rulers based in Bāzu as 'Arab', as their titles referred to individual cities they ruled over. This episode in Esarhaddon's annals is therefore the only interaction mentioned in these texts with 'Arabs' beyond asking for their support for his campaign against Egypt.

<sup>194</sup> The reference of Tabū'a being imposed 'over them' implies that there were multiple 'Kings of the Arabs' whom Tabū'a now ruled over (RINAP 4, 1, iv6).

<sup>195</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv15.

<sup>196</sup> Brinkman 1991: 34; Grayson & Novotny 2012: 12.

long-standing friction between Assyria and Babylonia meant that an alternative for governing this region had to be sought. Bēl-ibni was described in Sennacherib's inscriptions as a Babylonian commoner who had grown up in Sennacherib's palace.<sup>197</sup> A later example of this practice is the Elamite king Ḫuban-nikaš II. After the defeat of Teumman at the battle at the river Ulai, Ḫuban-nikaš II was installed by Assurbanipal as the new king of Elam.<sup>198</sup> Ḫuban-nikaš II was one of several sons of the Elamite king Urtak who fled to Nineveh, along with sixty members of the royal family, after Urtak died suddenly.<sup>199</sup> Esarhaddon sent a letter to Urtak that referred to an exchange of royal children.<sup>200</sup> Foreign children at the Assyrian court were therefore not unusual, and neither were the appointments made to install Assyria-friendly rulers in troublesome lands, precisely in the same manner as Bēl-ibni in Babylonia. This policy of installing foreign rulers who were socialised as was clearly seen to be successful enough to continue into the rule of Assurbanipal.

It is unsurprising that this general policy of using foreign children who had been taught to act as 'Assyrians' was extended to the 'Arabs'. There had been multiple battles against the 'Arabs', and control over the overland trade routes was clearly a driving motivation in subduing and pacifying them. Rather than pay for the manpower, equipment, and the logistics of a war, Esarhaddon only had to send one person in return for a yearly tribute and a more stable relationship with the 'Arabs'.

Tabū'a's gender played a large role in the decision to impose her as the ruler of the 'Arabs'. Bēl-ibni and Ḫuban-nikaš II were both male successors that Assyria imposed upon troublesome regions, so why, given the Assyrians' attitude toward royal women in their own society, would an Assyrian king send a woman to rule over the 'Arabs'? The closest parallel amongst Assyrian women is the case of Barsipītu who accompanied Ana-Nabû-taklāk to Bit-Dakkuri and wrote to Sargon II to inform him of this successful journey.<sup>201</sup> However, there is no parallel for a woman who was socialised as Assyrian being imposed as a ruler of a foreign land. The only male rulers of the 'Arabs' that the Assyrians knew about before this point were Gindibu' and Ḫazā-il, in comparison to the female leaders Zabibê, Samsi, Te'elḫunu, Iate', Iapa', and Baslu. The main interactions between the Assyrians and the 'Arabs' until the end of Esarhaddon's reign were predominantly with the 'Queens of the Arabs'. A traditional interpretation of this would suggest that the imposition of Tabū'a was therefore Esarhaddon reflecting the norms of 'Arabs' society. He knew there were female rulers in Arabia based on previous interactions with the 'Arabs' and his ancestors like Sennacherib and Tiglath-

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<sup>197</sup> Brinkman 1991: 34; Grayson 1991b: 106; RINAP 3 1 54.

<sup>198</sup> Grayson 1991c: 148; Waters 2000: 56.

<sup>199</sup> Waters 2000: 47.

<sup>200</sup> Waters 2000: 44.

<sup>201</sup> SAA 17 68, 73. Svärd discussed this in more detail and outlined a scenario where this woman was trusted with this task due to her familial ties to the leaders of Bit-Dakkuri (Svärd 2015a: 139-141).

pileser III, and so he extended his policy of minimal disruption to the local community by installing a female ruler.

In order to take the gender of Tabū'a into account, we must assess what the Assyrians expected from her economic role. The Assyrians would expect Tabū'a to behave in a similar way to Assyrian royal women, as she was socialised as one. Their economic roles of Assyrian royal women were most evident in either the office of the 'woman of the palace', or the wealth of the royal household.<sup>202</sup> Svärd explained that the household of the 'woman of the palace' was a permanent fixture in Neo-Assyria, and transactions from this office could be stamped with a seal depicting a scorpion.<sup>203</sup> Whilst the bearer of the seal may be a man, he would be acting with the authority of this powerful woman, and the seal was used to mark items belonging to the queen's household.<sup>204</sup> Those in her employ would have included basic labourers, administrative staff, military staff, and included both men and women.<sup>205</sup> Solvang explained how this office was in regular receipt of textiles, which Solvang then assumed would have been used to produce clothes for those in the household.<sup>206</sup> Solvang also pointed out that participation in financial activities did not mean Assyrian royal women were independent.<sup>207</sup> This was because in Assyria the women were responsible for maintaining the household, and the activities these royal women were engaging in were meant to maintain the household and their place in the royal court – not to increase individual personal wealth.<sup>208</sup>

Whilst the royal women of the Assyrian empire could attain personal wealth, as well as gain wealth for the institution of the 'woman of the palace', they did not hold the same economic roles as the Assyrian king. They were not able to access or control the wealth of the Assyrian state, whereas the Assyrian king could do so through taxation, and controlled the markets through which resources and goods flowed in and out of the Assyrian empire.

Another interesting aspect that cannot be ignored is that the mention of Tabū'a coincided with an interesting change in Assyria regarding the royal women, as during the reign of Sennacherib there was a shift in the visibility of these women and their offices.<sup>209</sup> In particular, the military units of the 'woman of the palace' more frequently attestations during the reigns of Sennacherib and

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<sup>202</sup> Solvang 2003: 30.

<sup>203</sup> Svärd 2015a: 67. Svärd explained that she used 'queen' to specifically refer to the MÍ.É.GAL (Svärd 2015a: 2).

<sup>204</sup> Svärd 2015a: 68.

<sup>205</sup> Svärd 2015a: 72.

<sup>206</sup> Solvang 2003: 31. Solvang uses examples from the third millennium to represent the whole of the ancient Near East. As circumstances can – and did – change dramatically even within a millennium, caution must be applied to the evidence provided by Solvang in this otherwise very important work. In SAA 7 115 line 15 the office of the 'woman of the palace' received twenty talents of flax for the production of textiles. This is further discussed in Svärd 2015a: 100-102.

<sup>207</sup> Solvang 2003: 36.

<sup>208</sup> Solvang 2003: 37.

<sup>209</sup> Reade 1987: 140.

Esarhaddon, and there was an increased weight given to the administrative bureau of the ‘woman of the palace’ during the reigns of Sargon II and Sennacherib.<sup>210</sup> There may be a connection between this shift in visibility and the decision to impose a woman as the ruler of the ‘Arabs’, but there is no concrete evidence for this connection.

There is a suggestion that Esarhaddon was already familiar with manipulating Assyrian gender roles for his own political benefit. Following the argument of Melville, the public life of Naqī’a was molded by Esarhaddon in order to promote a smooth transition for the next king. Melville said Esarhaddon promoted the public image of Naqī’a in order to have a person of unquestionable loyalty in the position of guardian of his heirs. In order to do this without offending the court officials, this promotion was done through her public profile.<sup>211</sup> With this background, it is even more likely that Tabū’a was chosen because she was socialised as an Assyrian royal woman. Particularly important here was the expectation that Assyrian women should never be involved in military conflict, and Tabū’a would have therefore been expected to avoid any conflict with Assyria in order to remain peaceful towards Assyria.<sup>212</sup> The expectation of Esarhaddon was that the Assyrian socialisation would create a female ruler who was not only friendly to Assyria, but was almost guaranteed to oppose any form of violence towards Assyria.

The ultimate result of this imposition would have been peace with the populations in the Arabian Peninsula, as Tabū’a was not only ruler over one population group, but over all the ‘Arabs’ in the region.<sup>213</sup> In RINAP 4 6 Tabū’a is described as being imposed ‘upon them’, which can only be read as the other rulers operating in the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>214</sup> The installation of Tabū’a over all the other ‘Arab’ leaders would also ensure that the trade routes flowing through Arabia would continue to supply Assyria unharrassed. Esarhaddon’s theory behind imposing Tabū’a as ruler was to pacify all the ‘Arab’ rulers in the region, whilst ensuring the trade routes supplying Assyria remained stable. This was clearly seen as important to Esarhaddon, but importantly also demonstrated an increased knowledge of ‘Arab’ society, as he was conscious that there were many ‘Arab’ rulers.

No evidence has been preserved that record the fate of Tabū’a after this point. It is possible that this lack of record could be proof that Tabū’a was acting as a ruler in the manner in which Esarhaddon envisaged: passive and reluctant to counter Assyria, and so would not have been discussed in the narratives regarding

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<sup>210</sup> Svärd 2015b: 163, 164, 169.

<sup>211</sup> Melville 1999: 31-60.

<sup>212</sup> For an overview of the conflict between the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the Assyrians, see chapter 3, section 3.2.

<sup>213</sup> RINAP 4 2 ii60-62.

<sup>214</sup> RINAP 4 6 iii’ 9’-10’: *‘ta-bu-u-a tar’-[bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti] UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma. ‘I imposed Tabū’a, ra[ised (in the) palace (of) my father in kinship] upon them.’*

the exploits of Assyrian kings. This scenario would suggest that Esarhaddon's strategy of imposing an 'Assyrianised' woman who would act in a passive manner as ruler over the 'Arabs' was successful – Tabū'a was fulfilling the role given to her and was acting as a 'proper' Assyrian royal woman.

However, the imposition of Tabū'a actually did little to pacify the 'Arabs'. Ḥazā-il died during the reign of Esarhaddon, and there were further acts of rebellion and resistance to Assyrian rule.<sup>215</sup> Iata', Ḥazā-il's son, was recognised as the ruler of the 'Arabs' by Esarhaddon, but soon after there was a rebellion against him.<sup>216</sup> Esarhaddon sided with Iata' against these rebellions, which demonstrated a desire to maintain allegiances along Ḥazā-il's hereditary line. Tabū'a disappeared from the sources right after this brief reference to her imposition as leader. It is possible that once Tabū'a returned to Arabia with Ḥazā-il, she was not seen as a ruler in the eyes of her fellow 'Arabs'. She may have been seen as something more akin to a political prisoner, where she was not allowed any position of power for fear of encroaching upon that of Ḥazā-il.<sup>217</sup> Esarhaddon's strategy was ultimately unsuccessful in pacifying the 'Arab' population, and access to the trade routes and the continued supply of goods flowing through the Arabian Peninsula was again restricted in the midst of a rebellion.

## 4.6. SUMMARY

The 'economic' sphere of power is the second division of power in Mann's 'IEMP' model. Mann pointed to this sphere as necessary in order to satisfy a group's subsistence through social organisation regarding the consumption of products.<sup>218</sup> According to this model, those with power were responsible for the organisation of networks that would provide their subjects or subordinates with that which is necessary for subsistence or comfortable living conditions. The evidence regarding the economic roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs' fulfil the latter condition, as there is no evidence that the large trade networks between the 'Arabs' and the Assyrians was for the subsistence of either the 'Arabs' or the Assyrians. Instead, the economic roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs' were based around access to the trade networks through the Arabian Peninsula. The resources at the disposal of the 'Queens of the Arabs' were used to try to ensure peace in the region, and thus minimise disruption to trade. The resources of the

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<sup>215</sup> Grayson 1991: 126.

<sup>216</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 17-31; Grayson 1991: 126.

<sup>217</sup> There is a final scenario to add, where Tabū'a may have been seen by the 'Arabs' as a spy for the Assyrians. Whilst the Assyrians were known for using spy networks to gather intelligence, there is no evidence that this was the case with Tabū'a.

<sup>218</sup> Mann 2012: 24-25.

'Queens of the Arabs' were also used to ensure security for their people and avoid bloodshed in a costly war against the Assyrians.

Archaeological material from the Arabian Peninsula played an important role in this chapter, as it provided much-needed context for the economic roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. It was established that aromatics and dromedaries were vital resources the 'Arabs' commanded, and were in demand in Assyria. In particular, dromedaries were valued for their ability to traverse terrain that horses could not. As the 'Arabs' had the most knowledge about dromedaries, as well as the desert terrain between the Levant and Egypt, they were vital for Esarhaddon's success in his campaign to Egypt.

It is impossible to reconstruct the overland trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula during the Neo-Assyrian period, and instead I suggested an alternative 'staged' model of trade. This countered the view that trade was carried out in one long journey from the South of the Peninsula to the North. An important city along this trade route during the Neo-Assyrian period was Adummatu, but unfortunately it has not been excavated to the Neo-Assyrian layer. However, evidence from Tayma suggests that Adummatu did exist as a fortified city during the Assyrian period, and was probably a centre of cultural and material exchange.

The Assyrians needed the 'Arabs' as an for their ability to cross the desert. I identified three key methods with which the Assyrians tried to maintain peace with the 'Arabs'. The first was the Assyrians allowed for 'Arab' livestock to graze on their land. The second was the imposition of treaties on 'Arabs'. The third was the restriction of iron to the 'Arabs' to ensure that in any future battles the Assyrians had a technological advantage.

This provided vital context for the discussion of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. Zabibê's mention in a tribute list of Tiglath-pileser III was likely not recording tribute, but a gift to placate Tiglath-pileser III and a guarantee the safety of her people. Samsi did the same with dromedaries after her defeat at the hands of Tiglath-pileser III, but this was only after her resources were looted. Under the reign of Sargon II she continued paying tribute as a vassal, and she was responsible for the exchange of fugitives and camels. Finally, Tabū'a's economic role was not her own, but was Esarhaddon's. She was imposed by this king to ensure an 'Assyrianised' female ruler maintained peaceful relationships with Assyria. Her socialisation as an Assyrian woman was meant to cement this, but in the long term this tactic did not work. Overall, the economics roles of Zabibê, Samsi, and Tabū'a were based on Assyrian interaction and a motivation for the Assyrians to control access to the trade routes through the Arabian Peninsula.

## 5 RELIGIOUS ROLES

The final role of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ identified by using Michael Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model of power are their ‘religious’ roles.<sup>1</sup> Evidence for this religious function is not present for all of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. In order to avoid imposing such a role on women who may not have had the same relationship with the divine world, I will only be discussing the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ who has evidence regarding their religious role: Te’elḥunu. This chapter will examine this evidence, and the impact of the mistake the Assyrians made in confusing Te’elḥunu’s title for her name on modern scholarship (section 5.1). A brief discussion of what is known about ‘Arab’ gods and divine images in the Neo-Assyrian period will be offered afterwards in section 5.2.

As there is very little direct evidence for the religious roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, a comparative approach will be used in this chapter.<sup>2</sup> This will provide alternative models for how the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ may have interacted with the divine world, as well as further context of how religion functioned in cultures during the Neo-Assyrian period and in the Arabian Peninsula more widely. I will begin by providing an overview of the relationship between the kings of Assyria and the gods (see section 5.3.1). As the evidence for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is from the Assyrian perspective, it is worth investigating what the Assyrians viewed as the ‘norm’ for the relationship between a monarch and the divine. I will demonstrate that religion was an important aspect of royal ideology, and provide an overview of the relevant scholarship.<sup>3</sup> I will also look at the royal women of Assyria. They were the most powerful women in Assyrian culture, and will provide a model for what the Assyrians might have expected from foreign royal women (section 5.3.2). These women could perform important roles in cultic activities and religion. The final alternative model for religious roles are the different forms of religion from across the Arabian Peninsula (section 5.3.3). These cases were

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<sup>1</sup> In the original model, the ‘ideological’ sphere of power encapsulates an overarching set of practices carried out by institutions or individuals in order to increase a mutual trust between those in power and those who are controlled by this power (Mann 2012: 22-24). The ‘ideological’ sphere can be split into two halves - ‘morale’ and ‘transcendent’ forms of power. Mann defines ‘morale’ as the technique used to intensify the cohesion and confidence of an established social group (Mann 2012: 24), and ‘transcendent’ as a sacred form of authority normally set apart and above the more secular structures of ideological power (Mann 2012: 23). There is no evidence for how the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ instilled cohesion and confidence in their leadership in the population groups they ruled over. For this, we would require the same types of documents and texts as those preserved for the Neo-Assyrian bureaucratic system. Therefore this chapter falls into the ‘transcendent’ section of the ‘ideological’ sphere in Mann’s model.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.3 for the theoretical background to this approach.

<sup>3</sup> There is evidence that the model of religion in Assyria was also followed in the peripheral regions of the Neo-Assyrian empire. Miller points to the wish to emulate the Assyrians as an explanation for this, but is keen to point out that local religions were allowed to continue operating (Miller 2009: 141-145).

chosen in an attempt to move away from Assyrian models of power, and to recognise that these women likely had more connections to the wider Arabian Peninsula and the cultures found within it than the Assyrians. The chapter will be concluded by a summary of the results of these approaches (section 5.4).

## 5.1. APKALLATU OR TE'ELĦUNU?

In modern scholarship, the 'Queens of the Arabs' have sometimes been described as priestesses.<sup>4</sup> This has stemmed from the Assyrian confusion of a 'Queen of the Arabs' called Apkallatu, who is referenced in Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions in a narrative about one of Sennacherib's military:<sup>5</sup>

Col. iv

- 1) URU.a-du-ma-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 2) ša <sup>md30</sup>-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba-nu-u-a
- 3) ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
- 4) a-di <sup>f</sup>ap-kal-la-tú šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi

Translation:

Col. iv.

1-4) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs,

After consulting Sennacherib's annals, this event can only refer to the 'Arab' campaign against Te'elĥunu and Ḥazā-il, but Te'elĥunu is called 'Apkallatu'.<sup>6</sup> Borger has proven that this change was due to a misunderstanding of one of Te'elĥunu's titles. Borger points out the masculine form of *apkallu* translates as 'wise man' in Akkadian, and used the parallel of previous Assyrian kings mistaking the Akkadian titles of foreign kings for personal names, to prove this is another instance of such a mistake.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For example Gadd 1958: 77; Al-Muaikel 1988: 6; and Macdonald 1995: 1360, 1364.

<sup>5</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 1-5. Also see RINAP 4 2 ii 46; RINAP 4 4 ii' 2'; RINAP 4 6 iii 1'.

<sup>6</sup> This identification was first proposed by Rykle Borger (Borger 1957: 9).

<sup>7</sup> Borger points to two examples. The first is the Hittite title *ir-ru-wi* being used for a Hittite king during the reign of Tiglath-pileser I, and the second is the title *marī* (meaning 'my lord') being mistaken during the time of Adad-nērārī III as a personal name of Aramaic kings (Borger 1957: 9). Borger then explains that *apkallu* was an Akkadian loan-word, which then survived into the later Nabataean and Lihyanite sources. Borger goes on to explain that due to the original meaning of the term in Akkadian for 'wise man', this should be seen as a title of office rather than a personal name (Borger 1957: 9). *CAD*, s.v. '*apkallatu*'. It is certainly reasonable to assume that the 'Arabs' had loanwords from Akkadian, as there was certainly influence of 'Arab' languages on Akkadian. Al-Jallad provides an

There are parallels of this theme of ‘wisdom’ in the titulary of the Assyrian kings, who were described as ‘wise’ in order to prove they were worthy of being the intermediary between the gods and humans. But interestingly there are no Assyrian kings who were explicitly called *apkallu*. The title of *apkallu* appears to have been used only in reference to the great gods, or with Adapa (entitled ‘the great sage’).<sup>8</sup> This link with Adapa was a particularly special one, and families of scribes would try to claim lineage to one of the seven original direct recipients of his knowledge of Adapa, who were called the *apkallu*. As Adapa was granted his knowledge from the wise god Ea, this would mean those with this title could claim to be able to access ancient, pre-diluvian, and divine knowledge. The title *apkallu* therefore went beyond describing someone as ‘wise’, and had specific connotations in Assyrian culture.<sup>9</sup>

In letters to the king, there is an interesting addition of likening the king specifically to Adapa, and thus including this subtle nod to the king being able to access divine knowledge.<sup>10</sup> Naqī’a was treated in the same way in a letter where Naqī’a was described as wise as a sage.<sup>11</sup> The Assyrian use of the word *apkallu* was largely to describe a quality of an individual that linked them to the divine, and was not part of the standard titles used by kings or royal women in Assyria. With this specific link to ancient knowledge, and the fact that this is not normally used as part of the official titulary (and indeed seems to only be used as part of extolling the great attributes of the royal family), the Assyrians would probably not have expected this word to be a title of a foreign ruler.

The usage of the term *apkallu* by those in the Arabian Peninsula might have been stripped of this deep Assyrian meaning and association with pre-diluvian knowledge. In later texts from this region this word simply means ‘priest’, and there is no indication that there is a link to divine knowledge in the same manner as in the Assyrian context.<sup>12</sup> Maraqtēn suggested that by the sixth century the loanword was used in modern-day Yemen, having travelled through the well-established overland trade routes of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>13</sup> Maraqtēn noted that in the later usages of this term in the Arabian Peninsula this title often indicated some sort of cultic role, and the bearer potentially also carried out some sort of

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overview of this, as well as other languages throughout the first millennium ‘Arab’ languages influenced – most notably Aramaic (Al-Jallad 2020).

<sup>8</sup> Sweet 1990: 52-57. For example, see RINAP 1 47 r.17’; RINAP 3 43 4; RINAP 4 77 46. For a brief overview of Adapa, see: Black & Green 1992: 27.

<sup>9</sup> Lenzi 2008: 106-120.

<sup>10</sup> Importantly, this is not part of the titulary of the Assyrian king, but rather suggests that the author of the letter was attempting to placate the king by extolling his wisdom. For example, see SAA 10 29 r2; SAA 10 30 r3; SAA 10 174 07, 08.

<sup>11</sup> SAA 10 244.

<sup>12</sup> Maraqtēn has listed the instances and usages of in the later Nabataean (the Roman period), Lihyanite, Dedanite, and other later languages. The earliest of these are the Lihyanitic and Dedanitic texts, which range from the sixth century BCE to the 1st century CE (Maraqtēn 2000: 276).

<sup>13</sup> Maraqtēn 2000: 277.

political role.<sup>14</sup> With this wider context of the Arabian Peninsula's use of *apkallu*, it is reasonable to suggest the following: *apkallatu* was the title of Te'elḥunu; she was required to undertake certain cultic activities; and the title did not have the same cultural meaning as it did in Assyria during this time.

The role of Te'elḥunu is further described in a text from the reign of Assurbanipal. In this text she is described as a *kumirtu*, or 'priestess':<sup>15</sup>

- 1) *a-na* dingir *dil-b[ad ... n]a-mir-tu šá x[*
- 2) *ša it-ti ḥa-za*<sup>1</sup>-[dingir XX] *ḥur a-ri-bi tas-bu-[su ..... ] Á[*
- 3) *ina šu-min* <sup>1-dingir</sup>*sin-pap-meš-s<sup>ou</sup> ad ad dù-ia tam-nu-š[u-ma ta]š-*  
*ku-na bad<sub>5</sub>-[bad<sub>5</sub>*
- 4) *la a-šá-ab-šá it-ti* <sup>ḥur</sup>*ḥur a-ri-bi taq-bu-ú a-na* kur an-šár<sup>ki</sup>  
*ta-aš-ba<sub>5</sub>-[*
- 5) <sup>ḥur</sup>*an-šár-pap-AŠ XX || [lu]gal kur an-šár<sup>ki</sup> ad ba-nu-u-a mi-gir*  
*dingir-meš [*
- 6) *ša ina pa-làḥ* dingir-meš *u || ù* <sup>dingir</sup>*XV-meš ik-šu-du ni-i[z-mat-su*
- 7) an-šár <sup>dingir</sup>*utu ina* <sup>gišgu</sup>*za ad ba-ni-šú ú-š[e-ši-bu-šú*
- 8) dingir-meš kur-kur *šal-lu-ú || ø-ti || tu ú-tir-ru áš-r[u-uš-šú-un*
- 9) *ḥa-za-dingir XX kur a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-š[ú*
- 10) *a-di maḥ-ri-šú il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-šiq* <sub>še</sub>-[*pi-šú*
- 11) *aš-šú na-dan* <sup>dingir</sup>*iš-tar-šú im-ḥur-šú-ma re-e-mu ir-ši-šu-ma im-*  
*g[u-ur*
- 12) <sup>munus</sup>*te-'e-el-ḥu-nu* <sup>munus</sup>*ku-mir-ta-šá maḥ-ri-tu a-na x(BI-x ŠI[M*<sup>16</sup>  
[
- 13) *ina ugu* <sup>munus</sup>*ta-bu-a* <sup>dingir</sup>*utu iš-al-ma um-ma ši-i x [*
- 14) *it-ti* <sup>dingir</sup>*iš-tar-i || ø-šú*<sup>17</sup> *ú-tir-ma [*

Translation:<sup>18</sup>

- 1) To the goddess Dil[bad ... .. b]rightness of ...[ ... ]
- 2) Who with Ḥazā[-il king of<sup>19</sup>] the land of the Arabs, you were ang[ry  
... ] side [...]
- 3) You counted h[im] in the hands (of) Sennacherib, father (of my)  
father, my creator, (and) you [est]ablished def[eat].]

<sup>14</sup> Maraqten 2000: 275-282. Maraqten used evidence that spanned from the Neo-Assyrian period up to the period just before the rise of Islam, but his conclusions are sound with regards to how we should treat this title.

<sup>15</sup> Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558. My translation.

<sup>16</sup> This may refer to an aromatic, but has remained untranslated.

<sup>17</sup> Here we can assume that the goddess belongs to Ḥazā-il, as no other female deity is mentioned in relation to the Assyrian kings.

<sup>18</sup> Borger strangely offers no translation of this text. Another English translation is offered by Cogan 1974, but only of one tablet used by Borger. In the face of this difficulty, I offer my own translation.

<sup>19</sup> This is a reconstruction by the author, based on other accounts of this individual's title: RINAP4 1 iv6; RINAP 4 2 ii51; RINAP 4 4 ii'7'; and RINAP 4 6 iii'2'.

- 4) You commanded she leave<sup>20</sup> the people of (the) Arab land. To the land Ashur x [ ... ]
- 5) Esarhaddon, king (of the) land Ashur, my father and creator, approved (by the) gods [ ... ]
- 6) Who achieved [his goal] (due to his) reverence (of) the gods and goddesses, [ ... ]
- 7) Ashur and Šamaš ca[used] (the) throne (of Esarhaddon's) creator [to be full].
- 8) He returned (the) gods (of the) lands (of his) rulership (to) [their holy sit]es.
- 9-10)) Ḫazā-il, *king of the* the land of the Arabs, went to (Esarhaddon) with h[is] audience gift, (and) kissed his fe[et].
- 11) Concerning his appeal (to) gift his goddess, (Esarhaddon) acquired mercy. He a[greed ... ]
- 12) Te'elḫunu, her<sup>21</sup> earlier priestess, to ... ..
- 13) With regard to Tabū'a, he asked Šamaš, saying 'Is she ...? [ ... ]
- 14) He returned with his goddess [ ... ]

In this dedicatory text to the goddess Dilbad, Te'elḫunu is mentioned by her proper name, but is then described as 'her earlier priestess'.<sup>22</sup> This directly linked her with the goddess Dilbad,<sup>23</sup> Cogan has discussed this text in detail, and explained that it is about the divine abandonment of the enemy. Assurbanipal wished that Dilbad, an 'Arab' goddess, would help ensure the defeat of the 'Arabs' led by Uaiate' in the same way as she helped his grandfather Sennacherib defeat Te'elḫunu.<sup>24</sup>

Interestingly, Esarhaddon appears to be the only ruler whose scribes did not refer to Te'elḫunu by her correct name. The reasons for this generational 'skip' are unlikely to be understood, but I tentatively suggest that there may have been records from the period of Sennacherib that Assurbanipal's scribes could access in order to ensure they had the correct name. This skip also raises the question of whether Te'elḫunu was actually her name. Only the last syllable 'nu' is partially preserved on the inscription from Sennacherib's reign.<sup>25</sup> However, the sign NU is different enough from the sign for the end of 'Apkallatu', UD (read as TÚ

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<sup>20</sup> Literally 'her (lack of) existence with the Arab people'. The context makes it clear Dilbad left the 'Arabs', rather than died.

<sup>21</sup> Here Te'elḫunu is explicitly described in relation to Dilbad.

<sup>22</sup> Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558 12. *CAD*, s.v. 'kumirtu'.

<sup>23</sup> A brief discussion of this text can be found in chapter 2, section 2.2.1.4.

<sup>24</sup> Cogan 1974: 15. Cogan also pointed out that an Assyrian king was ascribing past Assyrian military successes to a non-Assyrian deity, but it is far from the only instance of this occurring (Cogan 1974: 20). Discussion of Dilbad as a goddess is found in section 5.2 in this chapter.

<sup>25</sup> RINAP 3 r. 53'.

according to Borger), that Te'elḫunu is the most likely candidate for the personal name of this 'Queen of the Arabs'.<sup>26</sup>

The change in Assurbanipal's royal inscription is likely to be more accurate to the Arabian meaning of the term *apkallatu*. Instead of being steeped in meanings and associations with Ea and Adapa, *kumirtu* is a simple title that was more reflective of the potential religious roles Te'elḫunu carried out. This adds to the argument that Apkallatu was simply mistaking a title for a name, as there was an Akkadian term for the religious role she would have carried out. The fact that she is only mentioned explicitly as a priestess two generations after her military defeat speaks to a mistake at some point in the retelling of the story – particularly since this is the first time she is tied with the goddess Dilbad.

This therefore indicates a change in the perceived religious role of Te'elḫunu in the memory of the Assyrians (and importantly not the 'Queens of the Arabs' in general). When she first encountered Sennacherib, Te'elḫunu was recorded as a 'Queen of the Arabs', then Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions incorrectly recorded her name as 'Apkallatu'. Finally, under Assurbanipal Te'elḫunu has an explicit religious role of being a priestess of Dilbad – a relationship not mentioned before.

We can reach two important conclusions. The first is that *apkallu* (and the feminine form *apkallatu*) was likely a title of Te'elḫunu, which had a much simpler meaning to Arabian societies than in Assyria. As the term *apkallu* was imbued with a much deeper cultural meaning in Assyria, and was never in the titulature of the royal family, when confronted with a foreign ruler who bore *apkallatu* as a title, the Assyrians mistook it as her name. Finally, Te'elḫunu had a lasting impact on the Assyrian psyche, as she appeared as *kumirtu* ('priestess') in a text written during the reign of Assurbanipal. However, there is no evidence that being a priestess was Te'elḫunu's primary role, and this was likely a secondary title – much like what we find in the titles and epithets of the Assyrian kings.

## 5.2. 'ARAB' GODS AND DIVINE IMAGES

Aside from the name 'Apkallatu', the only other evidence of the religious roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs' is the mention of 'Arab' gods in the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon. In the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon, Ḫazā-il requested for the return of the statues of the Arabian gods, which had been looted by Sennacherib. The mention of these deities may illustrate what the cultic expectations of

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<sup>26</sup> For NU, see Borger 2004: 269-270. For UD (read as TÚ), see Borger 2004: 379-382.

Te'elḫunu might have been. Esarhaddon does return the 'Arab' gods to Ḫazā-il out of mercy:<sup>27</sup>

- 6) *mḥa-za-DINGIR 'LUGAL' LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-tú*
- 7) *a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia*
- 8) *il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia*
- 9) *áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-ṣal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma*
- 10) *ᵀa-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in ᵀda-a-a ᵀnu-ḫa-a-a*
- 11) *ᵀru-ul-da-a-a-ú ᵀa-bi-ri-il-lu*
- 12) *ᵀa-tar-qu-ru-ma-a DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi*
- 13) *an-ḫu-su-nu ud-diš-ma da-na-an ᵀaš-šur EN-ia*
- 14) *ù ši-tir MU-ia UGU-šú-nu áš-tur-ma ut-ter-ma ad-din-šú*
- 15) *ᵀta-bu-u-a tar-bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti*
- 16) *UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma it-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-šá a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši*

Translation:

Col. iv.

6-9) Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city,<sup>28</sup> with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him.

10-14) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḫāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-qurumâ, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him.

Ḫazā-il is introduced, and it is explained that he came to ask for the return of the 'Arab' gods which Sennacherib had taken in a previous campaign. Esarhaddon then returned six 'gods of the 'Arab' people' out of mercy, and lists them by name. There is very little information regarding these gods but based on Esarhaddon's ability to both return them and write his name upon them, they are likely to have been represented as statues.

In Assyria, statues of gods were considered in Assyria to be the embodiment of the gods themselves. They were lavishly made in copper, silver, lapis lazuli and gold; and were grouped with statues of the king in temples.<sup>29</sup> By extension,

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<sup>27</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 6-14.

<sup>28</sup> Literally 'the city of my lordship'.

<sup>29</sup> Cole & Machinist 1998: xiv. The amounts of gold needed for these statues were extraordinary, and these figures must have been imposing. In one letter 200kg of gold was used for the statues of the king and the queen mother (SAA 13 61). Holloway explained that even though there were no prayers directed to mortal Assyrian kings, the proximity of the royal statues to the divine ones meant that the worship of the gods would simultaneously also provide worship for the Assyrian king (Holloway 2002: 183-5, 189). Nadali and Verderame have noted that these lavish materials could interplay on the same statue. When combined with a specific location in the temple could engage multiple senses to create

whichever ruler controlled a statue essentially controlled the fate of the god.<sup>30</sup> Such control over divine figures was the motivation behind Sennacherib taking of the statue of Marduk from the Esagila in 689, and was part of a wider political move to demonstrate the primacy of Assyria over Babylonia.<sup>31</sup> The departure of Marduk would have been seen by the Babylonians as an expression of anger by the god against Babylonia – Marduk was abandoning Babylon in favour of Ashur, which could only result from some action of Babylon that had angered him.<sup>32</sup> It was therefore important for the Assyrian king to maintain peace and stability by controlling of the statues of both Assyrian and foreign gods. This exact conceptualisation may not have been the case with the ‘Arabs’, but explains the motivation behind Sennacherib taking statue of ‘Arab’ gods. By removing the ‘Arab’ statues, Sennacherib was punishing the ‘Arabs’ for the defiance against the Assyrians. Ideologically, the Assyrians viewed this as the gods abandoning the ‘Arabs’, and imposed un-Assyrian chaos upon this foreign group.<sup>33</sup>

The royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon saw Ḥazā-il, king of the ‘Arabs’, request these gods back. According to the texts, Esarhaddon agreed to do so out of mercy – but with one condition. He restored these statues and wrote his name and ‘the strength of Ashur’ upon them before returning them.<sup>34</sup> The return of the ‘Arab’ gods was a gesture to ensure friendly relations with the ‘Arabs’, and was part of a wider policy of reconciliation. The statue of Marduk, taken by Sennacherib, was given back to Babylon by Esarhaddon.<sup>35</sup> By returning gods, Esarhaddon was demonstrating the gods were no longer angry at the population, and their friendly interaction with the Assyrians was ensured through the gods’ return to their homeland.

The cuneiform inscription acted as a permanent reminder to those who saw it that the ‘Arab’ gods were overpowered by the Assyrians, and owed their restoration to the mercy and gracefulness of Esarhaddon. By inscribing this message, the ‘Arabs’ would not be able to remove it without tampering (or potentially destroying) the image of their god.<sup>36</sup> The choice of placing an inscription of both Esarhaddon’s name and one stating the greatness of Ashur on the physical likenesses of the ‘Arab’ gods would ensure the inscriptions’ longevity.

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an impression that they were alive in some manner and able to interact with the rituals performed around them (Nadali & Verderame 2019: 245).

<sup>30</sup> This phenomenon is also known as ‘godnapping’. See Zaia 2015 for a discussion of this phenomenon, and her discussion about the importance of naming the gods being taken hostage.

<sup>31</sup> Grayson 1991b: 118-119; Dandamayev 1996: 37.

<sup>32</sup> Hrůša 2015: 67. This is the same conceptualisation of Dilbad leaving the ‘Arabs’, and thus they were defeated and came under the rule of Assyria under Sennacherib and Esarhaddon (For texts regarding this, see Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558 15-28).

<sup>33</sup> Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558 15-28. Holloway also explained that a similar punishment was the imposition of a statue of the Assyrian king in foreign shrines, and the imposition of Assyrian royal ideology. This is not to be misconstrued as the imposition of Assyrian religion (Holloway 2002: 190-2, 195).

<sup>34</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 13-4; RINAP 4 2 ii 57-59; RINAP 4 3 iii 1’-iii 3’; RINAP 4 6 iii’5’-9’.

<sup>35</sup> Zaia 2015: 33.

<sup>36</sup> Holloway 2002: 194 n. 406.

Furthermore, the alteration of these statues was a demonstration that the Assyrian king could alter the divine world, as Esarhaddon was altering the image not only of the statues - but of the 'Arab' gods themselves. Cuneiform has a very different appearance to the scripts used in the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>37</sup> Even 'Arabs' who were not literate in Akkadian would recognise that this was a non-Arabian power from Mesopotamia that was able to alter the physical appearance of a divine statue.<sup>38</sup> This gave the overall message to the 'Arabs' that Esarhaddon and the god Ashur were more powerful than gods of the 'Arabs', and affirmed that the Assyrians were the more important power in the region.

Eph'al points out that this particular practice was only attested in the dealings with the 'Arabs', including those not given this ethnonym. Esarhaddon also inscribed the name of Ashur on the divine images of Laialê, king of Iadi', who was then made the ruler of Bāzu:<sup>39</sup>

Col. iii.

24) *ᵐla-a-a-le-e LUGAL URU.ia-di-i'*

25) *šá ul-tu la-pa-an GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia ip-par-ši-du*

26) *šal-la-at DINGIR.MEŠ-šú iš-mé-e-ma*

27) *a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia*

28) *a-di maḥ-ri-ia il-lik-am-ma*

29) *ú-na-áš-ši-iq ĜIR.II-ia*

30) *re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma aq-ta-bi-šú a-ḥu-lap*

31) *DINGIR.MEŠ-šú šá áš-lu-la da-na-an ᵃaš-šur EN-ia*

32) *UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma ú-ter-ma ad-din-šú*

33) *na-ge-e KUR.ba-a-zi šu-a-tú*

34) *ú-šad-gil pa-nu-uš-šú*

35) *GUN man-da-at-tú be-lu-ti-ia*

36) *ú-kin še-ru-uš-šú*

Translation:

Col. iii.

24-36) Laialê, king of the city Iadi', who had fled before my weapons, heard of the plundering of his gods and came to Nineveh, my capital city, before me, and kissed my feet. I had pity on him and said to him 'Aḥulap!' I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, on his gods that I had carried off and I gave (them) back to him. I put that province

<sup>37</sup> Some examples of North Arabian (which inscriptions are contemporaneous to the reign of Esarhaddon) can be found in Macdonald 2004: 491.

<sup>38</sup> Liverani 2014b: 378.

<sup>39</sup> Eph'al 1982: 127 n. 440; RINAP 4 2 iii 24-36. I take the position that Bāzu was located on the East of the Arabian Peninsula, along the Persian Gulf. Liverani based this location upon the Sargon Geography (Liverani 1999-2000). I therefore include the king Laialê of Iadi', who is made ruler of Bāzu, as an 'Arab'. The discussion regarding the location of Bāzu is explained in full in chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

of Bāzu under him (and) imposed on him my lordly tribute (and) payment.

This passage comes at the end of a section in Esarhaddon's annals regarding Bāzu, and discusses the treatment of Laialê, king of the city Iadi'. In principle, we see the same treatment as we saw with Ḥazā-il: an 'Arab' ruler was defeated, and his gods were taken to Nineveh. The ruler asks for his gods back, and Esarhaddon returned them out of compassion – but with an additional inscription establishing the supremacy of Assyrian rule.

There is an important distinction to be made between these two rulers. Laialê was a ruler who was personally defeated by Esarhaddon, whereas Ḥazā-il was not. But the similar narrative indicates that what mattered to Esarhaddon was the representatives of these 'Arab' groups were conciliatory towards Assyria. Laialê and Ḥazā-il were representing 'Arab' populations, and wanted to extend friendly relations to the Assyrian king. This was the deciding factor in the decision of whether to return their gods to them.

Both Ḥazā-il and Laialê received their gods, but the manner in which they are spoken of is different. In the case of Laialê, the names of the gods were not recorded, nor was the number of statues taken recorded. All that is known about these gods is they were important to the city of Iadi' – otherwise Laialê would not have asked for them back. In comparison, Ḥazā-il's gods were named, and there were at least six gods that were at the very least important to the population group ruled over by Ḥazā-il and Te'elḥunu: Atarsamayain, Daya, Nuḥaya, Ruldayau, Abirillu, Atarquruma.<sup>40</sup> The first instinct when presented with this list is to try and identify as many aspects of these gods as possible, but this is a difficult task. Here I shall present what is currently known about each of these deities in the Neo-Assyrian period.

The first deity mentioned is Atarsamayain.<sup>41</sup> There are no details of any cult surrounding this god, much like the others mentioned in this list – especially during the Neo-Assyrian period.<sup>42</sup> However, there was a cult dedicated to Atarsamayain in Adummatu in the sixth century, so by this point Atarsamayain was an important focal point in religion at this city.<sup>43</sup> There is virtually nothing to indicate the nature of the deity Abirillu, and this is also the case with the deity Daya.<sup>44</sup> Retsö writes that Nuḥaya (or NHY) used to be associated with the sun in previous scholarship, due to an association with 'the elevated sun' in an early inscription, but asserts this deity could also be associated with the concept of

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<sup>40</sup> RINAP 4 1 iv 10-12a.

<sup>41</sup> Zaia uses Atarsamayain as an example of how the Assyrian royal inscriptions did not mention the names of the gods taken by Assyrian kings or troops for fear of divine retribution, but mentioned their names upon returning the same gods to confer divine favour upon them (Zaia 2015: 34-36).

<sup>42</sup> Retsö lists the Assyrian mentions of this deity (Retsö 2003: 601).

<sup>43</sup> Retsö 2003: 601.

<sup>44</sup> Retsö 2003: 601, n. 16.

‘wisdom’.<sup>45</sup> With no firm dates for this attestation, and only associations with evidence from the Hebrew Bible, neither of these suggestions can be connected with certainty to Nuḥaya in Esarhaddon’s inscriptions. Ruldayau is the only deity who was worshipped in late antiquity, with Safaitic texts from 300 AD mentioning the deity Rudâ.<sup>46</sup> Yet again, the nature and exact identity of this god is not clear. Finally, Retsö has mentioned that there may have been a connection between Atarquruma and Atarsamayain based on the ‘Atar-’ aspect at the beginning of their name, but this connection is not confirmed.<sup>47</sup> Retsö then attempted to determine the nature of this god through analysing the second half of Atarquruma’s name, but with no clear conclusion.<sup>48</sup> There is therefore little known about the exact nature of the deities mentioned in the list given by Esarhaddon.

This list might not describe the entire pantheon that the ‘Arab’ population under Te’elḥunu and Ḥazā-il worshipped, but may have been a select few which were deemed the most important for the military mission against Sennacherib.<sup>49</sup> Religious rituals were used on campaign by the Assyrians, and therefore it is possible that this was the case for the ‘Arabs’.<sup>50</sup> The most important or relevant gods that would ensure military victory would be necessary would be brought, and others would be left behind. The wider pantheon may have included deities like ṢLM, who is found in Taymanitic graffiti from the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries in, and on a couple of stelae.<sup>51</sup> This relatively prominent deity may have been worshipped in the Northwest of the Arabian Peninsula at the time of Te’elḥunu and Ḥazā-il, but it is difficult to say so with any certainty. In this instance it is particularly important to be cautious not to project the deities which were worshipped in Arabia in later periods (such as the Liḥyanite deities) back onto the Neo-Assyrian period.<sup>52</sup> What may be the case for the sixth to first centuries may not have been

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<sup>45</sup> Retsö 2003: 602.

<sup>46</sup> Borger 1957: 10; Retsö 2003: 601.

<sup>47</sup> Retsö 2003: 602.

<sup>48</sup> Retsö 2003: 602. Here Retsö uses the similarities between ‘*quruma*’ and similar words in modern Arabic as well as ancient South Arabian to determine the nature of the god, but due to the diverse options, was unable to come to a solid conclusion.

<sup>49</sup> This would follow Zaia 2015, who suggested that the deities taken by Assyrians were not those that were the most important to the pantheon, but had a localised importance either geographically or dynastically (Zaia 2015: 30). In this case, the gods’ importance was in the context of warfare, and so only those pertinent to the ‘Arabs’ military success were brought to the battle.

<sup>50</sup> The inclusion of aromatics in the military camp of Samsi makes this possible. See chapter 3, section 3.2.1 for usages of aromatics in rituals.

<sup>51</sup> Graf 1990: 141; Macdonald 1995: 1361; Livingstone 2000: 235. This deity has been described as a moon-god who may also be connected to the idea of ‘image’ and was of Aramaic origin (Hausleiter 2012: 830; Livingstone 2000: 236; Graf 1990: 141). Dalley suggested that the winged disk, as depicted on the al-Hambra cube, is the Mesopotamian deity Ṣalmu, which was a sun-god who was present when oaths and treaties were agreed upon. See Dalley 1986 for Mesopotamian attestations of *ṣalmu*.

<sup>52</sup> The Liḥyanite kingdom was roughly from the sixth to the first centuries (Macdonald 1995: 1362). Hausleiter has described the Liḥyanite religion as possessing a ‘cosmopolitan pantheon’, giving Dhu Ghabat, Han-‘Uzza (the morning star), Han-‘Aktab (the Nabû equivalent), Qos (the chief god of Edom), Ba’al Shamin (from southern Syria), and Wadd (the chief god of Minaeans) as examples (Hausleiter 2012: 827-828).

the case for the period when Esarhaddon reigned, in the first half of the seventh century.

There was also a difference in the message inscribed upon the statues. The statues returned to Laialê merely had ‘the power of Ashur’ written upon them, which sent the specific message that all the gods of the city Iadi’ were subservient to the god Ashur. The presence of cuneiform on the statue of an ‘Arab’ god conveyed the message that their gods were changed by Assyria. The fact that a foreign power could change the image of ‘Arab’ gods demonstrated the power of Assyria, and thus the message was still able to be conveyed to a non-Akkadian speaking and illiterate community. Yet anyone who could read Akkadian would be able to interpret the message as specifically aimed at Laialê’s religious institution – this was not the case with those gods returned to Ḫazā-il. These were instead inscribed with ‘the might of Ashur’ as well as the name of Esarhaddon, which emphasised the Assyrian king’s superiority. Not only was the god Ashur able to (literally) stamp his authority upon a foreign god, but his earthly representative Esarhaddon was able to do so as well. This would therefore diminish the importance and impact of foreign gods and was a clear attempt by Esarhaddon to both placate ‘Arab’ rulers whilst ensuring his own dominance over foreign rulers. Even if no-one under Laialê could read Akkadian, this was the message that Esarhaddon intended to convey.

An intriguing addition to the pantheon of ‘Arab’ deities is the goddess Dilbad. She is only mentioned in an inscription of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal (Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558), and because she was described as the deity Te’elḫunu worshipped, Cogan took this to mean Dilbad was an ‘Arab’ deity.<sup>53</sup> Cogan went on to suggest that Dilbad was Atarsamayain, and suggested she was a version of the Assyrian goddess Iṣtar.<sup>54</sup> This equation between Dilbad and Iṣtar is partly due to line r.6 of the text (according to Cogan’s published version), as there is a broken line extolling ‘Ishtar, exalted mistress’.<sup>55</sup> This phrase appears in a damaged part of the text, but we can infer from line r.7 that Iṣtar (as well as Ashur and Ninlil) was commanding Assurbanipal to punish Uaiate’.<sup>56</sup> Cogan’s argument is that Dilbad, a female deity, is mentioned in a text alongside an Assyrian female deity, and therefore they should be read as the same god.<sup>57</sup> I am unconvinced by this argument, as it suggests all female deities were forms of Iṣtar. I believe the evidence points to a more sophisticated scenario. By this point, Assyria had interacted with the ‘Arabs’ for approximately two hundred years, and their understanding of ‘Arab’ culture was increasing as there was more contact

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<sup>53</sup> Cogan 1974: 19.

<sup>54</sup> Cogan 1974: 19-20. There is the possibility that this is the Mesopotamian goddess Dilbat, who is connected to Iṣtar. However, Dilbat is only mentioned in Old Babylonian and Neo-Babylonian sources. This makes it unlikely that Dilbad is Dilbat (*RLA*, s.v. ‘Dilbat’).

<sup>55</sup> Cogan 1974: 19. Translation is by Cogan.

<sup>56</sup> Cogan 1974: 19.

<sup>57</sup> Cogan 1974: 19-20.

between the two cultures. It is therefore more likely that this was a contemporary ‘Arab’ deity, who Assurbanipal was appealing to in order to ensure future ‘Arab’ subservience.

The six gods returned to Ḥazā-il were likely to be statues of these divine entities. There is little evidence of what these gods meant to the people Ḥazā-il ruled over, but there is some evidence that some were still worshipped in later periods in the Arabian Peninsula. We also cannot say for certain why they were present in Te’elḥunu’s camp, and we are unlikely to know more until we know the nature of her camp. However, we have seen that this act of returning ‘Arab’ gods to their leaders was intended to embody Esarhaddon’s mercy, but their alteration was a powerful symbol of the dominance of Assyria over ‘Arab’ leaders. To this list of deities we should also add Dilbad – again, we do not know what she meant to ‘Arab’ society, but by the time of Assurbanipal she was understood to be an ‘Arab’ deity.

### **5.3. ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF ROYALTY AND RELIGIOUS ROLES**

Thus far the evidence for the religious roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ are only a mistaken name, and names of gods. It is clear that this role of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ has the weakest direct evidence. However, even from this small amount of evidence we can see that religion was an important factor in the power of Te’elḥunu. With so little evidence, I turned to parallel case studies of religious roles in order to provide alternative models for the religious roles of Te’elḥunu. I chose to use the Neo-Assyrian kings, Neo-Assyrian royal women, and evidence for Arabian religion elsewhere in the Peninsula as alternative models. These case studies suggest three different ways power could intersect with religion, and how this could manifest itself in the sources.

The Neo-Assyrian kings were chosen as the first comparison to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ because of the nature of the sources (section 5.3.1). Every textual or visual source which mentions or depicts the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ had a direct relationship with the Neo-Assyrian kings, either to glorify them or as a report of provincial activities. It was therefore important to assess what Assyrians saw as ‘normal’ relationship between a ruler and their religious role. This would have influenced the way they viewed foreign individuals and their relationship to the divine, as already illustrated by the discussion about divine statues. This therefore a basis for the comparison with the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and how much they might have differed from Neo-Assyrian culture.

Yet using only the Neo-Assyrian kings would not have taken into account the gender of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. I therefore chose to look at these women’s closest cultural comparison during the Neo-Assyrian period: royal women

(section 5.3.2). This model may provide insight in terms of how gender influenced the religious roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. Using the Assyrian royal women as a comparison will also provide a potential model of high-status women from within Neo-Assyrian culture. This model would have been familiar to the Assyrian kings, and formed the basis of what the Neo-Assyrian kings might have expected to see from foreign female rulers.

The final comparative study are the models of religion found across the Arabian Peninsula. Due to the nature of the sources, I have had to expand the scope of this case study in terms of geography and time, and I have taken care to note where these examples originated from (section 5.3.3). The main purpose of this section is to serve as a reminder that there were diverse models for the religious roles of leaders, which could look drastically different from the Neo-Assyrian model. Just because the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ only appear in Neo-Assyrian textual evidence does not mean that their culture functioned like Assyria.

### 5.3.1. THE ASSYRIAN KINGS

The religious role of the Assyrian kings features prominently in the material that has been preserved from the Neo-Assyrian period, and as such has been a hub of research.<sup>58</sup> This section can only provide a brief overview of the religious role of the Assyrian king, and as such cannot go into detail about many of the topics raised here.

The kings of Assyria had many responsibilities, such as enlarging the land and defending it from chaotic powers, administering the land both himself as well as through lower level officials, and looking after the Assyrian people like a shepherd – all of which were key to fulfilling royal ideology.<sup>59</sup> The most important aspect of fulfilling these roles was the relationship between the Assyrian king and the divine, as this relationship was central to the prosperity of Assyria.<sup>60</sup> As Grayson has said previously, religion was one of the foundations upon which the kings’ power rested, and therefore was paramount to Assyrian kingship.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Important contributions include: Albenda 1969; Bahrani 2008; Bidmead 2002; Fuchs 2011; Holloway 2002; Hrůša 2015; Lambert 1998; Parpola 2010; Pongratz-Leisten 2015; Porter 1993; Postgate 2007; Radner 2010; Reade 1979; Siddall 2013; Ulanowski 2016.

<sup>59</sup> Reade 1979: 336; Parpola 2010: 36; Siddall 2013: 151. Reade and Parpola specifically discuss the Neo-Assyrian idea of ‘kingship’ and its relation to Assyrian royal ideology. Siddall focuses on the earlier king Adad-nērārī III, and states that the concept of the Assyrian king acting as a shepherd can be seen in the Middle Assyrian period, and is revived under the Sargonid kings.

<sup>60</sup> Solvang 2003: 40.

<sup>61</sup> Grayson 1999: 258. The importance of the Assyrian king’s religious role permeated all other roles, such as his military ones. Fuchs outlined the importance of the symbols of gods on standards accompanying soldiers on the march in reliefs by explaining how rituals can both improve morale within the army, and created of ‘secret knowledge’(Fuchs 2011: 386). This ‘secret knowledge’ was obtained through omens and invocations against the enemy, and could either be intelligence gained by omens to inform military actions, or could be asking the gods to cause harm to the enemy army in order

Within Assyrian religion the god Ashur enjoyed a special status. The fortunes of Assyria were entirely tied to the future of Ashur, both the city and the god. Ashur the god was supreme in all situations, and so the prosperity of the god was central to the prosperity of Assyria.<sup>62</sup> The king of Assyria was the ‘vice-regent’ of the god Ashur.<sup>63</sup> Titles like *iššiaku* (‘territorial ruler’) and *šaknu* (‘appointed’) described the kings’ relationship with Ashur.<sup>64</sup> These titles were a simple way of emphasising that the ‘real’ king of Ashur was the god, and the king was simply chosen to rule in the god’s stead.<sup>65</sup> Being chosen by the gods was another avenue to bolster the legitimacy of the king, and divine sanction was potentially more important than whether the king had been born to the previous king.<sup>66</sup>

The Assyrian king was seen as above other human beings because the gods made him as a perfect human.<sup>67</sup> He was therefore imbued with special qualities, specifically being made perfect by the gods, that allowed for his selection to rule by Ashur.<sup>68</sup> Parpola has suggested that the Assyrian king was the incarnation of the divine crown prince Ninurta.<sup>69</sup> By extension, the whole household of the king could be seen as a mirror image of the perfect divine family, and the court a mirror image of the gods’ assembly.<sup>70</sup> The perfect nature of the Assyrian king was encoded into the mythology of Assyrian kingship, as legitimate rule stemmed from the ‘seed of Ashur’ – the originator of this divinely sanctioned rule.<sup>71</sup> The

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to make the Assyrians victorious. Ulanowski outlined the importance of the *bārû* on the battlefield, and Bahrani described how strategies would be presented before the gods for their approval before battle (Ulanowski 2016: 66-77; Bahrani 2008: 184-189). The correct performance of rituals and cultic activity in a military campaign was therefore vital for an Assyrian victory, and it was the king’s responsibility to ensure these were carried out appropriately.

<sup>62</sup> Grayson 1991d: 195. The Assyrian kings had relationships with other gods. Chief amongst the other deities that the Assyrian kings chose to interact with was Marduk, god of Babylon. This relationship was established and annually re-established in the famous *akitu* festival. There were multiple complexes for the performance of the *akitu* festival in the cities Ashur, Arbela, Babylon, and Nineveh (Pongratz-Leisten, *RLA*, s.v. ‘Neujahr(sfest) (B)’).

<sup>63</sup> Grayson 1991d: 194.

<sup>64</sup> Porter 1993: 97; Millar 2009: 132; Hrůša 2015: 84. *CAD*, s.v. ‘*iššakku*’; *CAD*, s.v. ‘*šaknu*’. Pongratz-Leisten expanded on this to illustrate how these titles had an administrative aspect, and associations with the warrior gods Ninurta and Nergal meant there was a martial as well as economic element to providing for the cult of Ashur (Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 204)

<sup>65</sup> Siddall 2013: 152; Hrůša 2015: 84.

<sup>66</sup> The titles of Sennacherib have very few mentions of his genealogy, and favours emphasising his ties to the gods and his own personal traits as his legitimation for rule. For example, see RINAP 3/1 1, 3, and 9. Such changes to genealogies within Assyrian royal titulary more generally has led Siddall to question whether such manipulations were really just window-dressing in order to curate an image of legitimacy for those kings who may not necessarily have other, more convincing reasons for their legitimate rule (Siddall 2013: 152).

<sup>67</sup> Holloway 2002: 182; Radner 2010; Hrůša 2015: 81.

<sup>68</sup> This is of course the idealistic view of the office of the king, and was not necessarily borne out in reality. Grayson 1991d: 195-196; Parpola 2010: 36.

<sup>69</sup> Parpola 2010: 36; Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 208. Ataç has pointed to the lion hunt motif in Neo-Assyrian culture as the re-enactment of the hero gods Marduk and Ninurta defeating their opponents, with the Assyrian king representing the gods and the lions representing their ‘chaotic’ opponents (Ataç 2008: 920). For a full analysis of the role of Ninurta in royal ideology and mythology in Mesopotamian history, see Annus 2002.

<sup>70</sup> Parpola 2010: 36.

<sup>71</sup> Radner stressed that although this originator of the monarchy was mentioned by the Assyrian kings as an unbroken dynasty, this was not necessarily the case. It is still unclear what the exact rules

Assyrian king was closer to the gods than other mortals, to the point where in some royal epithets it can be difficult to differentiate between kings and gods.<sup>72</sup> Despite this intertwined aspect of Assyrian kings and the gods, it is important to stress that Assyrian kings were not deified, and never considered themselves as divine or as a manifestation of the divine.<sup>73</sup>

As a perfect creation of the gods, and the representative of the god Ashur on Earth, the Assyrian king required active participation of the king in religious activities.<sup>74</sup> From Aššur-uballit I (1365-1330) onwards, Assyrian kings were called *šangû* ('chief administrator of a temple'), which was especially important in cultic activities such as building temples, and participation in some festivals.<sup>75</sup> As Pongratz-Leisten stated, *šangû* as a title was exclusive to Assyrian royal ideology, and explained that this pointed to a critical difference between Assyrian and Babylonian royal ideology: in Assyria the king performed rituals, whereas Babylonian kings allowed rituals to be performed on their behalf by priests.<sup>76</sup> The culmination of this tie between Assyrian kingship and religion saw Esarhaddon described as a *šangû*, or 'chief administrator of a temple' of the god Ashur in his titles.<sup>77</sup> The extent to which Esarhaddon, or any Assyrian king, actually functioned as a member of the priesthood is uncertain, but at the very minimum this title acted to stress the connection between Esarhaddon and the god Ashur.<sup>78</sup>

The Assyrian king essentially acted as the intermediary between mortal realm and the realm of the immortal gods by participating in rituals for the gods.<sup>79</sup> The Assyrian king was the instrument through which Ashur's wishes were implemented on Earth, and the king was therefore responsible for the creation of a prosperous land for the service of Ashur.<sup>80</sup> Every action by the Assyrian king was therefore tied to commands from the divine, as he was acting as Ashur's vice-regent.<sup>81</sup> However, royal ideology did not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the general populace, so this can only be viewed as the ideal image the Assyrian kings wanted to project to others.<sup>82</sup> Despite this issue, it is still important to recognise that the Assyrian king wanted to emphasise that their right to rule due to the gods'

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of succession were (Radner 2010: 26). Lambert explains 'seed of Ashur' as Ashur the god was king over Assyria and created the Assyrian king as his regent (Lambert 1998: 68). Hrůša also pointed to another epithet of the king: *nibīt DN*, or 'one called by DN', which was used to express this concept (Hrůša 2015: 82).

<sup>72</sup> Grayson 1991d: 195.

<sup>73</sup> Dandamayev 1996: 36; Parpola 2010: 36; Siddall 2013: 152.

<sup>74</sup> Albenda 1969; Porter 1993; Bidmead 2002; Postgate 2007; Parpola 2010; Radner 2010; Siddall 2013.

<sup>75</sup> Siddall 2013: 152-154; Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 203. *CAD*, s.v. '*šangû*'.

<sup>76</sup> Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 202-3.

<sup>77</sup> Porter 1993: 97; Hrůša 2015: 84. For example, the title *šangû* used six times in RINAP 4 57.

<sup>78</sup> Porter 1993: 98. This is particularly important to stress as there is no direct evidence for every Assyrian king's participation in religious rituals.

<sup>79</sup> Grayson 1991d: 195; Postgate 2007: 331; Radner 2010: 25.

<sup>80</sup> Lambert 1998: 55; Radner 2010; Hrůša 2015: 81.

<sup>81</sup> Solvang 2003: 40; Bahrani 2008. Radner explained this was shown throughout the royal ideology, in both inscriptions and reliefs (Radner 2010: 25).

<sup>82</sup> Lambert 1998: 55.

authority, and that all actions taken by the king were by their very nature divinely sanctioned.<sup>83</sup> If the king was the representative of the gods, he was therefore acting in the god Ashur's stead, and as such to act against him was to act against Ashur.

The maintenance of the cultic apparatus was another key part of the religious role of the Assyrian king.<sup>84</sup> In order to ensure the continuance of a strong link between the king and the god Ashur, the seats of the cults of the god had to not just be functional, but be kept in optimum condition. This meant temples which came into disrepair would need to be rebuilt, which would then allow mankind to serve the gods in a manner befitting them, and by keeping the gods happy the cult maintained a favourable relationship between the divine and earthly worlds.<sup>85</sup>

The restoration and rebuilding of temples could be used to disseminate a political as well as religious message. Esarhaddon restored both Assyrian and Babylonian temples and shrines as part of his conciliatory policies towards Babylonia.<sup>86</sup> It is not entirely clear whether all of these temples needed restoration, or if they were 'restored' in an effort to demonstrate the special status of a particular place or shrine. The latter may be the case of the Ešarra temple, which Esarhaddon restored in order to link him to the ancient history and earlier kings linked to the temple.<sup>87</sup> The restoration of an important shrine served to legitimise Esarhaddon, as he was continuing the work of earlier kings and restoring their legacy to its rightful position.

The concept of Assyrian order over chaos was key to the link between theology and the Assyrian king, and Mander explained that the Assyrian king needed to spread order over chaos as mandated by the god Ashur.<sup>88</sup> Even the act of expanding the Assyrian empire to include foreign lands was the manifestation of divine will, and Mander went so far as to say this was a literal reflection of the heavens and the divine order.<sup>89</sup> As the empire expanded, the Assyrian king was able to mobilise more resources for the worship of the gods in the Assyrian heartland, and this was the reason why the Assyrian king had been created by the

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<sup>83</sup> Lambert 1998: 55; Grayson 1999: 258; Radner 2010: 25; Miller 2009: 132.

<sup>84</sup> Siddall 2013: 153.

<sup>85</sup> Hruša 2015: 66. Part of this was the commissioning of both royal and divine statues. The link between royal and divine statues was so close that Nadali and Verderame discussed them together (Nadali & Verderame 2019: 235). A key aspect raised by Nadali and Verderame was the intense interest by the Assyrian artists to create a correct likeness of kingship, as well as the concern of the temple personnel to place the royal and divine statues in the optimum positions in relation to one another within the temple (Nadali & Verderame 2019).

<sup>86</sup> Leichty 2011: 3. Porter explained that his depiction of participating in a Babylonian basket-carrying ritual helped cement the idea that Esarhaddon was fulfilling the roles of a traditional Babylonian ruler. She went on to explain that this same iconography backfired against his son Assurbanipal. As both Assurbanipal, the king of Assyria, and Šamaš-šumu-ukin, the king of Babylon, were portrayed in the same ritual which carried such importance to Babylonian royal ideology, this meant those who viewed this depiction had to decide to be loyal to either the Assyrian king or the Babylonian king (Porter 2004). Porter 1993: 92, 94

<sup>87</sup> Porter 1993: 98.

<sup>88</sup> Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 207; Mander 2016: 9.

<sup>89</sup> Mander 2016: 8.

gods.<sup>90</sup> Part of this was by ensuring oaths were upheld.<sup>91</sup> When oaths were sworn, they were sworn before gods, and if any aspect was broken the offending party was doomed to be punished by the gods. Declaring war on those who broke their oaths was therefore a vital aspect of upholding the duty of the Assyrian kings to Ashur, and was a vital aspect of their religious roles. If the enemy dared to defy an oath made before the gods, the gods would punish that enemy severely. These punishments are explicitly spelled out many times, such as in the ‘Zakūtu Treaty’ and the ‘Qedarite Treaty’.<sup>92</sup>

Accompanying these formal religious roles were the personal relationships between the Assyrian kings and religion. Esarhaddon was particularly interested in religious activities. Whilst personally seeking out prognostic reports nearly constantly throughout his reign, Esarhaddon is known for his almost excessive use of the ‘substitute king’ ritual.<sup>93</sup> This keen interest was not seen in the texts of other Assyrian kings, so Esarhaddon is a reminder that different kings had different relations to religion on a personal level. Some kings placed a higher value on their participation in religious rituals than others, and therefore it is difficult to provide a generalised view of Assyrian kings and their personal relationships to religious rituals during the whole Neo-Assyrian period.

Just like the act of restoring temples, participating in a religious ritual could serve a political role – such as Assyrian kings using ancient rituals to further legitimise their rule over Babylonia.<sup>94</sup> This is also seen in the Assyrian king’s participation in the *akitu* festival, as the core element of this festival was the supremacy of the god Marduk, the Esagila, and Babylon.<sup>95</sup> Participation in religious and cultic activities of Babylonia played an integral part of the politics of the Sargonid Neo-Assyrian kings, as it demonstrated the pious nature of the Assyrian king, his status in society, as well as the importance of Babylon within the Assyrian empire.

The kings of Assyria were functioning within a rigid ideology that saw them as the regent of the god Ashur, and were representatives of the deity for the land they controlled. The true ruler of the Assyrian empire was therefore the god Ashur. In order to be chosen by the divine for this role, the Assyrian king was conceived in royal ideology as more than human – but was never divine. Many of the Assyrian kings’ responsibilities were tied to religious ideology, as the maintenance of the empire was paramount to the continued support of the god. The Assyrian king

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<sup>90</sup> Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 217.

<sup>91</sup> In the royal inscriptions the breaking of oaths was a common reason for going to war. A broken oath to the god Šamaš is given as the reason for the campaign against Samsi. RINAP 1 20, 18’.

<sup>92</sup> SAA 2 8, SAA 2 10, respectively.

<sup>93</sup> Grayson 1991b: 141. This is a ritual in which the exorcists and priests of the royal court have perceived an ill omen, and then a substitute king was picked amongst a group of people whose life was not valued (Parpola 1983: XXII-XXIII).

<sup>94</sup> Grayson 1992: 99; Porter 1993: 82.

<sup>95</sup> Bidmead 2002: 49.

had to participate in religious rituals, and maintain the seats of the cult by rebuilding and restoring temples.

There are seven clear aspects of the Assyrian kings' relationship with the divine, and the Assyrian kings' religious roles which can be compared with the evidence of Te'elḥunu. The first is that religion was a foundational aspect of the power of the Assyrian kings. There is no evidence that religion was such an important aspect of Te'elḥunu's religious role, but her religious role was certainly a part of the construction of her power as a 'Queen of the Arabs'. The second aspect is that the god Ashur was elevated above other gods in Assyria, and whilst the names of some of the 'Arab' deities have been preserved in the Assyrian royal inscriptions, there is little to no evidence that would allow for a ranking of the deities. The Assyrian king was also chosen by the god Ashur to rule, which made the king more than human – but importantly, not divine. There is no instance of a text including any divine element to Te'elḥunu's name, and she is not described as a god. However, the use of the title *apkallatu* indicates that she might have held a special position, but this is only if the 'Arabs' shared the cultural understanding of the *apkallu* and pre-diluvian sacred knowledge with the Assyrians. The Assyrian king could be given the title of *sangû*, or 'chief administrator of a temple', to try to express his relationship and interaction with the divine as a regent. This aspect of Assyrian kingship is the clearest comparison with Te'elḥunu, as her title *apkallatu* indicates she had a similar institutionalised position within the religious structure of 'Arab' culture. This aspect of Te'elḥunu's role was then solidified in the Assyrian mindset, and during the reign of Assurbanipal she was remembered as a *kumirtu*, or 'priestess'. The Assyrian king had a responsibility to maintain cultic apparatus and temples. There are no temples directly connected to Te'elḥunu mentioned in the Assyrian texts, but based on the finds at Tayma, it is likely that Adummatu had temples as well.<sup>96</sup> In addition, Te'elḥunu might have been responsible for the maintenance of the statues of 'Arab' gods (prior to their removal to Assyria), but there is no evidence that this was part of the responsibilities of the 'Arab' *apkallatu*. The religious role of the Assyrian king has also been shown to be part of a wider royal ideology which sought to impose order over chaos. There is no evidence in the textual or archaeological record for such a royal ideology of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. Finally, there is textual evidence for both the political and personal function of the Assyrian kings' religious role. Due to the nature of the evidence, there simply isn't the evidence for this aspect of Te'elḥunu's religious role.

Overall, there is a clear similarity in the titles of both Assyrian kings and Te'elḥunu, as both include their religious roles in their titulary. However, the nature of the evidence means we simply do not have the evidence to provide a full evaluation of the two forms of religious roles. There is evidence of connections

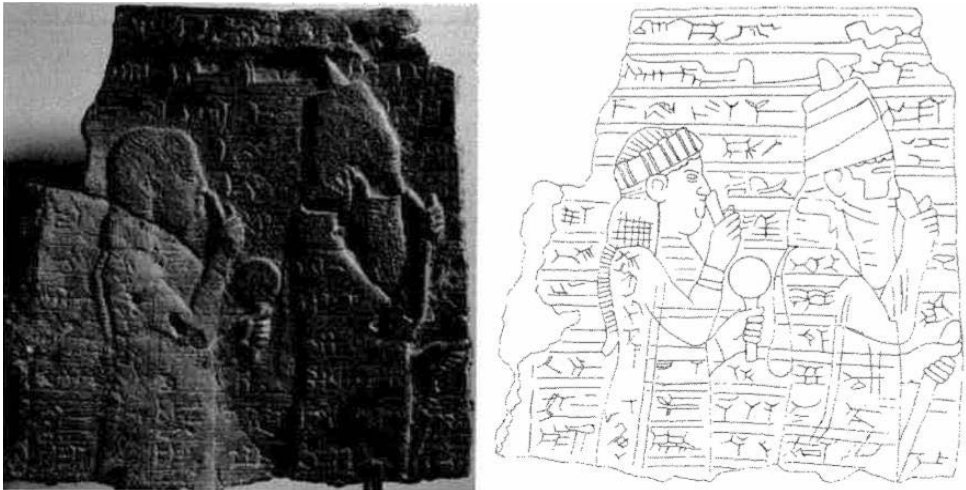
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<sup>96</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.3.2.

between Te' elhunu and concepts related to the religious roles of the Assyrian king (such as temples, statues, and deities), but there is simply no evidence for the nature of the connections. This simply underlines the importance of moving away from models of power based on Assyrian kingship when discussing populations on the margins of the Assyrian empire. Often there simply is not the evidence to provide a meaningful comparison with Assyrian kingship as a model of power and religious roles.

### 5.3.2. NEO-ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN AND RELIGION

Neo-Assyrian royal women were in the highest positions women could attain in Assyrian culture, and thus it is important to establish the religious roles of the closest comparable women to the 'Queens of the Arabs'. This will provide a model for how high-status women could interact with religion, and provide a model for what the Assyrian kings might have expected from foreign ruling women. This case study allowed for a comparison based on gender, and an assessment of what the Assyrians could expect in terms of how foreign women could interact with religion.



**Figure 28** *Bronze plaque depicting Naqi'a and an unknown Sargonid king.* [Bronze plaque and line drawing] Macgregor 2012: 109.

Royal women of the Neo-Assyrian period were involved in both personal and state religious activities.<sup>97</sup> There is one depiction of Naqī'a in a bronze plaque where she may be participating in a cultic ritual (see figure 28), and led Solvang suggests that royal women were expected to take part in cultic practices.<sup>98</sup> When looking beyond this piece of evidence, Assyrian royal women participated in cultic activities, and in one text there is a reference to an Assyrian royal woman participating in a ritual in Ashur.<sup>99</sup> In this section, I will focus on the evidence of the religious roles of Sammu-rāmat and Naqī'a, as these women both held the position of MÍ.É.GAL, and have the most evidence preserved for their religious roles out of the Neo-Assyrian royal women.

The traditional view of the religious roles of Sammu-rāmat and Naqī'a is that they were exceptional women during the Neo-Assyrian period.<sup>100</sup> Svärd, who instead demonstrated that these women should be seen as broadly representative of Neo-Assyrian queens' religious roles and activities, has convincingly challenged this.<sup>101</sup> In addition, Svärd has suggested that Sammu-rāmat and Naqī'a's roles in both their cultic activities and the motives behind carrying out these rituals were roughly the same as the Assyrian men in the royal court.<sup>102</sup> Naqī'a's personal interest in religious matters has been well documented elsewhere, but it will be worth providing an overview here. Naqī'a appears to have had a more active interest than her predecessors, despite an increase in the numbers of documents preserved from the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal.<sup>103</sup>

There are many letters addressed to and from Naqī'a regarding religious activities, but interestingly none of them refer to her direct involvement. She inquired after the correct manner for the rituals to be conducted in.<sup>104</sup> There is the possibility that these were also activities she was participating in, and this was the reason for her concern with the accuracy of these rituals.<sup>105</sup> The bronze plaque that depicted Naqī'a alongside an unknown Sargonid king, where she is depicted

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<sup>97</sup> The separation between these two were blurred, such as in SAA 20 34 we see the royal women involved in the burial of another royal woman.

<sup>98</sup> Solvang 2003: 40. Macgregor points to this relief being of Assyrian origin, and that Naqī'a is fully integrated into a religious ceremony in the same manner as the king alongside her (Macgregor 2012: 109-118).

<sup>99</sup> SAA 20 52. Svärd has written about the roles of the female sage – specifically how Naqī'a performed her 'feminine' role as the confidante and counsellor of her son Esarhaddon by expressing her piety to the gods (2019: 58-60).

<sup>100</sup> Melville 2004: 49.

<sup>101</sup> Svärd outlined the general problems in assessing the evidence of the royal Assyrian women in 2015a: 157-158, and more specifically the difficulty in assessing the 'uniqueness' of Naqī'a in 2015a: 160; Svärd has also collated the attestations of royal Assyrian women in the appendices of Svärd 2015a.

<sup>102</sup> These are listed in Appendix A of Svärd 2015a. SAA 10 16 is particularly interesting, as it affords Naqī'a the same powers that are normally reserved for the king.

<sup>103</sup> Svärd 2015a: 54.

<sup>104</sup> Svärd 2015a: 55; SAA 10 313; SAA 13 76, 77.

<sup>105</sup> The concern for the correct manner to perform rituals is paralleled in the Assyrian kings. For example, in RINAP 3/2 166 4-5 and RINAP 4 10 2 Sennacherib and Esarhaddon (respectively) claim to 'know how to revere' the gods. Accuracy in performing rituals was important, as it ensured social order and justice as per the commands of the gods (Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 274).

as participating in a ritual activity (Figure 28), suggests there was a real need for practical information in order to perform a religious ritual.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, Naqī'a likely participated in religious rituals, and one reason for the letters to and from Naqī'a could be due to the queen mother's concerns that the rituals she will participate in will be carried out correctly.

Naqī'a also provided for temples, paid tax, gave private donations, and provided material for statues of her to be placed in temples.<sup>107</sup> What stands out is the lavish nature of many of her dedications.<sup>108</sup> There is a letter recording the dedication of jewels for a statue, royal inscriptions on beads describing their dedication from Naqī'a, and inlaid objects and statues made of expensive materials.<sup>109</sup> SAA 13 61 records 200kg of gold reserved for the making of images of the Assyrian king and Naqī'a, indicating that the image of the mother of the king had to be both lavish and imposing.<sup>110</sup> Naqī'a made donations to temples outside of Ashur, which could have been seen as a demonstration of the status of Naqī'a.<sup>111</sup> The mother of the king was therefore able to make expensive donations to temples and cultic centres, and donations were an important aspect of the religious role of Naqī'a.<sup>112</sup>

Another important aspect of the religious roles of Naqī'a was the need to dedicate lavish objects to the gods for the preservation of her son Esarhaddon's life as well as her own.<sup>113</sup> These dedications intrinsically tied the fate of the Assyrian king to Naqī'a, as continued dedications to the gods would ensure the well-being of Esarhaddon. Therefore, the religious roles of the Assyrian royal women were tied to the well-being of the Assyrian king, and ensuring the kings' well-being was a necessity.

Members of the public could dedicate objects to temples in order to secure Assyrian royal women's lives and well-being. The most explicit of these are two inscribed statues from Kalhu, which were dedicated to the god Nabû for the life of the king and Sammu-rāmat by the governor of Kalhu Bēl-tarši-ilumma:<sup>114</sup> Yet this is not the case. If we look at these inscriptions, we see that this is not solely for the well-being of Sammu-rāmat, but for the well-being of the Assyrian king as well:<sup>115</sup>

8b) *a-na* TI <sup>md</sup>IŠKUR-ÉRIN.TÁḪ MAN KUR *aš-šur* EN-šú ù TI

<sup>106</sup> Melville 1999: 47, 52; Macgregor 2012: 109-118.

<sup>107</sup> Svärd 2015a: 55.

<sup>108</sup> Svärd 2015a: 55; SAA 10 313.

<sup>109</sup> SAA 10 348 012-13; SAA 13 188; RINAP 4 2005-2008.

<sup>110</sup> Svärd 2015a: 55; SAA 13 61.

<sup>111</sup> Melville 1999: 52.

<sup>112</sup> Svärd 2015a: 55, 85.

<sup>113</sup> RINAP 4 2005-2008.

<sup>114</sup> Baker 2002: 1084; RIMA 3 A.O.104.2002. Siddall painted these as unusual, and that this was an indication of the central administration recognising Sammu-rāmat's unusual presence and role at the royal court (Siddall 2013: 91). However, this analysis does not account for the text wishing for the well-being of the Assyrian king alongside Sammu-rāmat.

<sup>115</sup> RIMA 3 A.O.104.2002 8b-9a.

9a) *ʿsa-am-mu-ra-mat* MUNUS.É.GAL NIN-šú

Translation:

8b-9a) For the life of Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, his lord, and (for) the life of Semiramis,<sup>116</sup> the palace woman, his mistress:<sup>117</sup>

There is a parallel for this in SAA 12 96, where two slaves were dedicated to the temple of Nabû for the benefit of the lives of the Assyrian king Sin-šarru-iškun and his MÍ.É.GAL.<sup>118</sup> The MÍ.É.GAL could therefore be included in the well-wishes of outsiders to the royal court when praying for the well-being of the Assyrian king.

Sammu-rāmat's equal status to the Assyrian king in the eyes of the governors suggests she acted in the same way as a male ruler in terms of religious roles.<sup>119</sup> We also see this with Naqī'a, as the activities described previously were all those which were expected of the Assyrian king.<sup>120</sup> The dedication of cult objects, the addressing of reports about oracles to her, and the commissioning of a statue in her image were all activities the Assyrian king participated in.<sup>121</sup> The imagery on seals from the Nimrud burial assemblages of Assyrian royal women depict these women in the same manner as Assyrian kings. In one instance (a seal of Hamâ), the royal woman is in a mirrored position to the king, with the 'sacred tree' between them. This positioning highlighted their parallel roles in relation to the divine, and stressed that both figures were caretakers for the empire.<sup>122</sup> In the eyes of the gods, at least, Naqī'a and Sammu-rāmat were acting the same as the king, and therefore may have expected the same benefits as the king. It therefore would not have been surprising to Esarhaddon that Te'elḫunu played a role in the cultic activities of the 'Arabs', and her activities may have been just the same as her male equivalents. It may not have been too much of a stretch for the Assyrian king to therefore mistake her activities as that of a priestess – after all, Naqī'a could also be mistaken for a priestess.

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<sup>116</sup> RIMA calls Sammu-rāmat Semiramis.

<sup>117</sup> I believe a better translation is 'his woman', as the term 'mistress' implies in English that Sammu-rāmat was the power behind the throne. This idea has not necessarily been dismissed, but the extent of her power during the reign of Adad-nārārī III was certainly not as powerful as once thought (Siddall 2013: 86-100). See section 3.1.1. for a discussion on the role of Sammu-rāmat during her son's reign.

<sup>118</sup> SAA 12 96.

<sup>119</sup> Siddall suggested that the dedicatory statues allowed the central administration of Assyria to accept the exceptional status of Sammu-rāmat, which was otherwise difficult to describe. Siddall's argument is that since both the Assyrian king and his mother were treated equally on the votive statues, created by those outside of the royal family and were found in public places, those outside of the royal family must have accepted her position to the point where they inscribed on objects it for the public to witness. Sammu-rāmat and Adad-nārārī III are mentioned in inscriptions on dedicatory statues in equal terms, which Siddall described as indicative that they were both involved in the running of the state (Siddall 2013: 91).

<sup>120</sup> Svärd 2015a: 59, 84; For more on this, see Svärd 2015b.

<sup>121</sup> Grayson 1991b: 139; Svärd 2015a: 55.

<sup>122</sup> Gansell 2018: 93. Gansell illustrated how such ideology permeated throughout the elements of dress for Assyrian royal women (Gansell 2018).

There is very little evidence for similarities between Te'elḥunu's and Assyrian royal women's religious roles. This is not because the evidence points to differences, but there is simply no evidence that Te'elḥunu: had a personal interest in religious activities; made provisions for temples; dedicated items to temples; dedicated objects to temples on the behalf of an 'Arab' king; or could have items dedicated on her behalf. However, there is an indication that Te'elḥunu's religious role was similar to that of 'Arab' kings. Ḥazā-il's request for the gods taken from Te'elḥunu's camp by Sennacherib indicates they were key to Ḥazā-il's religious role as 'King of the Arabs'. The similarity in the function of religious roles between royal women and men 'Arab' and Assyrian cultures is an important comparable aspect of these two groups of royal women.

### 5.3.3. ARABIAN ALTERNATIVES

Examples from the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula will be used to provide non-Assyrian alternatives of how religious roles were expressed and performed. Due to the region the 'Queens of the Arabs' were from, this is an important counterpoint. Even though these women are assessed through an Assyrian lens, they were still 'Arab' and from the Arabian Peninsula. Due to the lack of evidence from the Northwest Arabian Peninsula during the Neo-Assyrian period, evidence will be taken from a wider geographical and temporal scale, and the dates and locations of these examples will be stated as explicitly as possible.<sup>123</sup> This is the most comparative model, as it illustrates non-Assyrian materialisations of religion in the Peninsula. In order to further emphasise the wide geographical and temporal span of material in this section, I will differ in my method of comparison from the previous two sections. Instead of analysing the similarities and differences of this evidence to that of Te'elḥunu's religious role at the end of this section, I will instead evaluate each comparative aspect from the Arabian Peninsula in relation to the evidence for Te'elḥunu's religious roles.

A particular problem in discussing the religious roles of rulers in the Arabian Peninsula is the imposition of later evidence on earlier periods. Traditionally, the view of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula was that there was a two-level system of rule: a *mlk* who was the ruler of a local population, and a *mkrb* who was a theocratic ruler who unified a group of *mlk* rulers on the basis of religious beliefs.<sup>124</sup> This model was based on South Arabia from the latter half of the first

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<sup>123</sup> The preciseness of the dates provided will vary due to the nature of the evidence.

<sup>124</sup> For examples of this see: Parr 1997: 163; and al-Fassi 2007: 62. These are also known as the *malik* and *mukarrib*. Hoyland argues that the *mlk* was the embodiment of a god (Hoyland 2002). It has also been suggested that the *mkrb* also functioned alongside the *mlk* as a 'unifier' of several regions ruled by a *mkrb* (Hoyland 2002: 68; Robin 2002: 52.). Höfner uses the etymological argument that *mkrb* meant 'unificator' but stressed that based on this alone you could not ascribe any religious role to this title (Höfner 1957:77-78).

millennium, and particularly the Sabaeen mukarribate period.<sup>125</sup> Yet this model is unlikely to apply to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, as the basis of the theocratic nature of the *mkrb* in South Arabia is from the Hellenistic period. Beeston explained that the relief of a king of Awsan (in South Arabia) named *ysdq’l fr’m s<sup>2</sup>rh’t* depicted him in Greek or Greco-Syrian dress.<sup>126</sup> Beeston pointed out that this is likely to be an attempt to be more like a Hellenistic ruler, rather than an indigenous notion of the divinity of rulers.<sup>127</sup> In terms of the evidence for Te’elḥunu’s religious role, there is no evidence of either her religious role being used to change or manipulate her status for foreign imperial powers. There is also no mention of rulers operating below her as in the *mkrb* and *mlk* model.<sup>128</sup>

Pilgrimage routes and accompanying festivals have been suggested as a fundamental part of ‘Arab’ religion. Magee suggested four sites in the East Arabian Peninsula, in the modern United Arab Emirates, that were part of a pilgrimage route.<sup>129</sup> Pilgrimage routes and the costs involved were able to facilitate social behaviours between populations that may not otherwise have been in contact with each other. Religious festivals could accompany pilgrimages, and Macdonald suggests that pilgrimages between these festivals allowed for commerce across the Arabian Peninsula to thrive.<sup>130</sup> Yet both of these arguments rely upon evidence that is not found in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula, and on evidence from later periods.<sup>131</sup> This perspective also centres the religious roles of these cities to the detriment of other functions of oasis towns like Adummatu and Tayma in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula. There were likely to be cultic sites such as temples within these cities, but they also functioned as economic hubs,<sup>132</sup> accommodation for the sedentary population, and sites of security during military campaigns.<sup>133</sup> Whilst pilgrimage might have played a role in the lived experience of oasis sites such as Adummatu and Tayma, there is no evidence of how the rulers of these towns (such as Te’elḥunu) might have interacted with such religious activities. Rulers may have instigated them, but equally possible was laypeople or religious personnel organising such religious activities. Therefore, pilgrimage routes might have existed in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula, but there is

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<sup>125</sup> This was the period from the eighth to the first centuries (Robin 2002: 52). Kitchen established a chronology for this period (Kitchen 1994: 80-111).

<sup>126</sup> Beeston 1972: 267. This is the only evidence of an Arabian king using divine honours in his epithets usually reserved for Greek rulers.

<sup>127</sup> Beeston 1972: 267-268.

<sup>128</sup> Tabū’a was imposed upon all of the ‘Arab’ rulers, but there is no evidence that the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who were not imposed by a foreign power ruled over other rulers beneath them. For a discussion of Tabū’a, see chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>129</sup> This was based on the commonality of the paraphernalia found at the sites Masafī, Bithna, al-Qusais and Sarouq al-Hadid, and the evidence comes from the early first millennium (Magee 2014: 239).

<sup>130</sup> Macdonald 1995: 1359.

<sup>131</sup> For example, the assumption that Adummatu functioned as a religious centre is based on the association between this city and Atarsamayain in the sixth century. See this chapter, section 5.2 for more on this connection.

<sup>132</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.2.

<sup>133</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.8. for the textual sources describing Adummatu as a fortified city.

currently no evidence these were a central aspect of the existence of oasis towns such as Adummatu or Tayma, and there is no evidence of how Te'elḥunu could have interacted with this activity.



**Figure 29** *Al-Hambra cube with Egyptian-style bull, Mesopotamian human figure, and a winged disc. [Stone cube] Hausleiter 2010: 254.*

The Neo-Assyrian ‘Arabs’ sat in a crossroads between several major political powers that influenced their culture.<sup>134</sup> An excellent example are the religious symbols used on the Al-Hambra cube (found at Tayma, and is roughly dated to the Neo-Babylonian period), which incorporated Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and South Arabian elements (Figure 29). Dalley suggested the winged disk on the cube was the Mesopotamian deity Šalmu.<sup>135</sup> Whilst the cultural influence and inclusion of this Mesopotamian image is undeniable, there is little evidence suggesting what the winged disk might have meant to the local population of Tayma, or the extent to which the population in Tayma followed Mesopotamian norms. Rather than elevate the Mesopotamian elements of the al-Hambra cube, I wish to stress this object emphasises the multicultural and cosmopolitan nature of the region.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> For more about the multicultural nature of Northwestern Arabian cities, see chapter 4, section 4.2.

<sup>135</sup> Dalley also implied (but never explicitly stated) that the al-Hambra cube might have been used to be sworn upon in the Neo-Babylonian period, but this is based on the Mesopotamian evidence for the deity Šalmu, and might not reflect ‘Arab’ or Taymanite practices (Dalley 1986: 92-94).

<sup>136</sup> Two more examples of the multicultural nature of this region are a rock relief found near Tayma dated to either the Neo-Babylonian or the Achaemenid period, which appears to demonstrate a knowledge of the art found at the Neo-Assyrian palaces (Jacobs & Macdonald 2009), and a cartouches of Rameses III found at Tayma (Tebes 2017: 11).

There is evidence for such multicultural interactions in relation to Te'elḥunu's religious role, as her title *apkallatu* was an Akkadian term, and not an Arabian one. This points to cultural interaction and exchange in terms of linguistics, and might suggest that other aspects of the religion of Te'elḥunu were multicultural.<sup>137</sup>

In a later time period, the Safaitic deities (from the region of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula and South Syria, during the first century BCE to the fourth century CE) were conceptualised in an interesting manner. In a discussion about the need to move away from identifying ancient deities with celestial bodies, Macdonald has raised the possibility that Arabian deities from the Safaitic period were not perceived of in anthropomorphic terms.<sup>138</sup> This abstract idea of divinities is a tantalising concept, and would be a radically different conceptualisation of the gods in comparison to Mesopotamian deities. However, there is no evidence that this was the case in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula during the Neo-Assyrian period. The determinatives of the 'Arab' gods indicate their divinity, not their gender. Simply because the gender of the 'Arab' gods were not mentioned by the Assyrians in their texts does not mean that they were not perceived as gendered or anthropomorphic beings by the 'Arab' populations. Without evidence for what the statues of the gods Ḥazā-il requested from Esarhaddon looked like, or even the very nature of how religion or deities were perceived by the 'Arab' groups at the time, all that can be said about these gods is that they were physical representations of 'Arab' deities of some sort.

With this in mind, it is also worth briefly stating that there is no evidence that the gender of the 'Arabs' gods necessitated certain genders for their cultic personnel.<sup>139</sup> There is also no evidence that Te'elḥunu was in the service of any single deity by virtue of her gender. The text from the reign of Assurbanipal explicitly tied Te'elḥunu as the priestess of the 'Arab' goddess Dilbad, but it is unlikely that this text was reflective of actual events that took place during the time of Assurbanipal's grandfather Sennacherib. Therefore, Te'elḥunu cannot be tied to any particular god simply due to her gender, and it would be wrong to suggest that she should be tied to any specific god more generally.

In South Arabia, cultic centres were an important aspect of both identity and politics.<sup>140</sup> New cult centres would be established in order to solidify a particular

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<sup>137</sup> Such linguistic interaction and exchange has been observed by Al-Jallad 2020.

<sup>138</sup> Macdonald 2012: 264. n. 17. The wider discussion is cause for reflection, as Macdonald calls for scholars to move away from the Greco-Roman model of assigning deities to celestial bodies, and turn to other conceptualisations of deities (Macdonald 2012: 263-264).

<sup>139</sup> This is counter to the suggestion by Borger, where male and female rulers reigned side by side over the 'Arabs', with the male rulers representing the earthly power, and the female rulers representing the religion (Borger 1957: 10). There were male rulers who rule at the same time as female rulers in the Arabian Peninsula, but they did not rule over the same population. In RINAP 4 1 iv62-69, Iapa' and Baslu are listed as ruling over their own cities, whilst the male rulers in the same list were leaders of their own separate populations.

<sup>140</sup> See Figure 2 in chapter 1 for the location of this region. South Arabia may have participated in very different religious practices within these cultic centres, especially in comparison to that of the Assyrian heartland. Yet the religious practices from this region can act as another comparison for the 'Queens of the Arabs' (Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 198; Hoyland 2002; Magee 2014).

message from a monarch and would emphasise the importance of social cohesion in this region of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>141</sup> There are a few examples of sanctuaries and temples from the Northwest Peninsula which indicate a similar situation.<sup>142</sup> The temple at Qasr al-Hambra in Tayma (where the al-Hambra cube and stele were found) might have been for the worship of Šalmu.<sup>143</sup> At al-‘Ula the most significant building was a temple with statues which were larger-than-life-sized and might date from the Neo-Babylonian period, which Hausleiter has interpreted as figures of gods.<sup>144</sup> As there was a cultic centre at Tayma, it is likely there was one at Adummatu.

In a further similarity to the Mesopotamian model about religious practices, several ‘Arab’ gods were identified as being tied to specific towns. The town Al-‘Ula was tied to Dhu-Ghabit, and Tayma was tied to the cult of Šalmu whilst also was seen as the centre of moon worship.<sup>145</sup> Based upon the list of deities provided in Esarhaddon’s royal inscriptions, Adummatu is seen by modern scholars as the religious centre of Atarsamayain.<sup>146</sup> This assertion has been made due to Thamudic material from the fifth and fourth centuries onto the seventh century.<sup>147</sup> I am reluctant to use this material as I do not believe that this reflects the situation at the time of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. In the Thamudic model, a single god was elevated and related to a single location. The six gods requested by Ḥazā-il rather points to several gods of equal status being worshipped at Adummatu. If there was one deity which was more important than the others, I would expect that only one of these gods would be returned. The return of six therefore points to all of these deities being important to the ‘Arabs’ under Ḥazā-il and Te’elḥunu. The Assyrian royal inscriptions do not describe Adummatu as a centre for religion. It is therefore difficult to say that this was an aspect unique to Adummatu, or if every urban centre (or even nomadic group) worshipped the six deities listed by Esarhaddon.

In ancient Oman there was a different expression of religion, as there were cultic sites that were not centred around a building, but centred on topographical aspects in the landscape. Reade suggested the boulder of Haṣāt bin Ṣalt was a natural monument that in the third or second millennium BCE was related to the worship of a mountain or to a deity associated with this mountain.<sup>148</sup> Throughout

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<sup>141</sup> Magee 2014: 239.

<sup>142</sup> For outside the Northwest Peninsula, see Parr 1993; Potts 1990; Boucharlat 1995.

<sup>143</sup> Dalley 1986; Hausleiter 2011: 115-116. See figure 2 in chapter 1 for the location of Tayma. See figure 29 in this chapter for the al-Hambra cube.

<sup>144</sup> Hausleiter 2012: 827.

<sup>145</sup> This is based on Taymanite graffiti from the late fifth and fourth centuries found in and around Tayma (Macdonald 1995: 1361; Edens & Bawden 1989: 67-68.). Different views on Nabonidus’ sojourn to Tayma can be found in: Lambert 1972; Dayton 1970: 254; Kuhrt 2002; Van de Mierop 2007.

<sup>146</sup> RINAP 4 1 1 iv1-16; Macdonald 1995: 1360. This appears to be following Eph’al, who stated that the Assyrians describe Adummatu as a religious centre, but provided no evidence for this (Eph’al 1982: 120).

<sup>147</sup> Retsö 2003: 601.

<sup>148</sup> Reade 2000: 133-134.

ancient Oman there was an association between mountains (or high places) and religion, and a similar situation may have been present in the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.<sup>149</sup> Again, it is important not to project this scenario onto the ‘Arabs’ at the opposite end of the Peninsula, and who are separated by thousands of years. This merely illustrated an alternative approach to discussing religious sites where the statues of the ‘Arab’ gods may have sat – not in a temple, but rather in connection to a topographical feature of the landscape. As Adummatu has not been excavated to the Neo-Assyrian layer, it is certainly possible that there was no temple that acted as the centre for religion in this city, but instead a topographical feature acted as the main cultic site. It is also possible that such a topographical feature was not recognised as a cultic centre by the Assyrians, and therefore was not recorded in the Assyrian evidence. I do not believe this was the case, and based on the excavations at Tayma, it is likely that any cultic and religious activities of Te’elḥunu centred around a temple.

There is very little evidence that could provide similarities with examples across the Arabian Peninsula in the pre-Islamic period. Like in the previous sections, this does not mean there were more differences than similarities, but that the evidence simply does not exist to demonstrate either differences or similarities. There is no evidence for: kings or rulers acting underneath Te’elḥunu who also had strong religious roles; pilgrimage routes through the Peninsula; the anthropomorphism of the representations of the ‘Arab’ deities; or that topographical locations served as cultic centres. Due to the archaeological evidence at Tayma, I believe there was a cultic or religious site at Adummatu, but it is unclear how an ‘Arab’ ruler based there would interact with this cult. This appears to be the only similarity with the material regarding Te’elḥunu’s religious role. Unlike the other two case studies, there is an important difference between the pre-Islamic Arabian material and the evidence for Te’elḥunu’s religious roles. The Thamudic material demonstrates that single deities could be related to specific towns, but when Ḥazā-il asked for his deities back, he received six. This implies that these deities were taken from Te’elḥunu during Sennacherib’s campaign against her, and that it was recognised that Adummatu needed six deities returned. It is likely that Adummatu was in fact a polytheistic centre, in the sense that no single deity was elevated to a special status and specifically connected to the site during the Neo-Assyrian period. Finally, this section has acted as a reminder that the religious communities in the Arabian Peninsula could function very differently from Assyria, and the evidence from this region must always be taken into account in any discussion of the ‘Arabs’.

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<sup>149</sup> Reade 2000: 134-137.

## 5.4. SUMMARY

The religious sphere of power represents a small part of Mann's 'ideological' sphere of power. This sphere encapsulates an overarching set of practices carried out by institutions or individuals in order to increase a mutual trust between those in power and those who are controlled by this power.<sup>150</sup> The 'ideological' sphere of power is divided into two: 'morale' and 'transcendent' aspects. Mann described the 'morale' aspect as the technique used to intensify the cohesion and confidence of an established social group.<sup>151</sup> Unfortunately, there is no evidence of such 'morale' aspects within the populations ruled by the 'Queens of the Arabs'. Instead, there are glimpses of Mann's second category of the 'ideological' sphere of power: 'transcendent'. Mann defined this as a sacred form of authority normally set apart and above the more secular structures of ideological power – in other words, the realm of religion.<sup>152</sup> As Mann's 'IEMP' model could not be applied directly, it has simply served to identify another aspect of Te'elḥunu's power that might not have otherwise been discussed in full.

In comparison to the military and economic roles, there is much less evidence for the religious roles of the 'Queens of the Arabs'. The only direct evidence relating any of the 'Queens of the Arabs' to a religious role is in a series of texts that demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of Te'elḥunu's titulary during the reign of Esarhaddon. As such, this chapter should be seen as an investigation into the religious roles of Te'elḥunu – we simply do not know if the other 'Queens of the Arabs' had the same religious roles. Te'elḥunu is referred to as 'Apkallatu', and this has been demonstrated to be one of her titles. This hints at a religious role of Te'elḥunu, and by the time of Assurbanipal her role as a *kumirtu* (or 'priestess') superseded her wider role of *šarratu* in the Assyrian mindset.

The Assyrian textual evidence does not include details of what this religious role of Te'elḥunu might entail. In one narrative of further dealings with the 'Arabs', the 'Arab' gods were represented as statues, and the Assyrians viewed these as the gods themselves. However, other than the names of these deities, there is no evidence regarding the exact nature of them. This is also the case with Dilbad, an 'Arab' deity in a dedicatory text from the period of Assurbanipal. However, it is highly likely that the gods mentioned in these texts – and their physical representations in the form of statues – were important to the religious role of Te'elḥunu.

In order to provide greater context for what the religious roles of Te'elḥunu might have entailed, I turned to three comparative case studies: the Assyrian kings; the Assyrian royal women; and evidence from across pre-Islamic Arabia. Not only did these case studies provide wider context, but they also provided three

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<sup>150</sup> Mann 2012: 22-24.

<sup>151</sup> Mann 2012: 24.

<sup>152</sup> Mann 2012: 23.

alternative models for Te'elḥunu's religious role. I then compared these models with the evidence of the religious role of Te'elḥunu. The first finding of this approach was there was simply very little evidence with which to compare. The evidence for many aspects that are seen as fundamental to the religious roles of 'Arab' leaders, such as the relationship with the divine, and their interaction with cultic temples in the form of dedications, simply has not been preserved to the present day. However, there were certain similarities with each of the three case studies. Te'elḥunu and the Assyrian kings both had some relationship with the divine, as evidenced by their titles. This relationship likely involved some form of 'priestly' duties. Ḥazā-il's request for the return of the same gods which were taken from Te'elḥunu indicate that, much like the Assyrian royal women, the function of Te'elḥunu's religious roles were much like that of their male counterparts. In Tayma, the excavated temple building is likely paralleled in the unexcavated Adummatu, and it is likely that Te'elḥunu had to interact with this cultic centre in some fashion – which can also be seen in the Assyrian kings and Assyrian royal women. There was only one instance of a clear difference, and that was with the tie of individual deities to specific locations (either towns, cities, or topographical features). As Te'elḥunu can be tied to Adummatu, all six of the gods taken by Sennacherib were worshipped at Adummatu. This indicates that all of the gods were (at least perceived by the Assyrians to be) of a roughly equal status, and none of them were explicitly elevated above another. Therefore no one god was explicitly and exclusively tied to Adummatu during this time period. The similarities that can be proven tie the religious roles of Te'elḥunu into a wider cultural milieu, and demonstrates the multicultural nature of the Northwestern Arabian Peninsula in general.

The aspect of not generalising has been the most important aspect of this chapter. Here the evidence has proven that only one woman could be described as having a religious role. Therefore, this chapter has focussed on the religious role of Te'elḥunu. The title of *apkallatu* has proven that there was a religious role of some sort, but even after a comparison with the religious roles of the Assyrian kings, the Assyrian royal women, and the archaeological evidence from the Arabian Peninsula, the exact nature of this has been difficult to determine. What has been clear is that not only was Te'elḥunu a *šarratu* ('female king') and not a *kumirtu* ('priestess'), but her religious role indicated by the title *apkallatu* ('wise woman') cannot be applied to any other 'Queen of the Arabs'.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The recording of female rulers of ‘Arab’ populations in the Assyrian textual material is remarkable. There are no other references of women who embodied a form of rulership identifiable to the Assyrians as ‘kingship’. These women were best described by the Akkadian term *šarratu*, which should be translated as ‘female king’.<sup>1</sup> They were able to wield power within their own communities, and their inter-regional activities resulted in their inclusion in the narratives of the royal inscriptions of Neo-Assyrian kings. The actions they carried out in these inscriptions demonstrate their military, economic, and religious roles. As my analysis was inspired by the ‘IEMP’ model of Mann, I will begin by critically assessing this tool in relation to the analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ (section 6.1). In section 6.2 I will describe the three key results of my dissertation: the misconceptions of the ‘Arabs’ by the Assyrians, the misconceptions of the ‘Arabs’ by modern scholars, and the need to treat the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as individuals. In the spirit of treating these women as individuals, section 6.3 will provide a chronological summary of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and their roles. Finally, section 6.4 will provide an overall summary and suggestions for future research.

### 6.1. A CRITICAL LOOK AT MANN

Before moving to conclusions about the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, I would like to spend some time assessing Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model. The main strength of this model is that it has concretely outlined some key areas for ruling a population. These concrete themes allowed for an assessment of the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ based on the evidence available. The most visible role relating to these women was the military roles of Samsi, Te’elḫunu, Iapa’, Baslu, and Adiyē. When using the ‘IEMP’ model as a framework, it was also clear that many of these texts also revealed the economic roles of Zabibê, Samsi, and Tabū’a. These two roles fit very clearly within Mann’s ‘military’ and ‘economic’ spheres of power. However, there is only evidence for one half of the ‘Ideological’ sphere of power according to this model: the ‘transcendent’ aspect of this sphere. This included the religious roles of rulers, and as such the ‘ideological’ sphere of power could only be used as inspiration for the theme of religious roles. There was only one ‘Queen of the Arabs’ who had evidence of her religious role: Te’elḫunu. Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model has therefore proven to be a useful heuristic tool for identifying three key themes that were vital for the roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.4.

A key finding of this research is that it was impossible to separate Mann's 'Political' sphere of power from the military, economic, or religious roles. Every inclusion of the 'Queens of the Arabs' was a political action by the Assyrians, as the scribes and artists could have chosen to omit them entirely from their texts. The Assyrian royal inscriptions are well known for their manipulations of events, and the inclusion of these women had to serve a specific political ideal that the Assyrian king was trying to portray. It is therefore not the 'political' sphere of the 'Queens of the Arabs' that is most visible in the Assyrian texts, but the 'political' sphere of the Assyrians. This is due to the nature of our sources, as there are no textual sources from the 'Queens of the Arabs' or their populations, and it is impossible to determine many of the motivations behind their actions.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of the interactions described between the Assyrians and the 'Arabs' were intended to emphasise how the Assyrians were politically superior. However, there are two clear examples of 'Queens of the Arabs' exercising their 'political' sphere of power in a manner that caused an Assyrian king to be lenient towards them. Zabibê expressed her 'political' sphere of power through her gift to Tiglath-pileser III, which was given in order to try to placate the Assyrians and to dissuade the Assyrian king from violently campaigning against her and the population she ruled over.<sup>3</sup> Her political motivation was to keep her community safe from the destructive Assyrians through peaceful actions. This is the same with Samsi, who kept her position as 'Queen of the Arabs' through the political act of sending a gift to Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>4</sup>

In comparison, the Assyrian kings exercised their 'political' sphere of power in every interaction with the 'Queens of the Arabs'. The gifts of Zabibê and Samsi were included in the royal inscriptions in order to demonstrate the sheer extent of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II's power.<sup>5</sup> The defeat of Samsi was included by Tiglath-pileser III partially to demonstrate that he could be merciful to rulers who were female, but was largely to emphasise how Tiglath-pileser III could defeat a large army.<sup>6</sup> Te'elḥunu's defeat is a little more ambiguous in Sennacherib's annals, since it is a broken text. Yet its inclusion served the same purpose as other descriptions of defeating foreign rulers: the supremacy of Assyria across the entire world. Her inclusion in the later texts of Esarhaddon was to demonstrate the supremacy of his father.<sup>7</sup> Esarhaddon also used Tabū'a's narrative to illustrate several positive aspects of his rule. The first was that he was merciful, as her imposition as ruler over all the other 'Arab' rulers was done alongside the return of gods that his father had taken from the 'Arabs'. The second was that he understood 'Arab' culture enough to impose a female ruler rather than a male one,

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.1.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>5</sup> See chapter 4, sections 4.5.1. and 4.5.2.

<sup>6</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>7</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.4.

and finally that this would avoid a costly military campaign.<sup>8</sup> Iapa' and Baslu were included as part of a more traditional narrative where the message was to express just how many rulers Esarhaddon had defeated, as well as just how far Esarhaddon's influence extended.<sup>9</sup> Adiyē's inclusion was also part of a demonstration of how many rulers Assurbanipal had defeated, and the unique relief of dead, dying, and tortured 'Arab' women was created as a specific response to Adiyē's role in the first 'Arab' campaign of Assurbanipal.<sup>10</sup> This relief would not have normally been produced, since it violated Assyrian artistic norms of depicting women in physically violent scenes. Assurbanipal commissioned this scene to send the message that no matter how different a society was from Assyria, they would be treated without mercy if they resisted Assyria. The relief also sent the message to the 'Arab' rulers that their future was under Assyrian control.<sup>11</sup> With every 'Queen of the Arabs' there was a careful curation of the specific message that the Assyrian king wanted to project, and this left little room for expressions of the 'political' sphere of power expressed by the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

This is the main problem of following Mann's 'IEMP' model of power, as all the sources that may allow for expressions of the 'political' sphere of power by the 'Queens of the Arabs' are fundamentally flawed. The textual sources are from the perspective of the Assyrians, and the narratives of these women were themselves expressions of the 'political' sphere of power of the Assyrian king. Every description of events that mentioned the 'Queens of the Arabs' (or 'Arabs' more generally) were manifestations of a political worldview that was distinctly Assyrian. The very inclusion of these women in the Assyrian material was a political act, as well their exclusion. Their exclusion from the Assyrian palace reliefs was indicative of the Assyrian worldview that royal women should not be in the same scene as physical violence.<sup>12</sup> This 'etic' lens means I am not just analysing an ancient culture with a distance through time, but also with a layer of Assyrian interpretation and attempts to understand 'Arab' culture. Whilst the archaeological evidence from the Arabian Peninsula does not add to the evidence of the 'political' sphere of power for the 'Queens of the Arabs' in their own communities, it does reveal the motivations behind the actions of the Assyrians.<sup>13</sup> This context has been vital, as the motivation for interactions with the Arabian Peninsula were not explicitly made in the Assyrian material. However, without textual sources from the 'Arab' perspective, it is therefore impossible to separate the 'political' sphere of power of the 'Queens of the Arabs' into its own analytical category.

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>9</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

<sup>10</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

<sup>11</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

<sup>12</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.

<sup>13</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.1.

## 6.2. KEY RESEARCH RESULTS

There have been three recurring themes in this analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. The first is that there were Assyrian misconceptions from the beginning of their interactions with the ‘Arab’ populations, but Assyrian knowledge of the ‘Arabs’ evolved over time (section 6.2.1). The second was that studies of ‘Arabs’ in the Neo-Assyrian period have been hampered by modern scholars’ misconceptions (section 6.2.2), and this can only be ameliorated by the third theme: the need for assessing these women as individuals, and not in generalisations.

### 6.2.1. ASSYRIAN MISCONCEPTIONS AND THEIR DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF ‘ARAB’ SOCIETY

There is no textual evidence from the perspective of the ‘Arab’ societies that the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ ruled over.<sup>14</sup> There is only evidence from the Assyrian perspective, which severely limited analysis of these female rulers. These women were only mentioned in sources when they were in contact with the Assyrians, whether through warfare or by trade.<sup>15</sup> Due to this, any misconceptions or misunderstandings of ‘Arab’ society by the Assyrians hindered analysis of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’.

The very title of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ showed confusion over how to classify the ‘Arabs’, as the determinatives fluctuated between KUR and LÚ. There was also confusion as to Te’elḫunu’s name. Chapter five explained that her title *apkallatu* was mistaken by the Assyrians as her name, and this was how she was referred to in the texts of Esarhaddon. There was a cultural and linguistic barrier in place here, as the Assyrians were unable to properly differentiate between a personal name and the title of a ruler.<sup>16</sup>

In terms of Tabū’a, Esarhaddon had a better understanding of ‘Arab’ society, but was still unclear as to their social structure. Despite his royal inscriptions giving both the determinatives KUR and LÚ for the title ‘Queens of the Arabs’, Esarhaddon clearly believed that imposing a single female ruler over all of the ‘Arab’ rulers would placate the entire population. This indicates two aspects of the Assyrian understanding of ‘Arab’ society. The first is that Esarhaddon by this point knew that there were multiple rulers of the ‘Arabs’, which was a development from the discussions of Zabibê, Samsi, and Te’elḫunu, who were all described as the single rulers of all the ‘Arabs’ in the Northwest Peninsula. The

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<sup>14</sup> See chapter 2.

<sup>15</sup> In addition, these references were only included when they were seen to fit the message of the overall inscription. See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.2 for a discussion of this issue with regards to Samsi and Zabibê.

<sup>16</sup> See chapter 5, section 5.1.

second is that multiple ‘Arab’ rulers could be amenable to being ruled by a single ruler of Esarhaddon’s choosing. Finally, Esarhaddon was confident that because he recognised that female rulers existed in ‘Arab’ society, imposing a female ruler of his choosing would be the simple solution to placating the ‘Arabs’. It appears that this was not enough of a reason for the local rulers to follow Tabū’a, and there were clearly societal expectations, norms, behaviours, and machinations that have not survived in the textual record but played an important role in the non-acceptance of Tabū’a as ruler over all of the ‘Arab’ kings.<sup>17</sup>

Chapter three demonstrated Iapa’ and Baslu that the Assyrians were not ignorant of all the groups modern scholars would consider ‘Arab’, as both of these women were given titles in relation to single cities, rather than ‘Arab’.<sup>18</sup> As outlined in chapter one, section 1.4, ‘Arab’ could refer to many different groups of people, and the meaning of this term has changed throughout history.<sup>19</sup> In the Neo-Assyrian period, the Assyrians viewed those from the Northwest Arabian Peninsula as ‘Arabs’, but the populations in the Eastern Peninsula were not included in this designation. I suggested in chapter three, section 3.2.3 that this was because Assyria and the Eastern Arabian Peninsula had a long history of cultural interaction, and therefore Assyria would have had a better understanding of how society in this region functioned.<sup>20</sup> Esarhaddon would have known that these female rulers were in control of specific cities, but Sennacherib’s knowledge about the Northwest Arabian Peninsula was not as detailed as that of the Eastern Peninsula, and thus Te’elḫunu was given the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’.

The misconceptions of ‘Arab’ society by the Assyrians cannot be overstated, as they have played an important role in later depictions and research regarding the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. This is even more important considering there is only Assyrian textual evidence, and the Assyrians’ misconceptions can greatly impact how these women are interpreted.

## 6.2.2. MODERN MISCONCEPTIONS AND THEIR IMPACT

Compounding the problem of Assyrian misconceptions has been the recurring theme of modern scholars’ misunderstandings and – in some cases – orientalist stereotypes of ‘Arabs’ that have influenced the discussions of this group.

The most evident of these is the frequent use of ‘nomad’ in place of ‘Arab’. Nomadism was an important part of ‘Arab’ society, but there is very little place for nuance in some modern works. Nomadism is part of a spectrum and to refer to all ‘Arabs’ as a ‘nomad’ is misleading.<sup>21</sup> This is due to incorrect modern notions

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<sup>17</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>18</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>19</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.4.

<sup>20</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>21</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.2.

that ‘Arabs’ in the Arabian desert have a direct relationship to all the nomadic Bedouin tribes. I have therefore been careful to discuss populations that are defined as ‘Arab’ by the Assyrians as only ‘Arab’, and to try to separate the notion of nomadism from this concept in my discussion. The only exceptions have been Iapa’ and Baslu, who were not called ‘Arab’, but ‘queen of the city Diḥrani’ and ‘queen of the city Iḥilum’, respectively.<sup>22</sup> These women, despite not called ‘Arab’ by the Assyrians, have been included to further enhance the context of the Arabian Peninsula, and provided evidence that female rulers could operate outside of the Northwest Arabian Peninsula.

The titles *apkallatu* and *kumirtu* have caused more confusion, since despite their use for only one woman, they have been applied uncritically to all of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in order to describe them as priestesses.<sup>23</sup> There is no evidence that all of these women held religious titles or positions, and to describe all of them as ‘priestesses’ also does an injustice to the original title *apkallatu* in Assyrian culture. *Apkallatu* has connotations beyond being a ‘priestess’, as the title-holder had a connection to ancient and divine knowledge such as the sages of Adapa.<sup>24</sup> There is a need for preciseness about these women, and I have ensured that I only ascribe specific roles and titles to the women for whom there is evidence.

Finally, none of the modern scholarship has engaged with the role gender played in the interactions between the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ and the Assyrians. Part of this is due to the reaction of the Assyrians themselves, as their treatment of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ is very similar to that of foreign male rulers. This has in turn led to the misconception in Assyriology that there was nothing more of note about the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. I have proved that this Assyrian response was interesting in and of itself, and worthy of investigation. This has resulted in an analysis of the remarkable relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured women, with the result that there was a specifically gendered message to both female and male ‘Arab’ rulers. This message was that the future of the ‘Arabs’, particularly if they were ruled by women, was at the mercy of the Assyrians. In addition, there was a wider message to non-‘Arab’ foreign rulers: no matter how different their culture was to Assyria, they would be treated in the same harsh manner.<sup>25</sup> Samsi was used in the royal inscriptions to demonstrate how Tiglath-pileser III was able to uphold the Assyrian value of protecting women from physical violence by allowing her to survive after her surrender.<sup>26</sup> Their gender meant that they made a great impression upon the memories of the Assyrian kings, as Te’elḥunu was remembered in the royal inscriptions of Assurbanipal – the grandson of

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<sup>22</sup> These titles have been discussed in detail in chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

<sup>23</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.1.2.

<sup>24</sup> See chapter 5, section 5.1.

<sup>25</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

<sup>26</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

Sennacherib, who was the king who defeated her in battle.<sup>27</sup> The memory of previous ‘Queens of the Arabs’ who were involved in a battle against the Assyrians was part of the motivation for the palace relief of dead, dying, and tortured women. The ‘Queens of the Arabs’ cannot be discussed without assessing the role their gender played in interactions with the Assyrians.

### **6.2.3. THE NEED FOR INDIVIDUALITY, NOT GENERALISATIONS**

The final theme that has arisen is the need to discuss the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as individuals, not as a group. This allowed for a more accurate picture of these women than in previous scholarship.

This approach has demonstrated that not every ‘Queen of the Arabs’ had military, economic, or religious roles. Not every ‘Queen of the Arabs’ led armies in battle, and not every woman had a demonstrable economic role. Indeed, only one ‘Queen of the Arabs’ had a religious role. The approach based on individuals and not generalisations has allowed for a more nuanced image of the Arabian Peninsula, where the ‘Arabs’ were likely several groups ruled by different leaders. These women were only grouped together under the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’ due to the misunderstanding by the Assyrians about who the ‘Arabs’ were.

## **6.3. CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARIES**

In light of two of the recurring themes of this dissertation – the changing understanding of ‘Arabs’ in the Assyrian material, and the need to avoid generalisations – I will give summaries of the research results not according to theme, but chronologically. Mann’s ‘IEMP’ model was key in identifying the key roles of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, but whilst many of them shared a title, there was no single woman who demonstrated all military, economic, and religious roles.

### **6.3.1. TIGLATH-PILESER III: ZABIBÉ AND SAMSI**

In the royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III there was mention of two women given the title ‘Queen of the Arabs’: Zabibé and Samsi. Zabibé is the earliest mention of a ‘Queen of the Arabs’, and there is evidence for her economic role.<sup>28</sup> She was included in a tribute list, but due to the way it was written, it is difficult to ascertain which objects she sent to Assyria (although it is likely that she sent

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<sup>27</sup> See chapter 5, section 5.1.

<sup>28</sup> This is discussed in more detail in chapter 4, section 4.5.1.

the dromedary camels in the list). The timing of this tribute list suggests that Zabibê sent items not as part of tribute, but as a single payment to placate Tiglath-pileser III, who had been encroaching into the region and caused devastation in neighbouring regions. Zabibê likely saw this violence and sent a gift to Tiglath-pileser III to stop him from continuing into her region, and thus endangering her people. Zabibê had control over the resources of her population, and could use these items to change the fortunes of her people.

Samsi exhibited a military role in the summary inscriptions.<sup>29</sup> Whilst her exact military role is difficult to determine, from the palace reliefs there is the possibility that she was present on battlefield. This is directly counter to the Assyrian cultural norms, as Assyrian royal women were expected to be kept away from physical violence. In the summary inscriptions is a literary juxtaposition between the narrative of Samsi and that of the ruler Paqaha. Paqaha was defeated in battle, killed, and replaced by an Assyria-friendly ruler. Samsi's narrative followed this, and despite Samsi supposedly breaking an oath and rebelling (according to the annals) in the same manner as Paqaha, she was allowed to live.<sup>30</sup> I suggested that this was to reflect Assyrian gender norms, as Tiglath-pileser III was avoiding further physical violence against a woman by allowing her to live.

### 6.3.2. SARGON II: SAMSI

Samsi is also mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Sargon II.<sup>31</sup> She was mentioned in a complicated passage that mentioned her, a king of Egypt, and a Sabaean ruler, who were called the 'kings of (the) ocean shore and of (the) desert'.<sup>32</sup> These rulers sent 'tribute' to Sargon II. This time, as Samsi became a vassal of Assyria after her defeat under Tiglath-pileser III, her payment was probably a tribute payment and not a gift. Again, a 'Queen of the Arabs' was in control of the resources of her people in order to ensure a secure future and maintain the peace she experienced with Assyria for approximately seventeen years.

In addition to the royal inscriptions is an intriguing memorandum that might be dated to the reign of Sargon II.<sup>33</sup> In this document (SAA 11 162), fugitives and camels were recorded as transferred to a woman called Samsi. I have treated this woman as the same as the 'Queen of the Arabs'. This text illustrated that she was an authority who was able to receive fugitives. This is therefore a concrete

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<sup>29</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>30</sup> Although this was under the supervision of a *qēpu* and a garrison of soldiers. See chapter 3, section 3.2.1.

<sup>31</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.2.

<sup>32</sup> Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11, line 7.

<sup>33</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

expression of Samsi's economic role, and a demonstration of her successfully ensuring the security of the 'Arabs' under her purview.

### 6.3.3. SENNACHERIB: IATI'E, AND TE'ELḪUNU

In the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib are two brief mentions of two 'Queens of the Arabs'. The first is Iati'e, who was mentioned in order to identify her brother Basqānu.<sup>34</sup> In Assyrian royal women's titles, the woman's position or status was based on their relationship with male rulers. With Iati'e, her gender was swapped, as the status of Basqānu – a man who was an ally of Marduk-aplu-iddina during his rebellion against Assyria – was due to his relationship with a female ruler. I could not determine any military, economic, or religious roles related to Iati'e.

Te'elḫunu is the second 'Queen of the Arabs' mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib, but is only mentioned in a broken and damaged text.<sup>35</sup> Originally the text detailed the events of Te'elḫunu's defeat, which included mention of Te'elḫunu and Ḫazā-il fleeing to the city Adummatu. Te'elḫunu therefore had a military role similar to that of Samsi, but it cannot be ascertained whether she was on the battlefield. The mention of the town Kapānu in relation to this battle indicated that the fate of Adummatu impacted multiple sedentary populations in the Northwest of the Arabian Peninsula.

### 6.3.4. ESARHADDON: TE'ELḪUNU, TABŪ'A, IAPA' AND BASLU

The royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon have the largest number of attestations of female 'Arab' rulers, with Te'elḫunu, Tabū'a, Iapa', and Baslu all attested. Te'elḫunu and Tabū'a were mentioned in the same narrative, and Te'elḫunu was mentioned to offer context for Esarhaddon's interactions with Ḫazā-il and Tabū'a.<sup>36</sup> Te'elḫunu was defeated by Sennacherib, Esarhaddon's father, and was taken to Assyria alongside booty taken in war. Ḫazā-il then travelled to Esarhaddon to ask for the return of the 'Arab' gods. Esarhaddon allowed this, and imposed Tabū'a as the ruler over all the 'Arabs'.

The texts from the period of Esarhaddon give the only concrete evidence for the religious role of any of the 'Queens of the Arabs', as Te'elḫunu is given a different name.<sup>37</sup> At some point there was a misunderstanding, as her title *apkallatu* was mistaken for her name. This Akkadian term meant 'wise woman', and was a loanword in 'Arab' culture. In Assyrian culture, the *apkallu* (the masculine form of this title) had a deep spiritual and religious meaning, and using

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<sup>34</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.4.2.

<sup>35</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.4.

<sup>36</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.4.

<sup>37</sup> See chapter 5, section 5.1.

it as an epithet connoted a relationship with deep time and primordial knowledge. This was likely not how the term *apkallatu* was used in the Arabian Peninsula, but there is no evidence that would explain the precise meaning of this term in ‘Arab’ culture during this period. Based on the evidence from the Arabian Peninsula, it may be that the role of the *apkallatu* was very different from that expected in Assyria.

The evidence regarding Tabū’a demonstrated the need for the Assyrians to control access to the economic resources which flowed through the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>38</sup> She was also the most important case study for the need to incorporate gender into the analysis of these women. Tabū’a was raised in Sennacherib’s palace, and Esarhaddon chose her to rule over all the leaders of the ‘Arabs’. It was not unusual for Assyrian kings to impose individuals who were raised in Assyria as rulers over traditionally anti-Assyrian populations, but the question is why Esarhaddon chose a woman. I demonstrated that Tabū’a was chosen partly due to Esarhaddon’s knowledge of female rulers in the region, but also because she would have been raised as an Assyrian royal woman. This meant she was socialised to be kept away from physical violence, and Esarhaddon might have hoped Tabū’a would have avoided military conflicts with Assyria as much as possible. The need for a prolonged peace with the ‘Arabs’ was to ensure the resources of the Arabian Peninsula continued to travel unimpeded to Assyria. Therefore, Tabū’a’s economic role was to ensure trade continued with Assyria, and was an economic role tied to Assyria rather than the ‘Arabs’.

Iapa’ and Baslu must be discussed as a unit, as they only appear together in the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon in a list of rulers from Bāzu who fought against him as a coalition.<sup>39</sup> Iapa’ and Baslu therefore had clear military roles. These women were mentioned in the same manner as the male rulers in this list, and were included in the total of ‘8 kings’. This proved that these female rulers with the title *šarratu* should be viewed as ‘female kings’. The location of Bāzu was along the Persian Gulf in the East of the Arabian Peninsula, this indicating the phenomenon of female rulers existed beyond the Northwest Arabian Peninsula. Finally, these two women appeared in the same narrative, and this demonstrated that two female rulers could operate at the same time, and were rulers of separate cities.

### 6.3.5. ASSURBANIPAL: TE’ELḪUNU AND ADIYE

Te’elḫunu was mentioned in a dedicatory text aimed at the ‘Arab’ goddess Dilbad, where Assurbanipal asked for the help of the goddess in defeating and placating

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<sup>38</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.5.3.

<sup>39</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

the ‘Arabs’ as she had for Sennacherib and Esarhaddon.<sup>40</sup> This is the only text that preserved Te’elḥunu’s full name, but her title transformed to *kumirtu*, or ‘priestess’. The misunderstanding of Te’elḥunu’s name had been rectified, but she was remembered as a priestess, not a ‘queen’. By the time of Assurbanipal, Te’elḥunu only had religious roles, and cultic activities were seen as the most important aspect of her position to the Assyrian scribes.

Adiye appeared in two variations of the same account of the first ‘Arab’ campaign of Ashurbanipal.<sup>41</sup> In one version she was described as ‘defeated’, and her property was burned. This hinted at a military role, but it is difficult to ascertain more. The other version sees Adiye described as the ‘wife of Uaiate’, and this is the only indication that any of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ were married. Contact with this female ruler resulted in the commissioning of a unique palace relief from Assurbanipal’s North Palace in Nineveh that depicts dead, dying, and tortured ‘Arab’ women. This is the only depiction of women in such contexts, and had the message that the future of the ‘Arabs’ was in the hands of the Assyrians. This relief also had the message that no matter how different a culture was to the Assyrians – even if the culture had female rulers – they would be treated in the same manner as every other population.

## 6.4. SUMMARY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This dissertation has determined the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ cannot be discussed as a single unit, as they were potentially rulers of separate population groups. Each of these groups may have differed vastly in their culture and religion, and therefore it is inaccurate to describe all of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ as a single unit. In fact, the only similarity these women had was in the motivations of the Assyrians’ interactions with them. The Assyrian kings wanted to monopolise the trade routes that travelled through the Arabian Peninsula and brought luxury goods like aromatics to Assyria. Doing so required the ‘Arabs’ to become allies. Whether this was done through peaceful means (such as the imposition of Tabū’a as ruler over all the ‘Arab’ kings), the threat of violence (as we see with Zabibê), or military defeat (such as the narrative regarding Samsi), all of these methods had the ultimate goal of ensuring the commodities travelling through the Arabian Peninsula reached Assyria.

The actions the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ participated in reflected three out of the four ‘spheres of power’ outlined by Michael Mann, and these women were therefore rulers in their own right. Amongst the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ we see Te’elḥunu’s title reflected some sort of religious aspect to her rule. Zabibê, Samsi,

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<sup>40</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.1.1.4.

<sup>41</sup> See chapter 3, section 3.2.4.

and Tabū'a were able to control the commodities and resources of their population group. Zabibê, Samsi, Iapa', Baslu, and Adiyê were personally involved on the battlefield against the Assyrians. These women were actively participating in roles that were more akin to what we see in the description of foreign male kings, and the Assyrians reflected this in the title 'female kings' (*šarratu*).

A final brief point is to be made about future research with regards to the 'Queens of the Arabs'. Until further archaeological evidence emerges from the Arabian Peninsula I do not believe much can be added to the analysis of these women. Excavations at Dumat al-Jandal to the Neo-Assyrian layer in particular would be vitally important in order to confirm that this was indeed the famous Adummatu. However, a wider question of who precisely the 'Arabs' were in the Neo-Assyrian textual sources needs a more modern treatment. Such a study would address whether we can indeed include Iapa' and Baslu as 'Queens of the Arabs'. Finally, addressing the masculinities of these women as presented by the Assyrians would be both timely (as masculinities studies is a growing field within Assyriology) and informative as to the Assyrian notions of 'masculinities' in general.

## APPENDIX A: TEXTS

The goal of this appendix is to present the texts that directly relate to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in the most accessible manner. It has been divided into three sections – the first two contain tables that include the name of the text, the ‘Queen of the Arab’ mentioned in the text, museum or excavation numbers, and the reign of the Assyrian king during which the text was written. The third section provides transliterations and translations of the relevant passages of the texts that include the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. I have also included several other passages that relate to Assyrian royal women and ‘Arab’ society.

There are only twenty-eight texts that refer to the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and as such it was necessary to provide the evidence in as full a manner as possible. As mentioned in chapter two, section 2.2, it is striking that so many of the texts are royal inscriptions, with only one falling outside of this genre. A full discussion regarding the issues of all of the different types of evidence can be found in chapter two, sections 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.

## **A.1. TABLE OF TEXTS ACCORDING TO PUBLICATION**

On the following page is a table with the technical information regarding the texts that directly refer to the 'Queens of the Arabs'. I have provided the name of the overall text, but I have not provided the precise line numbers where these women were mentioned. The intention is that the researcher can identify which text they are interested in, and then refer to section A.3 for the passage of interest.

This table orders the texts according to publication number, and here it is easy to see how several women were discussed in a single text.

Text	'Queen(s) of the Arabs' mentioned'	Reign of king text is from	Museum/Excavation Numbers	Findspots
Borger 1996 K3087  K3045  Rm 2.558	Te eljunu	Assurbanipal	K3087, K3045, Rm 2.558	Nineveh
	Tabū a			
Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11	Samsi	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal X 3	Samsi	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal IV 11 & 9	Samsi	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VII 3	Samsi	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VIII 13	Samsi	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
RINAP 1 14-15	Zabibé	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 124961 + BM 132306 (+) DIA 2002.166	Kalhu, SW Palace
RINAP 1 20	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 118908	Kalhu, SW Palace
RINAP 1 27-28	Zabibé	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 115634 + BM 118903	Kalhu, Central Palace
RINAP 1 32	Zabibé	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 118899 + BM 118900	Kalhu, Central Palace
RINAP 1 35	Zabibé	Tiglath-pileser III	Israel Museum 74.49.96a (+) 74.49.96b + private collection (H. Mahboubian)	Luristan, Iran
RINAP 1 42	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	Squeezes: BM 116a-b + BM 122 + BM 124a-b + BM 125a-b. Also reconstructed from copies by Smith.	Kalhu, Central Palace
RINAP 1 44	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	N/A (copies by Layard and Rawlinson only)	Kalhu, Central Palace
RINAP 1 47	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	K3751	Kalhu, Nabû temple?

RINAP 1 48	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 131982	Kalhu, Nabū temple?
RINAP 1 49	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	ND 4301 + ND 4305 + ND 5422	Kalhu, Nabū temple
RINAP 1 53	Samsi	Tiglath-pileser III	AO 11501	Arsilan Tash
RINAP 3 1	lati'e	Sennacherib	BM 113203 + BM 127939 + Rm 2,186 + BM 99046 + VA 8985 + Ki 1902-5-10,1 + Bu 89-4-26,175 + 81-7-27,21 + Bu 89-4-26,39 + Bu 89-4-26,140 + Bu 89-4-26,149	Nineveh and Ashur
RINAP 3 35	Te' eljunu	Sennacherib	VA 3310 + K 8544	Nineveh and Ashur (?)
RINAP 3 213	lati'e	Sennacherib	IM - (Frahm, ISIMU 6 pp. 161-163; pp. 134-141 T variants)	Tarbišu
RINAP 4 1	Te' eljunu Apkallatu)	Esarhaddon	BM 121005 + K 1667 + K 6387 + BM 91030 + A 16962 + A 16963 + VA 3458 + VA 3459 + VA 3640 + VA 3827 + VA 3829 + VA 3826 + VA 3461 + VA 3462 + VA 3463 + Zürich 1937 + BM 121007 + BM 127875 + BM 128334 + BM 134489 + A 35258 (= PA 16) + VA 8425 + Rm 2,184 + Rm 2,384 + BM 99043 + BM 99044 + BM 127872 + BM 127975 + BM 13488 + BM 138195 + BM 138184 + YBC 16224 + A 16925 + A 8135 + A 16928 + A 16927 + A 8132 + K 1695 + VA 3464 + BM 128068 + BM 128091 + BM 128221 + BM 128222 + BM 128232 + BM 128274 + BM 128269 + BM 128279 + BM 128289 + BM 128322 + BM134468 + BM 127879 + BM12751 + BM 128243 + VA 8432 + VA 8423	Nineveh, Ashur, and Susa
RINAP 4 2	Tabu'a	Esarhaddon		Nineveh
	lapa' and Baslu			
RINAP 4 2	Te' eljunu Apkallatu)	Esarhaddon	IM 59046 + BM 91028 + EHE 323 + YBC 2297 + Peabody 6970 + K 10490 + 79-7-8,8 + A 16926	Nineveh

	Tabū'a				
	lapa' and Baslu				
RINAP 4 3	Tabū'a	Esarhaddon	BM 91029 (K 1679 + K 8542 + Bu 89-4-26,29	Nineveh	
RINAP 4 4	Te'elḥunu Apkallatu)	(as Esarhaddon	IM 59047/A (+) IM 59047/B	Nineveh, Northeast end of Nebi Yunus	
RINAP 4 6	Te'elḥunu Apkallatu) Tabū'a	(as Esarhaddon	BM 134465	Nineveh	
RINAP 4 8	lapa' and Baslu	Esarhaddon	Unknown	Nineveh	
RINAP 4 97	Tabū'a	Esarhaddon	Aleppo Museum, number unknown	Til Barsip/Tell Aḥmar	
RINAP 5 8	Adiye	Assurbanipal	Prism G	Nineveh	
RINAP 5 11	Adiye	Assurbanipal	Prism A	Nineveh	
SAA 11 162	Samsi	Sargon II?	K 1265 (= ADD 759); ABL 631	Nineveh	

## **A.2. TABLE OF TEXTS ACCORDING TO ‘QUEENS OF THE ARABS’**

The following pages contain a much longer table that presents the same information as in section A.1, but ordered according to the ‘Queen of the Arab’. This will be more useful as an index for a future researcher, but provides an erroneous first impression that every woman is mentioned in a text separately from each other. It is therefore important to stress to the future researcher to ensure they refer to section A.1 to see if another ‘Queen of the Arabs’ is mentioned in the same text.

'Queen(s) of the Arabs' mentioned'	Text	Reign of king text is from	Museum/Excavation Numbers (imclude composite numbers)	Findspots
Zabibé	RINAP 1 14-15	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 124961 + BM 132306 (+) DIA 2002.166	Kalhu, SW Palace
Zabibé	RINAP 1 27-28	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 115634 + BM 118903	Kalhu, Central Palace
Zabibé	RINAP 1 32	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 118899 + BM 118900	Kalhu, Central Palace
Zabibé	RINAP 1 35	Tiglath-pileser III	Israel Museum 74.49.96a (+) 74.49.96b + private collection (H. Mahboubian)	Luristan, Iran
Samsi	Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Samsi	Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal X 3	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Samsi	Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal IV 11 & 9	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Samsi	Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VII 3	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Samsi	Fuchs 1994: Prunk. Saal VIII 13	Sargon II	Unknown	Khorsabad
Samsi	RINAP 1 20	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 118908	Kalhu, SW Palace

Samsi	RINAP 1 42	Tiglath-pileser III	Squeezes: BM 116a-b + BM 122 + BM 124a-b + BM 125a-b. Also reconstructed from copies by Smith.	Kalhu, Central Palace
Samsi	RINAP 1 44	Tiglath-pileser III	N/A (copies by Layard and Rawlinson only)	Kalhu, Central Palace
Samsi	RINAP 1 47	Tiglath-pileser III	K3751	Kalhu, Nabû temple?
Samsi	RINAP 1 48	Tiglath-pileser III	BM 131982	Kalhu, Nabû temple?
Samsi	RINAP 1 49	Tiglath-pileser III	ND 4301 + ND 4305 + ND 5422	Kalhu, Nabû temple
Samsi	RINAP 1 53	Tiglath-pileser III	AO 11501	Arsilan Tash
Samsi	SAA 11 162	Sargon II?	K 1265 (= ADD 759); ABL 631	Nineveh
lati'e	RINAP 3 1	Sennacherib	BM 113203 + BM 127939 + Rm 2,186 + BM 99046 + VA 8985 + KI 1902-5-10,1 + Bu 89-4-26,175 + 81-7-27,21 + Bu 89-4-26,39 + Bu 89-4-26,140 + Bu 89-4-26,149	Nineveh and Ashur
lati'e	RINAP 3 213	Sennacherib	IM - (Frahm, ISIMU 6 pp. 161-163; pp. 134-141 T variants)	Tarbišu

Te' elhunu	RINAP 3 35	Sennacherib	VA 3310 + K 8544	Nineveh and Ashur (?)
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Te' eljunu (as Apkallatu)	RINAP 4 1	Esarhaddon	<p>BM 121005 + K 1667 + K 6387 + BM 91030 + A 16962 + A 16963 + VA 3458 + VA 3459 + VA 3640 + VA 3827 + VA 3829 + VA 3826 + VA 3461 + VA 3462 + VA 3463 + Zürich 1937 + BM 121007 + BM 127875 + BM 128334 + BM 134489 + A 35258 (= PA 16) + VA 8425 + Rm 2, 184 + Rm 2,384 + BM 99043 + BM 99044 + BM 127872 + BM 127975 + BM 13488 + BM 138195 + BM 138184 + YBC 16224 + A 16925 + A 8135 + A 16928 + A 16927 + A 8132 + K 1695 + VA 3464 + BM 128068 + BM 128091 + BM 128221 + BM 128222 + BM 128232 + BM 128274 + BM 128269 + BM 128279 + BM 128289 + BM 128322 + BM134468 + BM 127879 + BM12751 + BM 128243 + VA 8432 + VA 8423</p>	Nineveh, Ashur, and Susa
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Te' eljunu Apkallatu)	(as RINAP 4 4	Esarhaddon	IM 59047/A (+) IM 59047/B	Nineveh, Northeast end of Nebi Yunus
Te' eljunu Apkallatu)	(as RINAP 4 6	Esarhaddon	BM 134465	Nineveh
Te' eljunu	Borger K3087  K3045  Rm 2.558 1996	Assurbaniyal	K3087, K3045, Rm 2.558	Nineveh

Tabū'a	RINAP 4 1	Esarhaddon	<p>BM 121005 + K 1667 + K 6387 + BM 91030 + A 16962 + A 16963 + VA 3458 + VA 3459 + VA 3640 + VA 3827 + VA 3829 + VA 3826 + VA 3461 + VA 3462 + VA 3463 + Zürich 1937 + BM 121007 + BM 127875 + BM 128334 + BM 134489 + A 35258 (= PA 16) + VA 8425 + Rm 2, 184 + Rm 2,384 + BM 99043 + BM 99044 + BM 127872 + BM 127975 + BM 13488 + BM 138195 + BM 138184 + YBC 16224 + A 16925 + A 8135 + A 16928 + A 16927 + A 8132 + K 1695 + VA 3464 + BM 128068 + BM 128091 + BM 128221 + BM 128222 + BM 128232 + BM 128274 + BM 128269 + BM 128279 + BM 128289 + BM 128322 + BM134468 + BM 127879 + BM12751 + BM 128243 + VA 8432 + VA 8423</p>	Nineveh, Ashur, and Susa
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Tabū`a	RINAP 4 2	Esarhaddon	IM 59046 + BM 91028 + EHE 323 + YBC 2297 + Peabody 6970 + K 10490 + 79-7-8,8 + A 16926	Nineveh
Tabū`a	RINAP 4 3	Esarhaddon	BM 91029 (K 1679 + K 8542 + Bu 89-4-26,29	Nineveh
Tabū`a	RINAP 4 6	Esarhaddon	BM 134465	Nineveh
Tabū`a	RINAP 4 97	Esarhaddon	Aleppo Museum, number unknown	Til Barsip/Teil Ahmar
Tabū`a	Borger 1996 K3087  K3045  Rm 2.558	Assurbanipal	K3087, K3045, Rm 2.558	Nineveh

Iapa' and Baslu	RINAP 4 1	Esarhaddon	<p>BM 121005 + K 1667 + K 6387 + BM 91030 + A 16962 + A 16963 + VA 3458 + VA 3459 + VA 3640 + VA 3827 + VA 3829 + VA 3826 + VA 3461 + VA 3462 + VA 3463 + Zürich 1937 + BM 121007 + BM 127875 + BM 128334 + BM 134489 + A 35258 (= PA 16) + VA 8425 + Rm 2, 184 + Rm 2,384 + BM 99043 + BM 99044 + BM 127872 + BM 127975 + BM 13488 + BM 138195 + BM 138184 + YBC 16224 + A 16925 + A 8135 + A 16928 + A 16927 + A 8132 + K 1695 + VA 3464 + BM 128068 + BM 128091 + BM 128221 + BM 128222 + BM 128232 + BM 128274 + BM 128269 + BM 128279 + BM 128289 + BM 128322 + BM134468 + BM 127879 + BM12751 + BM 128243 + VA 8432 + VA 8423</p>	Nineveh, Ashur, and Susa
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lapa' and Baslu	RINAP 4 2	Esarhaddon	IM 59046 + BM 91028 + EHE 323 + YBC 2297 + Peabody 6970 + K 10490 + 79-7-8,8 + A 16926	Nineveh
lapa' and Baslu	RINAP 4 8	Esarhaddon	Unknown	Nineveh
Adiye	RINAP 5 8	Assurbaniipal	Prism G	Nineveh
Adiye	RINAP 5 11	Assurbaniipal	Prism A	Nineveh

### A.3. TRANSLITERATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

The following transliterations and translations are texts that have been vital for the research of the ‘Queens of the Arabs’. The section begins with those texts that directly mention or refer to these women, and are arranged according to publication. In some cases, several women are mentioned in the same text, and in order to prevent the erroneous image that these different passages were a much longer piece of text, I have provided subheadings to indicate which ‘Queen of the Arabs’ is included in the text.

In section A.3.2. and A.3.3. I have also provided texts that relate to Sammu-rāmat and Naqī’a, Assyrian royal women who have provided an important comparative study for the ‘Queens of the Arabs’, and some of the most important Assyrian texts referring to ‘Arab’ society.

In this section of Appendix A I have provided the texts as they appear in their publications. This means the conventions vary across the different publications, and a full explanation for these should be sought in their original publication. In addition, many of these texts are available at the online project ‘Online Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus’ (ORACC). Some of these texts have been updated on this site, and differ substantially from the printed publication. This is particularly the case with the texts from the SAA series. Even though the online transliterations are probably more accurate, the field of Assyriology still places primacy on the printed publication. For this reason, I have provided the transliterations and translations from the printed volumes.<sup>1</sup> In the cases where the transliterations differ from their online versions, I have provided a url to the text as a footnote.

Many of these texts are very long, particularly in the cases of the Assyrian royal inscriptions. In these instances I have provided here enough of the text to provide context for the event of interest. I have provided the whole text for shorter pieces, such as those from the SAA series.

As a final note, this dissertation was completed prior to the publication of RINAP 2. For this reason I have included the texts as published by Fuchs.

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<sup>1</sup> See Del Turco 2016 for an overview of some of the valid reasons for the discomfort of online editions of ancient texts, but also for some of the main arguments why they should be used more in academic discourse.

### A.3.1. 'QUEENS OF THE ARABS':

**Borger 1996 K3087||K3045||Rm 2.558.<sup>2</sup>**

#### *Te'elḫunu and Tabū'a*

- 1) *a-na* dingir *dil-b[ad ... n]a-mir-tu šá x[*
- 2) *ša it-ti* <sup>1</sup>*ḫa-za*<sup>1</sup>-[dingir XX] <sup>1</sup>*kur a-ri-bi tas-bu-[su ..... ] Á[*
- 3) *ina* šu-min <sup>1</sup>-dingir *sin-pap-meš-s<sup>o</sup>u ad ad dù-ia tam-nu-š[u-ma ta]š-*  
*ku-na bad<sub>5</sub>-[bad<sub>5</sub>*
- 4) *la a-šá-ab-šá it-ti* <sup>1</sup>*un*<sup>1</sup>.<sup>1</sup>*meš kur a-ri-bi taq-bu-ú a-na kur an-šár<sup>ki</sup>*  
*ta-aš-ba<sub>5</sub>-[*
- 5) <sup>1</sup>*an-šár-pap-AŠ XX || [lu]gal kur an-šár<sup>ki</sup> ad ba-nu-u-a mi-gir*  
*dingir-meš [*
- 6) *ša ina pa-làḫ* dingir-meš *u || ù* <sup>dingir</sup>*XV-meš ik-šu-du ni-i[z-mat-su*
- 7) *an-šár ù* <sup>dingir</sup>*utu ina* <sup>giš</sup>*gu-za ad ba-ni-šú ú-š[e-ši-bu-šú*
- 8) *dingir-meš kur-kur šal-lu-ú || ø-ti || tu ú-tir-ru áš-r[u-uš-šú-un*
- 9) *ḫa-za-dingir XX kur a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-š[ú*
- 10) *a-dī maḫ-ri-šú il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-šiq* <sub>še</sub> <sub>-[pi-šú</sub>
- 11) *aš-šú na-dan* <sup>dingir</sup>*iš-tar-šú im-ḫur-šú-ma re-e-mu ir-ši-šu-ma im-*  
*g[u-ur*
- 12) <sup>munus</sup>*te-'e-el-ḫu-nu* <sup>munus</sup>*ku-mir-ta-šá maḫ-ri-tu a-na x(BI-x ŠI[M<sup>3</sup>*  
*[*
- 13) *ina ugu* <sup>munus</sup>*ta-bu-a* <sup>dingir</sup>*utu iš-al-ma um-ma ši-i x [*
- 14) *it-ti* <sup>dingir</sup>*iš-tar-i || ø-šú<sup>4</sup> ú-tir-ma [*

Translation:<sup>5</sup>

- 1) To the goddess Dil[bad ... .. b]rightness of ...[ ... ]
- 2) Who with Ḫazā[-il king of<sup>6</sup>] the land of the Arabs, you were ang[ry ... ] side [...]
- 3) You counted h[im] in the hands (of) Sennacherib, father (of my) father, my creator, (and) you [est]ablished def[eat.]
- 4) You commanded she leave<sup>7</sup> the people of (the) Arab land. To the land Ashur x [ ...]

<sup>2</sup> I have not included the notes provided by Borger in his transliteration.

<sup>3</sup> This may refer to an aromatic, but this has remained untranslated.

<sup>4</sup> Here we can assume that the goddess belongs to Ḫazā-il, as no other female deity is mentioned in relation to the Assyrian kings.

<sup>5</sup> Borger strangely offers no translation of this text. Another English translation is offered by Cogan 1974, but only of one tablet used by Borger. In the face of this difficulty, I offer my own translation.

<sup>6</sup> This is a reconstruction by the author, based on other accounts of this individual's title: RINAP4 1 iv6; RINAP 4 2 ii51; RINAP 4 4 ii'7'; and RINAP 4 6 iii'2'.

<sup>7</sup> Literally 'her (lack of) existence with the Arab people'. The context makes it clear Dilbad left the 'Arabs', rather than died.

- 5) Esarhaddon, king (of the) land Ashur, my father and creator, approved (by the) gods [ ... ]
- 6) Who achieved [his goal] (due to his) reverence (of) the gods and goddesses, [... ]
- 7) Ashur and Šamaš ca[used] (the) throne (of Esarhaddon's) creator [to be full].
- 8) He returned (the) gods (of the) lands (of his) rulership (to) [their holy sit]es.
- 9-10)) Ḫazā-il, *king of the*<sup>8</sup> the land of the Arabs, went to (Esarhaddon) with h[is] audience gift, (and) kissed his fe[et].
- 11) Concerning his appeal (to) gift his goddess, (Esarhaddon) acquired mercy. He a[greed ... ]
- 12) Te'elḫunu, her<sup>9</sup> earlier priestess, to ... ..
- 13) With regard to Tabū'a, he asked Šamaš, saying 'Is she ...? [ ... ]
- 14) He returned with his goddess [ ... ]

**Fuchs 1994: Ann. Saal II 11**

**Samsi**

- 6b) *ša* <sup>1</sup>*Pi-ir-*[']*i šàr māt(kur) Mu-ṣu-ri* <sup>munus</sup>*Sa-a[m]-si šar-ra* <sup>\*\*t'</sup>  
*māt(kur) A-ri*<sup>+10</sup>-*bi* <sup>1</sup>*It-*[']*a-am-ra* <sup>kur</sup>*Sa-ba-*'*a-a*
- 7) *šarrāni* (lugal.meš-ni) *ša a-ḫi'* *tam-tim ù mad-b<sup>o</sup>a'-ri* <sup>!</sup>  
[*ḫurāṣu*(kù.si<sub>22</sub>)] *saḫar.bi kur.ra ni-siq-ti* [abnī(n)]<sub>a4</sub>.meš *šinni*(zú')  
*pīri*(am.[s]i) *zēr*(numu<sup>\*\*n</sup>) <sup>giš</sup>*ušī*(esi) *riqqī*(š[i]m.ḫá) *ka-la-ma*  
*sīsī*(anše.kur[ra].meš)
- 8a) *ibilī*(anše.a.ab.ba.meš) [*m*]'*a'-da-ta-šú-nu* [*a*]*m-ḫur*<sup>+11</sup>

Translation:<sup>12</sup>

6b) (Regarding) Pir'i, king of the land Muṣri, Samsi, queen of the land of 'Arabs', It'amar, of Sabaya,

7) kings<sup>13</sup> of (the) ocean shore and of (the) desert, gold dust from the mountains, choice stones, elephant ivory, ebony seeds, all kinds of aromatics, horses,

<sup>8</sup> This reconstruction follows note 6.

<sup>9</sup> Here Te'elḫunu is explicitly described in relation to Dilbad.

<sup>10</sup> Here Fuchs notes that this sign was incorrectly copied by Botta (Fuchs 1994: 12).

<sup>11</sup> Again, Fuchs noted that this sign was incorrectly copied by Botta (Fuchs 1994: 12).

<sup>12</sup> The translations provided by Fuchs are in German, so for the sake of both accessibility and consistency, I have provided my own English translation.

<sup>13</sup> Here Samsi is included in this small summary of rulers as a *šarrum*, or 'king'. This is similar to the total including Iapa and Baslu as 'kings' in RINAP 4 2.





2) *mú-ri-im-mì-i URU.ḫu-bi-iš-na-a-a ʿza-ʿbi-bé<sup>1</sup>-e šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi KÙ.GI KÙ.BABBAR ʿAN.NA AN.BAR<sup>1</sup> KUŠ AM.SI ʿZÚ<sup>1</sup> [AM.SI]*

3) *lu-bul-ti bir-me TÚG.GADA SÍG.ta-ʿkil<sup>1</sup>-tu ʿSÍG<sup>1</sup>.[ár]-ga-man-nu GIŠ.ESI GIŠ.TÚG mim-ma aq-ru ni-šir-ti ʿLUGAL<sup>1</sup>-ú-ti UDU.NÍTA.MEŠ bal-ʿtu<sup>1</sup>-[ti ša SÍG.MEŠ-šú-nu]*

4) *ar-ga-man-nu<sup>15</sup> šar-pat iš-šur AN-e mut-tap-ri-šú-ti šá a-gap-pi-šú-nu a-na ta-kil-te šar-pu ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA.MEŠ GU<sub>4</sub>.NÍTA.MEŠ ʿú še<sup>1</sup>-[e-ni ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ]*

5a) *MUNUS.ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te a-di ANŠE.ba-ʿak<sup>1</sup>-ka-ri-ši-na am-ḫur*

Translation:

Text No. 14

10b-12) The payment of Kuštašpi of the city Kummuḫu, Raḫiānu (Rezin) of the land Damascus, Menahem of the city Samaria, [Hiram of the city] Tyre, Sibitti-biʿil of the city Byblos, Urikki of the land Que, Pisīris of the city Carchemish, Ēnī-il of [the city Hama]th, Panammû of the city Samʿal, Tarḫulara of the land Gurgum, Sulumal of the land Melid, Dadīlu

Text No. 15 (continued from text no.14)

1-4) of the the city Kaska, Uassurme of the land Tabal, Ušḫitti of the land Tuna, Urballâ of the land Tuḫana, Tuḫam[me of the city Ištunda], Urimmi of the city Ḫubišna, (and) Zabibe, queen of the Arabs: gold, silver, tin, iron, elephant hides, ivo[ry], multi-colored garments, linen garments, blue-purple (and) [red]-purple wool, ebony, boxwood, all kinds of precious things from the royal treasure, li[ve] sheep [whose wool] is dyed red-purple, flying birds of the sky whose wings are dyed blue-purple, horses, mules, oxen and she[ep and goats, camels], 5a) she-camels, together with their young, I received (from them).

## RINAP 1 20-21

### Samsi

Text No. 20

18') *ʿf<sup>1</sup>sa-am-si šar-rat KUR.a\*-ri-bi ša ma-mit dšá-maš te-ti-qu-ma*  
Lacuna

<sup>15</sup> RINAP 1 15 notes that this was a scribal mistake, and the reconstruction in line 3 is the correct form based on text 27.

Text No. 21

1') *ša* x [...]

2') *ša la* x [...]

3') *ša* 16 'na<sup>1</sup> -[ge-e *ša* KUR.É-*ḫu-um-ri-a*? ...]

4') *ša-l-la*<sup>1</sup>-[at ...]

5') 2 ME 26 [...]

6') 'ša-l-la-at<sup>1</sup> [...]

7') 4 ME [...]

8') 6 ME 56 *ša-l*-[la-at URU.sa-...]

9') 13 LIM 5 ME 20 [...]

10') *a-di mar-ši-ti-šú-nu* [... *ša ina*]

11') KUR-*e mar-ṣu-ti šit*-[ku-na-at *šu-bat-su-nu* ...]

Translation:

Text No. 20

18') Samsi, queen of the land of Arabs, who transgressed her oath (sworn by) the god Šamaš<sup>16</sup> and

Lacuna

Text No. 21

1'-4') ... [...] without ... [...] I utterly demolished ...] of sixteen dis[tricts of the land Bīt-Ḫumria (Israel). I carried off (to Assyria) ...] capti[ves from ...],

5'-9') 226 [captives from ..., ...] captives [from ...], 400 [(and ...) captives from ...], 656 cap[tives from the city Sa..., ...] (altogether) 13,520 [people, ...],

10'-11') with their belongings. [I ... the cities Arumâ (and) Marum, (...) which are] sit[uated in] rugged mountains.

## RINAP 1 27-28

### Zabibê

Text No. 27

2b) [*ma-da-at-tu*] *ša* <<sup>m</sup>>*ku-uš-ta-áš-pi* URU.*ku-um-mu-ḫa-a-a*

3) <sup>m</sup>*ra-ḫi-a-nu* KUR.šá-ANŠE.NÍTA-*šu*-[*a-a* <sup>m</sup>*me-ni-ḫi-im-me* URU.sa-me-ri-na-a-a <sup>m</sup>*ḫi-ru-um-mu* URU.šur-a-a <sup>m</sup>*si-bi-it*]-<sup>1</sup>*ti*<sup>1</sup>-*bi*-<sup>1</sup>*i-li* URU.gu-ub-la-a-a

4) <sup>m</sup>*ú-ri-ia-ik-ki* KUR.*qu-ú*-[*a-a* <sup>m</sup>*pi-si-ri-is* URU.gar-ga-miš-a-a <sup>m</sup>*e-ni-íl* URU.ḫa-am-ma-ta-a-a <sup>m</sup>*pa*]-*na-am-mu-u* URU.sa-am-<sup>1</sup>*a-la-a-a*

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the implications of this oath, and if this was actually sworn, see page 99-101.

5) *ṁtar-ḥu-la-ra* KUR.gúr-gu-[*ma-a-a* *ṁsu-lu-ma-al* KUR.me-lid-da-a-a *ṁda-di-i-lu* URU.kas-ka-a-a *ṁú-as*]-<sup>r</sup>sur<sup>1</sup>-me KUR.ta-bal-a-a *ṁuš-ḥi-it-te*

6) KUR.tu-na-a-a *ṁur-bal-la-a* [KUR.tu-ḥa-na-a-a *ṁtu-ḥa-am-me* URU.iš-tu-un-da-a-a *ṁú-ri-im-mì-i* URU.ḥu-bi-iš-na-a]-a <sup>r</sup>za-bi-bé-e

7) *šar-rat* KUR.a-ri-bi KÙ.GI [KÙ.BABBAR AN.NA AN.BAR KUŠ AM.SI ZÛ AM.SI *lu-bul-ti bir-me* TÚG.GADA SÍG.ta-kil-tu] *ár-ga-man-nu* GIŠ.ESI GIŠ.TÚG

Text No. 28

1) *mim-ma aq-ru ni-šir-<ti>* LUGAL-ú-ti UDU.NÍTA.MEŠ *bal-<sup>r</sup>tu<sup>1</sup>-ti* ša SÍG.MEŠ-šú-nu *ar-ga-man-nu*<sup>17</sup> *šar-pat iš-šur* AN-e *mut-tap-ri-šú-ti* šá *a-gap-pi-šú-nu*

2) *a-na ta-kil-te šar-pu* ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA.MEŠ GU<sub>4</sub>.NÍTA.MEŠ *ù še-e-ni* ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-te a-di* ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri-šì-<sup>r</sup>na am<sup>1</sup>-[ḥur]

Translation:

Text No. 27

2b-4) [The payment] of Kuštašpi of the city Kummuḥu, Raḥiānu (Rezin) of the land Damascu[s], Menahem of the city Samaria, Hiram of the city Tyre, Sibit[ti-bi'il of the city Byblos, Uriyikki (Urikki) of the land Qu[e, Pisiris of the city Carchemish, Ēnī-il of the city Hamath, Pa]nammû of the city Sam'al,

5-7) Tarḥulara of the land Gurgu[m, Sulumal of the land Melid, Dadīlu of the city Kaska, Uas]surme of the land Tabal, Ušḥitti of the land Tuna, Urballâ of [the land Tuḥana, Tuḥamme of the city Ištunda, Urimmi of the city Ḥubišn]a, (and) Zabibe, queen of the Arabs: gold, [silver, tin, iron, elephant hides, ivory, multi-colored garments, linen garments, blue-purple] (and) red-purple wool, ebony, boxwood,

Text No. 28

1-2) all kinds of precious things from the royal treasure, live sheep whose wool is dyed red-purple, flying birds of the sky whose wings are dyed blue-purple, horses, mules, oxen, and sheep and goats, camels, she-camels, together with their young, I recei[ved] (from them).

<sup>17</sup> This is a mistake on the scribe's part, as noted in RINAP 1 14. This should be *ár-ga-man-nu*.

**Zabibê**

- 1) *ma-da-at-tu ša mku-uš-ta-áš-pi KUR.ku-um-mu-ḫa-a-a mra-ḫi-a-nu KUR.ša-ANŠE.NÍTA.MEŠ-šu-a-a*
- 2) *mme-ni-ḫi-me URU.sa-me-ri-i-na-a-a mḫi-ru-um-mu URU.šur-ra-a-a msi-bi-it-ti-bi-`i-li*
- 3) *URU.gu-ub-la-a-a mú-ri-ia-ik-ki KUR.qu-ú-a-a mpi-si-ri-is URU.gar-ga-miš-a-a*
- 4) *me-ni-ìl URU.ḫa-am-ma-ta-a-a mpa-na-am-mu-ú URU.sa-am-`a-la-a-a*
- 5) *mtar-ḫu-la-ra KUR.gúr-gu-ma-a-a msu-lu-ma-al KUR.me-lid-da-a-a*
- 6) *m̄da-di-i-lu URU.kas-ka-a-a mú-as-sur-me KUR.ta-bal-a-a muš-ḫi-it-te KUR.tu-na-a-a*
- 7) *m̄ur-bal-la-a KUR.tu-ḫa-na-a-a mtu-ḫa\*-am-me URU.iš-tu-un-da-a-a mú-ri-im-me*
- 8) *URU.ḫu-bi-iš-na-a-a fza-bi-bé-e šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi [KÛ.GI KÛ.BABBAR AN.NA AN.BAR KUŠ AM.SI]*
- 9) *ZÚ AM.SI lu-bul-ti bir-me [TÚG.GADA SÍG.ta-kil-tu ár-ga-man-nu GIŠ.ESI GIŠ.TÚG]*
- 10) *mim\*-ma aq-ru ni-[šir-ti LUGAL-ú-ti UDU.NÍTA.MEŠ bal-ṭu-ti ša SÍG.MEŠ-šú-nu ar-ga-man-nu šar-pat]*
- 11) *iš-šur AN-e mut-[tap-ri-šú-ti šá a-gap-pi-šú-nu a-na ta-kil-te šar-pu ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA.MEŠ]*
- 12) *[GU<sub>4</sub>].NÍTA.MEŠ ù [še-e-ni ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te a-di ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na am-ḫur]*

Translation:

1-4) [I received] the payment of Kuštašpi of the land Kummūḫu, Raḫiānu (Rezin) of the land Damascus, Menahem of the city Samaria, Hiram of the city Tyre, Sibitti-bi`il of the city Byblos, Uriyikki (Urikki) of the land Que, Pisiris of the city Carchemish, Ēnī-il of the city Hamath, Panammû of the city Sam`al,

5-12) Tarḫulara of the land Gurgum, Sulumal of the land Melid, Dadīlu of the city Kaska, Uassurme of the land Tabal, Ušḫitti of the land Tuna, Urballâ of the land Tuḫana, Tuḫamme of the city Ištunda, Urimmi of the city Ḫubišna, (and) Zabibe, queen of the Arabs: [gold, silver, tin, iron, elephant hides], ivory, multi-colored garments, [linen garments, blue-purple (and) red-purple wool, ebony, boxwood], all kinds of

<sup>18</sup> This is a duplicate of RINAP 14-15, and is included here for the sake of completion.

precious things from the [royal] tr[asure, live sheep whose wool is dyed red-purple], fly[ing] birds of the sky [whose wings are dyed blue-purple, horses, mules, ox]en and [sheep and goats, camels, she-camels, together with their young].

## RINAP 1 35

### Zabibé

Col. iii

- 1) MAN.MEŠ šá KUR.ḫat-ti KUR.a-ri-me šá UŠ tam-<sup>1</sup>tim<sup>1</sup>
- 2) šá SILIM <sup>d</sup>šam-ši KUR.qid-ri KUR.a-ri-<sup>1</sup>bi<sup>1</sup>
- 3) <sup>m</sup>kuš-taš-pi URU.<sup>1</sup>ku<sup>1</sup>-muḫ-a-[a]
- 4) <sup>m</sup>ra-qi-a-nu KUR.šá-ANŠE.NÍTA-šú-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 5) <sup>m</sup>mi-ni-ḫi-im-<sup>1</sup>me<sup>1</sup> KUR.sa-<sup>1</sup>me<sup>1</sup>-ri-i-na-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 6) <sup>m</sup>tu-ba-ìl URU.šur-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 7) <sup>m</sup>si-bít-ba-ìl KUR.gub-la-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 8) <sup>m</sup>ú-ri-ik KUR.qu-ú-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 9) <sup>m</sup>su-lu-mal KUR.mi-lid-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 10) <sup>m</sup>ú-as-sur-me KUR.<sup>1</sup>ta<sup>1</sup>-bal-a-a
- 11) <sup>m</sup>uš-ḫi-ti KUR.a-tú-na-a-a
- 12) <sup>m</sup>ur-bal-la-a KUR.tú-ḫa-na-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 13) [<sup>m</sup>]tú-ḫa-me KUR.iš-tu-un-di-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 14) <sup>m</sup>ú-i-ri-mi KUR.ḫu-bi-iš-na-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 15) <sup>m</sup>da-di-ìl KUR.kás-ka-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 16) <sup>m</sup>pi-si-ri-is URU.gar-<sup>1</sup>ga<sup>1</sup>-miš-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 17) <sup>m</sup>pa-na-am-mu [KUR.sa]-<sup>1</sup>ma<sup>1</sup>-al-la-la-[a]
- 18) <sup>m</sup>tar-ḫu-la-ru KUR.[gúr]-gu-ma-a-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>
- 19) <sup>1</sup>za-bi-bé-e šar-<sup>1</sup>rat<sup>1</sup> KUR.a-ri-<sup>1</sup>bi<sup>1</sup>
- 20) bíl-tú ma-da-tú KÛ.BABBAR KÛ.GI AN.NA AN.BAR
- 21) KUŠ AM.SI ZÚ AM.SI ta-kil-tú ar-ga-man-nu
- 22) lu-bul-ti bir-me GADA ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ
- 23) ANŠE.<a>-na-qa-a-ti UGU-šú-nu ú-<sup>1</sup>kin<sup>1</sup>

Translation:

Col. iii

1-2a) (As for) the kings of the land Ḫatti (Syria-Palestine), the Arameans who are on the shore of the Sea of the Setting Sun, (the people of) the land Qedar, (and) the Arabs: Kuštašpi of the land Kummuḫu, Raqiānu (Rezin) of the land Damascus,

(iii 5) Menahem of the land Samaria, Tuba'il of the city Tyre, Sibitti-ba'il (Sibitti-bi'il) of the city Byblos, Urik(ki) of the land Que, Sulumal of the land Melid,  
 (iii 10) Uassurme of the land Tabal, Ušḫitti of the land Atuna (Tuna), Urballâ of the land Tuḫana, Tuḫamme of the land Ištundi, Urimmi of the land Ḫubišna,  
 (iii 15) Dadīlu of the land Kaska, Pisiris of the city Carchemish, Panammû of [the land Sa]m'al, Tarḫulara of the land [Gur]gum, (and) Zabibe, queen of the Arabs –  
 (iii 20) I imposed upon them tribute (and) payment of silver, gold, tin, iron, elephant hide(s), ivory, blue-purple (and) red-purple garments, multi-colored linen garments, camels, (and) she-camels.

## RINAP 1 42

### Samsi

- 19'b) ša <sup>f</sup>sa-am-si šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi <sup>f</sup>ina KUR.sa<sup>1</sup>-qu-ur-ri <sup>f</sup>KUR-i<sup>1</sup>  
 20') [9 LIM 4 ME di-ik-ta-šú-nu a]-duk 1 LIM UN.MEŠ 30 LIM ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ 20 LIM GU<sub>4</sub>.NÍTA.MEŠ  
 21') [...].<sup>f</sup>MEŠ<sup>1</sup> 5 LIM ŠIM.ḪI.A DÛ-ma x TU DU né-mat-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-ni-šá  
 22') [GIŠ.til-li GIŠ.NÍG.GIDRU.MEŠ <sup>d</sup>iš-tar-šá] <sup>f</sup>NÍG.GA<sup>1</sup>-šá e-kim <<KI>> <sup>f</sup>ù<sup>1</sup> ši-i a-na šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šá  
 23') [...<sup>19</sup> a-na ma]-<sup>f</sup>ad<sup>1</sup>-ba-<sup>f</sup>ri<sup>1</sup> a-šar šu-ma-me GIM MUNUS.ANŠE.EDIN.NA  
 24') [taš-ku-na pa-ni-šá si-ta-at NÍG.GA-šá kul-ta]-ri-šá ḫu-ra-da-at UN.MEŠ-šá i-na MURUB<sub>4</sub> KARAŠ-šá  
 25') [ina IZI áš-ru-up <sup>f</sup>sa-am-si la-pa-an GIŠ.TUKUL].MEŠ-ia KAL.MEŠ taš-ḫu-ut-ma ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te  
 26') [a-di ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na a-na KUR aš-šur a-di maḫ]-ri-ia taš-šá-a LÚ.qe-e-pu ina muḫ-ḫi-šá áš-kun-ma  
 27') [10<sup>?</sup> LIM<sup>?</sup> LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ<sup>?</sup> ... URU].ma-as-<sup>f</sup>a-a-a URU.te-ma-a-a LÚ.sa-ba-<sup>f</sup>a-a-a  
 28') [URU.ḫa-a-a-ap-pa-a-a URU.ba-da-na-a-a] URU.ḫa-at-te-e-a LÚ.i-di-ba-a-<sup>f</sup>il-a-a  
 29') [...] ša mi-šir <sup>f</sup>KUR<sup>1</sup>.KUR ša šu-lum <sup>d</sup>šam-ši  
 30') [ša mám-ma la i-du-šú-nu-ti-ma a-šar-šú-un ru-ú]-qu <sup>f</sup>ta<sup>1</sup>-nit-ti be-lu-ti-ia

<sup>19</sup> There is likely a finite verb missing in this break.

31') [al-ka-ka-at qur-di-ia iš-mu-ma<sup>2</sup> ú-šal-lu-ú<sup>20</sup>] be-lu-ti KÙ.GI  
KÙ.BABBAR

32') [ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-ti ŠIM.ĪI.A DÙ-  
a-ma] ma-da-ta-šú-nu ki-i 1-en

33') [a-di maḥ-ri-ia ú-bi-lu-nim-ma<sup>2</sup> ú-na-áš-ši-qu] GÌR.II.MEŠ-ia

Translation:

19'b-22'a) As for Samsi, queen of the Arabs,<sup>21</sup> at<sup>22</sup> Mount Saqurri, [I] de[feated] 9,400 (of her people)]. I took away (from her) 1,000 people, 30,000 camels,<sup>23</sup> 20,000 oxen, [...] ..., 5,000 (pouches) of all types of aromatics, ...,<sup>24</sup> thrones of her gods, [the military equipment (and) staffs of her goddess(es)], (and) her property.

22'b-24'a) Moreover, she, in order to save her life, [... (and) set out] like a female onager [to the de]sert, a place (where one is always) thirsty. [I set the rest of her possessions] (and) her [ten]ts, her people's safeguard<sup>25</sup> within her camp, [on fire].

25'b-26'a) [Samsi] became startled [by] my mighty [weapon]s and she brought camels, she-camels, [with their young, to Assyria, befo]re me. I placed a representative (of mine) over her and [... 10,000 soldiers].

27'b-29') The people of the cities Mas'a (and) Tema, the (tribe) Saba,<sup>26</sup> the people of the cities [Ḥayappa, Badanu], (and) Ḥatte, (and) the (tribes) Idiba'ilu, [...], who are on the border of the western lands,<sup>27</sup>

30'-33') [whom none (of my predecessors) had known about, and whose country is remo]te, [heard about] the fame of my majesty (and) [my heroic deeds, and (thus) they beseeched] my lordship. As one, [they brought before me] gold, silver, [camels, she-camels, (and) all types of aromatics] as their payment [and they kissed] my feet.

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<sup>20</sup> Tadmor & Yamada makes it clear that this is a conjectural reconstruction. Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 104-107.

<sup>21</sup> Here the determinative KUR makes it clear she was the ruler of the land where the 'Arab' people lived. See section 1.4.3. for a discussion regarding the use of the determinatives LÚ and KUR and their impact on how we should understand the basis of power for the 'Queens of the Arabs'.

<sup>22</sup> See pages 104-105 for a discussion on the usage of *ina* in this sentence. It is likely this battle took place on the plateau of the mountain.

<sup>23</sup> All camels in this passage are dromedary camels, as opposed to Bactrians. See section 4.1.2. for a discussion on the dromedary and its importance to the Arabian Peninsula.

<sup>24</sup> The text has TU DU, but I am unable to ascertain the meaning.

<sup>25</sup> Tadmor & Yamada states this should be 'her people's safeguard', and should be taken metaphorically (Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 107) but I am unsure if this is the best translation. The CAD states it is a type of soldier, and I suggest here 'soldiers of her people' might be a better translation (CAD s.v. 'ḥuradu').

<sup>26</sup> Even though the nisbe ending indicates these people are tied to the location of Saba, the determinative makes it clear they were classified as a 'people', and thus the translation classifies them as a '(tribe)'.

<sup>27</sup> Literally the 'lands of the setting sun' (CAD, s.v. 'šulmu 4b').

Samsi

- 3') [ša<sup>f</sup>sa-am-si šar-rat KUR].a-ri-bi i-na KUR.sa-[qu-ur-ri KUR-e ...]  
 4') [... gi]-<sup>f</sup>mir<sup>1</sup> KARASŠ-šá [...]  
 5') [ù<sup>?</sup> ši-i<sup>?</sup> ša<sup>?</sup> la-pa-an<sup>?</sup> GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ<sup>?</sup>]-<sup>f</sup>ia taš-ḥu-tu<sup>1</sup> [...]  
 6') [... ana KUR aš]-<sup>f</sup>šur a<sup>1</sup>-[di maḥ-ri-ia taš-šá-a]  
 7') [LÚ.qe-e-pu ina muḥ-ḥi-šá áš]-kun-ma <10 LIM> LÚ.ERIM.[ḪI.A ...]  
 8') [... a-na GÌR].II-ia ú-šak-[niš] <sup>f</sup>URU<sup>1</sup>. [ma-as-<sup>?</sup>a-a-a]  
 9') [URU.te-ma-a-a LÚ.sa-ba]-<sup>f</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-a-a URU.ḥa-a-a-[ap-pa-a-a]  
 10') [URU.ba-da-na-a-a URU.ḥa-at]-ti-a-a <sup>f</sup>LÚ.i<sup>1</sup>-[di-ba-a-<sup>?</sup>il-a-a]  
 11') [... ša mi]-šir KUR.KUR šá SILIM šam-ši [ša mám-ma la i-du šú-nu-ti-ma]  
 12') [a-šar-šú-un ru-ú-qu ta-nit]-ti be-lu-ti-ia al-[ka-ka-at qur-di-ia iš-mu-ma]  
 13') [ú-šal-lu-ú be-lu-ti] <sup>f</sup>KÙ.GI<sup>1</sup> KÙ.BABBAR <sup>f</sup>ANŠE.A.AB.BA<sup>1</sup>. [MEŠ]  
 14') [MUNUS.ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-ti] <sup>f</sup>ŠIM<sup>1</sup>.ḪI.A DÛ-a-ma ma-da-ta-šú-nu <sup>f</sup>ki-i<sup>1</sup> [1-en a-di maḥ-ri]-<sup>f</sup>ia<sup>1</sup>  
 15') [ú-bi-lu-nim-ma ú-na-áš]-š-i-qu GÌR.II-[ia] šùl-<sup>f</sup>ma-ni<sup>1</sup>-šú-nu [x (x)] A <sup>f</sup>É<sup>(?)1</sup>.GAL x [...] AD x  
 16') [...] <sup>m</sup>i-di-bi-<sup>f</sup>i<sup>1</sup>-i-lu a-na LÚ.x-[x]-ti <ina> UGU [KUR.mu-uš]-<sup>f</sup>ri<sup>1</sup> ap-qid

Translation:

- 3'-4') [As for Samsi, queen of] the Arabs, at Mount Sa[qurri, I ...] her [en]tire camp [...].  
 5'-8'a) [Moreover, she, who had] become startled [by] my (mighty) [weapons, brought ... to Assy]ria, b[efore me. I pl]aced [a representative<sup>28</sup> (of mine) over her] and [...] <10,000> soldie[rs ...]. I made [...] bow [down at] my [feet].  
 8'b-9') The people of the cities [Mas'a (and) Tema, the (tribe) Sab]a, the people of the cities Ḫaya[ppa,  
 10'-14') Badanu, (and) Ḫat]te, (and) the (tribes) I[diba'ilu, ..., who are on the bor]der of the western lands, [whom none (of my predecessors) had known about, and whose country is remote, heard about the fame of my majesty (and) [my heroic] de]eds, and (thus) they beseeched my lordship]. As [one,

<sup>28</sup> This representative was a <sup>l</sup>iqēpu. Their exact duties has been difficult to decipher, but see Dubovsky 2012 for a discussion of some of the roles they carry out in the texts.

15'-16'a) they brought before] me gold, silver, camel[s, she-camels], (and) all types of aromatics as their payment [and they kis]sed [my] feet. [...] their greeting-gifts [...] ... [...] ... [...].

16'b) I appointed Idibi'ilu as the “*ga[tekeep]er*” facing [Egypt]t.

## RINAP 1 47

### Samsi

Rev.

1') [...] *ma ina* 'IZI *áš-ru*<sup>1</sup>-[*up* <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-si la-pa-an* GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-*ia* KAL.MEŠ *taš-ḥu-ut-ma* ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-te a-di* ANŠE.*ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na*]

2') [*a-na* KUR *aš*]-*šur a-di maḥ-ri-ia* 'ta<sup>1</sup>-[*áš-šá-a* LÚ.*qe-e-pu ina muḥ*]-*ḥi-šá áš-kun*<sup>1</sup>-[*ma* 10 LIM LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ ... ]

---

3') [URU.*ma-as*]-'a<sup>1</sup>-*a-a* URU.*te-ma-a-a* URU.*sa-ab-'a-a-a* URU.*ḥa-a-a-ap-pa-a-a* URU.*ba-da-na-a-a* 'URU<sup>1</sup>.[*ḥa-at-ti-a-a* LÚ.*i-di-ba-a'*-*il-a-a* ... *ša mi-šir* KUR.KUR]

4') [*ša šu-lum* <sup>d</sup>]UTU-*ši ša mám-ma la i-du-šú-nu-ti-ma a-šar-šú-un ru-ú-qu ta-nit-ti be-lu-ti-ia* [*al-ka-ka-at qur-di-ia iš-mu-ma ú-šal-u-ú be-lu-ti*]

5') [KÛ.GI KÛ].BABBAR ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.*a-na-qa-a-ti* ŠIM.ḪI.A DÛ-*a-ma ma-da-ta-šú-nu ki-i* 1-*en a-di* 'maḥ<sup>1</sup>-[*ri-ia ú-bi-lu-nim-ma ú-na-áš-ši-qu* ĞİR.II-*ia*]

6'a) [<sup>m</sup>i]-'di<sup>1</sup>-*bi-'i-i-li a-na* LÚ.Ī.DU<sub>8</sub>-*ú-ti ina* UGU KUR.*mu-uš-ri áš-ku-un*

Translation:

Rev.

1'-2') I se[t the rest of her (Samsi's) possessions (and) her tents, her people's safeguard within her camp], on fire. [Samsi became startled by my mighty weapons and] she [brought camels, she-camels, with their young, to As]syria, before me. I placed [a representative<sup>29</sup> (of mine) ov]er her [and ... 10,000 soldiers ...].

---

3'-4') The people of the cities [Mas]'a, Tema, Saba,<sup>30</sup> Ḫayappa, Badanu, (and) [Ḫatte, (and) the (tribes) Idiba'ilu, ..., who are on the border of the west]ern [lands], whom none (of my predecessors) had known

<sup>29</sup> See note 28 in this appendix for the <sup>16</sup>*qēpu*.

<sup>30</sup> Note here that Saba is a city, but in RINAP 1 44 it is classified as a tribe of people, using the determinative LÚ.

about, and whose country is remote, [heard about] the fame of my majesty (and) [my heroic deeds, and (thus) they beseeched my lordship].

5'-6') As one, [they brought] befo[re me gold, sil]ver, camels, she-camels, (and) all types of aromatics as their payment [and they kissed my feet]. I appointed [Id]ibi'ilu as the "gatekeeper" facing Egypt.

## RINAP 1 48

### Samsi

24') [... ša <sup>f</sup>sa-am-si šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi] 'ina<sup>1</sup> KUR.sa-qu-ur-ri] KUR-e 9 LIM 4 ME di-ik-'ta<sup>1</sup>-[šú-nu a-duk ...]

25') [... né-mat-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-ni]- 'šá<sup>1</sup> GIŠ.til-li GIŠ.NÍG.GIDRU.MEŠ <sup>d</sup>ištar-šá [NÍG.GA-šá e-kim ù ši-i a-na šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šá]

26') [... a-na ma-ad-ba-ri a-šar šu-ma-me GIM MUNUS.ANŠE]. 'EDIN<sup>1</sup>.NA taš-ku-na pa-ni-šá si-ta-[at NÍG.GA kul-ta-ri-šá hu-ra-da-at UN.MEŠ-šá]

27') [i-na MURUB<sub>4</sub> KARAŠ-šá ina IZI áš-ru-up <sup>f</sup>sa-am-si la-pa-an GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia KAL.MEŠ taš-hu-ut-ma ANŠE.A.AB.BA].MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.a-na-qa-a-te a-'di<sup>1</sup> [ANŠE.ba-ak-ka-ri-ši-na]

Lacuna

Translation:

24'b) [As for Samsi, queen of the Arabs], at Mount Saqurri, I de[feated] 9,400 (of her people).

25'a) [I took away (from her) ..., thrones of] her [gods], the military equipment (and) staffs of her goddess(es), (and) [her property].

25'b-27'a) [Moreover, she, in order to save her life, ...] (and) set out [like a female on]ager [to the desert, a place (where one is always) thirsty. I set] the rest [of (her) possessions (and) her tents, her people's safeguard within her camp, on fire].

27'b) [Samsi became startled by my mighty weapons and she brought camel]s, she-camels, with [their young, to Assyria, before me].

Lacuna

## RINAP 1 49

### Samsi

Rev.

- 17) [šá<sup>1</sup> *sa-am-si šar-rat* KUR.a-ri-bi ina KUR.sa-qu-ur-ri KUR-e ...] x  
ina GIŠ.TUKUL ú-šam-qit-ma gim-ri 'KARAŠ'-[šá ...]
- 18) [... ŠIM.ĤI.A DÙ]-'ma<sup>1</sup> a-na la ma-ni DINGIR.'MEŠ'-[ni-šá e-kim]
- 19) [ù ší-i a-na šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šá a-na ma-ad-ba-ri a]- 'šar<sup>1</sup> šu-ma-me GIM MUNUS.<ANŠE>.EDIN.NA taš-ku-'na<sup>1</sup> [pa-ni-šá]
- 20) [si-ta-at NÍG.GA-šá kul-ta-ri-šá ĥu-ra-da-at UN.MEŠ-šá i-na] 'MURUB<sub>4</sub>' KARAŠ-šá ina 'IZI' [áš-ru-up]
- 21) [*sa-am-si la-pa-an* GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia KAL.MEŠ taš-ĥu-ut-ma ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ MUNUS.ANŠE.a]- 'na<sup>1</sup>-qa-ti a-di ANŠE.ba-'ak<sup>1</sup>-[ka-ri-ši-na]
- 22) [ana KUR aš-šur a-di maĥ-ri-ia taš-šá-a LÚ.qe-e-pu] 'ina<sup>1</sup> muĥ-ĥi-šá áš-kun-ma 10 LIM LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ [...]

Translation:

Rev.

- 17-18) [As for Samsi, queen of the Arabs, at Mount Saqurri], I cut down with the sword (lit. “weapon”) [...] ... and [I ... her] entire camp. [I took away (from her) ... all types of aromatics], without number, (and) [her] gods.
- 19) [Moreover, she, in order to save her life, set] out like a female onager [to the desert, a] place (where one is always) thirsty. [I set the rest of her possessions (and) her tents, her people’s safeguard wit]hin her camp, on fire.
- 21a) [Samsi became startled by my mighty weapons and she brought camels, she]-camels, with [their] you[ng, to Assyria, before me]. I placed [a representative] (of mine) over her and [...] 10,000 soldiers [...].

## RINAP 1 53

### Samsi

- 14) [...] KUR.ĥa-u-'ra<sup>1</sup>-nu 'KUR' ú-ma-li
- 15) [...] x 'LIM UDU'.MEŠ šal-'la<sup>1</sup>-su-'nu<sup>1</sup> áš-'lu-la'
- 16) [...] x KUR-ud 'ù<sup>1</sup> ší-i na-mur-rat
- 17) [aš-šur EN-ia is-ĥup-šá-ma ...] x ana dà-lil e-zib-ši
- 18) [...] LÚ.GAR.MEŠ ina u<sub>4</sub>-me-šú-ma

Translation:

14) I filled Mount Ḥauranu (Hauran) with [...].  
15-18a) I carried off [...] (and) ... thousand sheep. I conquered [...].  
Moreover, as for her (Samsi?), the terrifying radiance of (the god)  
[Aššur, my lord, overwhelmed her and ...]. I spared her<sup>31</sup> so (she would)  
praise (the victory of the god Aššur). [... I set up ...] as governors.

### RINAP 3 1

#### *Iati'e*

27) <sup>m</sup>ta-an-na-a-nu a-di um-ma-na-at LÚ.ELAM.MA.KI LÚ.kal-du ù  
LÚ.a-ra-mu ša i-da-a-šu iz-zi-zu-ma il-li-ku re-šu-us-su BAD<sub>5</sub>.BAD<sub>5</sub>-  
šú-un áš-kun-ma ú-par-ri-ir el-lat-su

28) <sup>m</sup>a-di-nu DUMU NIN<sup>32</sup> <sup>md</sup>AMAR.UTU-IBILA-SUM.NA a-di <sup>m</sup>ba-  
as-qa-a-nu ŠEŠ <sup>f</sup>ia-ti-i'-e šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti um-ma-na-te-šú-nu  
bal-ṭu-su-un ina qa-ti aš-bat

29) GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ GIŠ.šu-um-bi ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ  
ANŠE.KUNGA.MEŠ ANŠE.MEŠ ANŠE.A.AB.BA.MEŠ ANŠE.ud-ri ša  
qé-reb tam-ḥa-ri muš-šu-ru ik-šu-da ŠU.II-a-a

Translation:

27-29) I defeated Tannānu, together with the Elamite, Chaldean, and Aramean troops who had stood by him and had come to his aid, and I scattered his forces. I captured alive Adinu, a nephew of Marduk-apla-iddina (II) (Merodach-baladan), together with Basqānu, a brother of Iati'e, queen of the Arabs, along with their troops. I seized the chariots, wagons, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, (and) Bactrian camels that he had abandoned during the battle.

### RINAP 3 35

#### *Te'elḥunu*

Rev.

53') [... <sup>f</sup>te-'e-el-ḥu?]-'nu' šar-rat LÚ.a-ra-bi i-na qé-reb mad-ba-'ri'

<sup>31</sup> Tadmor & Yamada suggest this is likely referring to Samsi (Tadmor & Yamada 2011: 140).

<sup>32</sup> Grayson & Novotny notes that this sign could have been DAM but explain that this reconstruction is based on one of the cylinders discussing this campaign from Tarbišu (Grayson & Novotny 2012: 29, 34).

- 54') [...] LIM ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ *e-kim qa-tuš-ša ši-i it-ti* <sup>m</sup>ha-<sup>r</sup>za-DINGIR<sup>1</sup>
- 55') [... *hur-ba-šú ta-ḥa*]-<sup>r</sup>zi<sup>1</sup>-ia is-<sup>ḥ</sup>up-šú-nu-ti kul-ta-ri-šú-nu ú-maš-še-<sup>r</sup>ru-ma<sup>1</sup>
- 56') [*a-na* ...] <sup>r</sup>ú<sup>21</sup> URU.a-du-um-ma-te a-na nap-šá-a-ti in-nab-<sup>r</sup>tu<sup>1</sup>
- 57') [... URU.a]-<sup>r</sup>du<sup>1</sup>-um-ma-tu ša qé-reb mad-ba-ri šit-ku-na-at šu-bat-<sup>r</sup>sún<sup>1</sup>
- 58') [...*qaq*]-<sup>r</sup>qar<sup>2</sup> šu<sup>1</sup>-me ša ri-i-tu maš-qí-tú la ba-šú-ú qé-reb-šú-[un]
- 59') [...] x x x x x x (x)
- Lacuna
- 1'') [... *i-na*] <sup>r</sup>šuk<sup>1</sup>-bu-us <sup>r</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-ram-<sup>r</sup>me<sup>1</sup> [...]
- 2'') [...] -x-ma<sup>2</sup> man-da-at-ta-šú-nu <sup>r</sup>ka<sup>1</sup>-[bit-tu am-ḥur<sup>2</sup>...]
- 3'') [...] -lu<sup>2</sup>-ni URU.ka-pa-a-nu URU.[...]
- 4'') [...] a-šar ni-šir-ti-šá i-<sup>r</sup>na<sup>21</sup> [...]
- 5'') [... <sup>t</sup>te-<sup>r</sup>e-el-ḥu-nu<sup>2</sup> šar]-rat LÚ.a-ra-bi a-di DINGIR.[MEŠ-šá...]
- 6'') [...] x-a-ti NA<sub>4</sub>.BABBAR.DILI.MEŠ NA<sub>4</sub>.<sup>r</sup>BABBAR<sup>21</sup>.[MIN<sub>5</sub><sup>2</sup>.MEŠ...]
- 7'') [...] <sup>r</sup>ḥa<sup>21</sup>-šur-ru ŠIM.MEŠ ka-<sup>r</sup>la<sup>1</sup>-[ma...]
- 8'') [...] x-a-te ù LUGAL.MEŠ-ni x [...]
- 9'') [... *áš-lu*]-la URU.MEŠ-ni šá-tu-<sup>r</sup>nu<sup>1</sup> [*ap-pu-ul aq-qur i-na* <sup>d</sup>GIŠ.BAR aq-mu]

Translation:

Rev.

53'-56') [... *Te'elḥu*]nu, queen of the Arabs, in the middle of the desert [...] I took away [...] thousand camels from her. She [...] with Hazael. [Terror of doing battle wi]th me overwhelmed them. They abandoned their tents and fled for (their) lives [to *the city* ...] and the city Adummatu.

57'-59') [(As for) *the city*... and the city Ad]ummatu, which are located in the desert, [... *a place of thirst* in whi[ch] there is no pasture (or) watering-place, [...] ...

Lacuna

1''-3''a) [... by having] ramp[s] trodden down [...] ... and [*I received*] their sub[stantial] payment [...] ... to me.

3''b-4'') (As for) the cities Kapānu, ... [...] its secret place, (which is) in [...

5''-9'') ... I carried] off [*Te'elḥunu*, que]en of the Arabs, together with [*her*] god[s, ...] ..., pappardilû-stones, pappar[*minu*]-stone[s, ...]

*ḥašūru*-wood, all types [of] aromatics, [...] ... and kings ... [...] I destroyed, devastated, (and) burned with fire] those cities.

### RINAP 3 213

#### *Iati'e*

27) <sup>m</sup>*ta-an-na-a-nu a-di* ERIM.ḪI.A ELAM.MA.KI LÚ.*kal-du* ù LÚ.*a-ra-mu* *ša i-da-šú iz-zi-zu-ma il-li-ku re-ṣu-us-su* BAD<sup>5</sup>.BAD<sup>5</sup>-šú-  
*un áš-kun-ma ú-par-ri-ir el-lat-su*

28) <sup>m</sup>*a-di-nu* DUMU NIN <sup>md</sup>AMAR.UTU\*-IBILA-SUM.NA *a-di* <sup>m</sup>*ba-as-qa-a-nu* ŠEŠ <sup>f</sup>*ia-ti-i'*-*e* *šar-rat* KUR.*a-ri-bi it-ti um-ma-na-ti-šú-nu*  
*bal-ṭu-su-un ina qa-ti aṣ-bat*

29) GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ GIŠ.ṣu-um-bi ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ  
ANŠE.KUNGA.MEŠ ANŠE.MEŠ ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ ANŠE.ud-ri *ša*  
*qé-reb tam-ḥa-ri muš-šu-ru ik-šu-da* ŠU.II-a-a

Translation:

27-29) I defeated Tannānu, together with the Elamite, Chaldean, and Aramean troops who had stood by him and had come to his aid, and I scattered his forces. I captured alive Adinu, a *nephew* of Marduk-apla-iddina (II) (Merodach-baladan), together with Basqānu, a brother of Iati'e, queen of the Arabs, along with their troops. I seized the chariots, wagons, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, (and) Bactrian camels that he had abandoned during the battle.

### RINAP 4 1

#### *Te'elḥunu and Tabū'a*

Col. iv

1) URU.*a-du-ma-tu* URU *dan-nu-tu* LÚ.*a-ri-bi*

2) *ša* <sup>md</sup>30-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR *aš-šur*.KI AD *ba-nu-u-a*

3) *ik-šu-du-ma* NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú

4) *a-di* <sup>f</sup>*ap-kal-la-tú* *šar-rat* LÚ.*a-ri-bi*

5) *iš-lu-lam-ma a-na* KUR *aš-šur*.KI *il-qa-a*

6) <sup>m</sup>*ḥa-za*-DINGIR 'LUGAL' LÚ.*a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-tú*

7) *a-na* NINA.KI URU *be-lu-ti-ia*

8) *il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq* ĞÎR.II-*ia*

9) *áš-šú na-dan* DINGIR.MEŠ-šú *ú-ṣal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-*  
*ma*

- 10) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a <sup>d</sup>nu-ḥa-a-a  
 11) <sup>d</sup>ru-ul-da-a-a-ú <sup>d</sup>a-bi-ri-il-lu  
 12) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-qu-ru-ma-a DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi  
 13) an-ḥu-su-nu ud-diš-ma da-na-an <sup>d</sup>aš-šur EN-ia  
 14) ú ši-tir MU-ia UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma ut-ter-ma ad-din-šú  
 15) <sup>f</sup>ta-bu-u-a tar-bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti  
 16) UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma it-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-šá a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši

Translation:

Col. iv.

1-4) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs,

5-9) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city,<sup>33</sup> with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him.

10-14) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-qurumâ, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him.

15-16) I placed the lady Tabūa,<sup>34</sup> who was raised in the palace of my father, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods.

### ***lapa' and Baslu***

Col. iv

53) KUR.ba-a-zu na-gu-ú šá a-šar-šú ru-u-qu

54) mi-šit na-ba-li qa-q-qar MUN a-šar šu-ma-a-me

55) 1 ME 20 KASKAL.GÍD<sup>35</sup> qa-q-qar ba-a-ši pu-qut-ti u NA<sub>4</sub>.ZÚ.MAŠ.DĀ<sup>36</sup>

56) a-šar MUŠ u GÍR.TAB ki-ma kul-ba-bi ma-lu-u A.GÀR

57) 20 KASKAL.GÍD KUR.ḥa-zu-ú šad-di NA<sub>4</sub>.SAG.GIL.MUD

58) a-na EGIR-ia ú-maš-šir-ma e-ti<sub>7</sub>-iq

59) na-gu-ú šu-a-tú ša ul-tu u<sub>4</sub>-me ul-lu-ti

<sup>33</sup> Literally 'the city of my lordship'.

<sup>34</sup> Whilst I agree that the gender of Tabū 'a should be expressed in the translation, I do not believe the term 'lady' is appropriate, as it implies this was a title of hers in the Akkadian. Instead, her gender is only expressed through the determinative <sup>f</sup>. I propose this should be read as 'the woman Tabua' instead.

<sup>35</sup> This should be read as *bēru*.

<sup>36</sup> Borger simply translates this as a 'stone', but it is a type of stone that has some sort of connotation to gazelles and teeth (Borger 2004: 256).

- 60) *la il-li-ku* LUGAL *pa-ni maḥ-ri-ia*  
61) *ina qí-bit* <sup>aš-šur</sup> EN-*ia ina qé-reb-e-šú šal-ṭa-niš at-tal-lak*  
62) <sup>m</sup>*ki-i-su* LUGAL URU.*ḫal-di-su* <sup>m</sup>*ak-ba-ru* LUGAL URU.*il-pi-a-tú*  
63) <sup>m</sup>*ma-an-sa-ku* LUGAL URU.*ma-gal-a-ni*  
64) <sup>f</sup>*ia-pa-a* <sup>'</sup>*šar-rat* URU.*di-iḫ-ra-a-ni*  
65) <sup>m</sup>*ḫa-bi-su* LUGAL URU.*qa-da-ba-a* <sup>'</sup>  
66) <sup>m</sup>*ni-ḫa-ru* LUGAL URU.*ga-a* <sup>'</sup>*-u-a-ni*  
67) <sup>f</sup>*ba-as-lu* *šar-rat* URU.*i-ḫi-lum*  
68) <sup>m</sup>*ḫa-ba-zi-ru* LUGAL URU.*pu-da-a* <sup>'</sup>  
69) 8 LUGAL.MEŠ-*ni*<sup>37</sup> *ša qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú a-duk*  
70) *ki-ma* MUNU<sub>4</sub> *áš-ta-ṭi pa-gar* LÚ.*qu-ra-di-šú-un*  
71) DINGIR.MEŠ-*šú-nu* NÍG.ŠU-*šú-nu* NÍG.GA-*šú-nu* ù UN.MEŠ-*šú-nu*  
72) *áš-lu-la a-na qé-reb* KUR *aš-šur*.KI <sup>m</sup>*la-a-a-le-e*  
73) LUGAL URU.*ia-di-i* <sup>'</sup> *šá la-pa-an* GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-*ia in-nab-tú*  
74) *ḫa-at-tu ra-ma-ni-šú im-qut-su-ma a-na* URU.*ni-na-a*  
75) *a-di maḥ-ri-ia il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-šiq* GÌR.II-*ia*  
76) *re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma na-ge-e* URU.*ba-zi*<sup>38</sup> *šu-a-tum*  
77) *ú-šad-gíl pa-nu-uš-šú*

Translation:

Col. iv.

53-54) (As for) the land Bāzu, a district in a remote place, a forgotten place of dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst,  
55-59) one hundred and twenty leagues of desert, thistles, and gazelle-tooth stones, where snakes and scorpions fill the plain like ants — I left Mount Ḥazû, the mountain of *saggilmud*-stone, twenty leagues behind me and crossed over to that district to which

60-64) no king before me had gone since earliest days. By the command of the god Aššur, my lord, I marched triumphantly in its midst. I defeated Kīsu, king of the city Ḥaldisu, Akbaru, king of the city Ilpiatu, Mansāku, king of the city Magalani, Iapa', queen of the city Diḫrāni,  
65-69) Ḥabīsu, king of the city Qadaba', Niḫaru, king of the city Ga' uani, Baslu, queen of the city Iḫilum, (and) Ḥabaziru, king of the city Puda', eight kings from that district

70-77) (and) laid out the bodies of their warriors like (drying) malt. I carried off their gods, their goods, their possessions, and their people

<sup>37</sup> In this total there is no separate tally for the 'kings' with female names. Here the normalisation should read *šarrāni*, and is in the masculine plural. As this is a total of eight, including the women Iapa' and Baslu, the two women in this list were categorised as 'kings', rather than 'queens'. See section 3.2.3. for a discussion on the implications this has on the term *šarratu*.

<sup>38</sup> Leichty states that other versions have the determinative KUR for Bāzu, so it is possible that it is still the 'land' that is referred to as opposed to the 'city' (Leichty 2011: 21).

to Assyria. (As for) Laialê, king of the city Iadi', who had fled before my weapons, unprovoked fear fell upon him, and he came to Nineveh, before me, and kissed my feet. I had pity on him and put that province of Bāzu under him.

## RINAP 4 2

### *Te'elḫunu and Tabū'a*

Col. ii

- 46) URU.a-du-mu-tu URU dan-nu-ti KUR.a-ri-bi
- 47) šá<sup>md30</sup>-PAP.MEŠ-SU MAN KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba-nu-u-a
- 48) ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
- 49) a-di<sup>f</sup>ap-kal-la-ti šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi
- 50) iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš-šur.KI il-qa-a
- 51) <sup>m</sup>ḫa-za-DINGIR LUGAL KUR.a-ri-bi
- 52) it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-ti
- 53) a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia
- 54) il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia
- 55) áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma
- 56) re-e-mu ar-ši-šu-ma
- 57) DINGIR.MEŠ šá-tu-nu an-ḫu-su-nu ud-diš-ma
- 58) da-na-an<sup>a</sup>aš-šur EN-ia u ši-tir MU-ia
- 59) UGU-šú-nu ú-šá-áš-tir-ma ú-ter-ma ad-din-šú
- 60) <sup>f</sup>ta-bu-u-a tar-bit É.GAL-ia
- 61) a-na LUGAL-ú-ti UGU-šú-nu áš-kun-ma
- 62) it-ti DINGIR.MEŠ-šá a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši

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Col. iii

- 1) 65 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ UGU ma-da-at-ti AD-ia
- 2) maḫ-ri-ti ú-rad-di-ma ú-kin še-ru-uš-šú
- 3) ar-ka <sup>m</sup>ḫa-za-DINGIR šim-tú ú-bíl-šu-ma
- 4) <sup>m</sup>ia-a'-lu-ú DUMU-šú
- 5) ina GIŠ.GU.ZA-šú ú-še-ši-ib-ma
- 6) 10 MA.NA KÛ.GI 1 LIM NA<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ bé-ru-ti
- 7) 50 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ 1 LIM kun-zi ŠIM.ḪI.A
- 8) UGU ma-da-ti AD-šú ú-rad-di-ma e-mid-su

Translation:

Col. ii

46-54) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs, he plundered and brought to Assyria – Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city, with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet.

55-59) He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him. I refurbished those gods and I had the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name inscribed on them and I gave (them) back to him.

60-62) I placed the lady Tabūa,<sup>39</sup> who was raised in my palace, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods.

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Col. iii

1-2) I added sixty-five camels to the previous tribute (which was paid to) my father and imposed (it) on him. Later, Hazael died<sup>40</sup> and I placed Ia'lu (Iata'), his son,

5-8) on his throne. I added ten minas of gold, one thousand choice stones, fifty camels, (and) one thousand bags of aromatics to the tribute of his father and imposed (it) on him.

### ***lapa' and Baslu***

Col. iii

9) KUR.ba-a-zu na-gu-u šá a-šar-šú ru-u-qu

10) mi-šit na-ba-li qaq-qar MUN a-šar šu-ma-mi

11) 1 ME 40 KASKAL.GÍD<sup>41</sup> qaq-qar ba-a-ši

12) pu-qut-ti u NA<sub>4</sub>.ZÚ ša-bi-ti<sup>42</sup>

13) 20 KASKAL.GÍD qaq-qar MUŠ u GÍR.TAB

14) šá ki-ma kul-ba-bi ma-lu-u ú-ga-ru

15) 20 KASKAL.GÍD KUR.ḥa-zu-u šad-di NA<sub>4</sub>.SAG.GIL.MUD

16) a-na EGIR-ia ú-maš-šir-ma e-ti-iq

17) šá ul-tu u<sub>4</sub>-me ul-lu-ti

18) la il-li-ku LUGAL pa-ni maḥ-ri-ia

19) ina qí-bit <sup>da</sup>aš-šur EN-ia

20) ina qer-bi-šú šal-ṭa-niš at-tal-lak

21) 8 LUGAL.MEŠ<sup>43</sup> šá qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú a-duk

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<sup>39</sup> See note 34.

<sup>40</sup> Literally 'fate took him away'.

<sup>41</sup> Note that here the distance is 20 *beru* longer than in RINAP 4 1. The implication of this is discussed in chapter 3, section 3.2.3.

<sup>42</sup> This is in contrast to RINAP 4 1 iv55, where this stone is called NA<sub>4</sub>.ZÚ.MAŠ.DÀ.

<sup>43</sup> See note 37.

22) DINGIR.MEŠ-šú -nu NÍG.ŠU-šú-nu NÍG.GA-šú-nu UN.MEŠ-šú-nu

23) *áš-lu-la a-na qé-reb* KUR.áš-šur.KI

Translation:

Col. iii.

9-14) (As for) the land Bāzu, a district in a remote place, a forgotten place of dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst, one hundred and forty leagues of desert, thistles, and gazelle-tooth stones, twenty leagues of land where snakes and scorpions fill the plain like ants —

15-19) I left mount Ḫazû, the mountain of *saggilmud*-stone, twenty leagues behind me and crossed over (to that district) to which no king before me had gone since earliest days. By the command of the god Aššur, my lord,

20-23) I marched triumphantly in its midst. I defeated eight kings from that district (and) carried off their gods, their goods, their possessions, (and) their people to Assyria.

#### RINAP 4 3

##### Tabū'a

Col. iii

Lacuna

1') [*da-na-an* <sup>d</sup>*áš-šur* EN-ia u ši]-*ṭir* MU-ia

2') [UGU-šú-nu] *ú-šá-áš-ṭir-ma ú-ter-ma ad-din-šú*

3') <sup>f</sup>*ta-bu-u-a tar-bit* É.GAL-ia

4') *a-na* LUGAL-ú-ti UGU-šú-nu *áš-kun-ma*

5') *it-ti* DINGIR.MEŠ-šá *a-na* KUR-šá *ú-ter-ši*

6') 65 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ UGU *ma-da-at-ti* AD-ia

7') *maḥ-ri-ti ú-rad-di-ma ú-kin še-ru-uš-šú*

8') *ar-ka* <sup>m</sup>*ḥa-za*-DINGIR *šim-tu ú-bil-šú-ma*

9') <sup>m</sup>*ia-a'-lu-u* DUMU-šú *ina* GIŠ.GU.ZA-šú *ú-še-šib-ma*

10') 10 MA.NA KÛ.GI 1 LIM NA<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ *bé-ru-ti*

11') 50 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ 1 LIM *kun-zi* ŠIM.ḪI.A

12') UGU *ma-da-at-ti* <sup>f</sup>AD<sup>1</sup>-šú *ú-rad-di-ma e-mid-su*

Translation:

Col. iii.

1') I had [the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) wri]tten in my name inscribed [on them] and I gave (them) back to him.

I placed the lady Tabūa,<sup>44</sup> who was raised in my palace, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods.

6') I added sixty-five camels to the previous tribute (which was paid to) my father and imposed (it) on him. Later, Hazael died and I put Ia'î (Iata'), his son, on his throne.

10') I added ten minas of gold, one thousand choice stones, fifty camels, (and) one thousand bags of aromatics to the tribute of his father and imposed (it) on him.

#### RINAP 4 4

##### *Te'elḫunu, Iapa', and Baslu*

Col. ii'

2') [URU.a-du-mu-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a]- 'ri<sup>1</sup>-bi

3') [ša<sup>md30</sup>-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba]-nu-u-a

4') [ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú] DINGIR.MEŠ-šú

5') [a-di<sup>f</sup>ap-kal-la-tú] 'šar<sup>1</sup>-rat KUR.a-ri-bi

6') [iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš]-'šur<sup>1</sup>.KI il-qa-a

7') [mḫa-za-DINGIR LUGAL] KUR.a-ri-bi

8') [it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú] ka-bit-ti

9') [a-na NINA.KI URU] 'be<sup>1</sup>-lu-ti-ia

10') [il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši]- 'iq<sup>1</sup> GÎR.II-ia

11') [áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu] 'ar<sup>2</sup>-šî<sup>2</sup>-šú<sup>2</sup>-ma

12') [...]-x-šu-nu

13') [... an-ḫu-su-nu] 'ud<sup>1</sup>-diš-ma

14') [da-na-an<sup>d</sup>aš-šur] 'EN<sup>1</sup>-ia

Lacuna of about 8 lines

23') [50] ANŠE.[GAM.MAL.MEŠ 1 LIM kun-zi ŠIM.ḪI.A]

24') 'UGU<sup>1</sup> man-da-'at<sup>1</sup>-[ti AD-šú ú-rad-di-ma e-mid-su]

---

25') [KUR].ba-a-zu 'na<sup>1</sup>-[gu-ú šá a-šar-šú ru-u-qu]

26') 'mi<sup>1</sup>-šit na-ba-li [qaq-qar MUN a-šar šu-ma-a-me

27') 1 ME 20 KASKAL.GÍD<sup>45</sup> qaq-qar 'ba<sup>1</sup>-[a-ši pu-qut-ti]

28') ù NA<sub>4</sub>.ZÚ ša-[bi-ti a-šar MUŠ u GÍR.TAB]

29') ša ki-ma kul-ba-[bi ma-lu-u A.GÀR]

30') 20 KASKAL.GÍD KUR.ḫa-'zu<sup>1</sup>-[ú šad-di NA<sub>4</sub>.SAG.GIL.MUD]

<sup>44</sup> See note 34.

<sup>45</sup> This should be read as bēru. CAD, s.v. 'bēru A'.

- 31') *a-na EGIR-ia* [ú-maš-šir-ma e-ti<sub>7</sub>-iq na-gu-ú šu-a-tú]  
 32') *ša ul-tu u<sub>4</sub>-me* [ul-lu-ti]  
 33') *la il-li-ku* [LUGAL pa-ni maḥ-ri-ia]  
 34') *ina qí-bit* <sup>d</sup>aš-šur [EN-ia ina qé-reb-e-šú šal-ṭa-niš]  
 35') *at-tal-lak* 8 'LUGAL'. [MEŠ-ni<sup>46</sup> ša qé-reb na-ge-e šu-a-tú a-duk]  
 36') DINGIR. 'MEŠ-šú-nu NÍG.ŠU-[šú-nu NÍG.GA-šú-nu UN.MEŠ-šú-nu]

Translation:

Col. ii'

2'-9') [(As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the A]rabs, [which Sennacherib, king of Assyria], (my) father, who engendered me, [conquered and whose goods, possessions], (and) gods, [together with Apkallatu, the qu]een of the Arabs, [he plundered and] brought [to Assyri]a — [Hazael, the king of] the Arabs, 10'-14') [came to Nineveh], my capital [city, with his] heavy [audience gift and kissed] my feet. [He implored me to give (back) his gods and] I had [pity on him. I] refurbished [...] ... [...] and [I inscribed the might of the god Aššur], my [lo]rd,

Lacuna

23'-24 ' ) [I added ... fifty] ca[mels, (and) one thousand bags of aromatics] to the tribute [of his father and imposed (it) on him].

---

25' -29' ) [(As for) the lan]d Bāzu, a dis[trict in a remote place, a] forgotten place of dry land, [saline ground, a place of thirst], one hundred and forty leagues of de[sert, thistles], and ga[zelle]-tooth stones, [where snakes and scorpions fill the plain] like ant[s — I left] 30'-36') Mount Ḥaz[û, the mountain of saggilmud-stone], twenty leagues behind me [and crossed over to that district] to which no [king before me] had gone since [earliest] days. By the command of the god Ašš[ur, my lord], I marched [triumphantly in its midst. I defeated] eight ki[ngs<sup>47</sup> from that district (and) carried off] their gods, [their] goods, [their possessions, (and) their people to Assyria].

Lacuna

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<sup>46</sup> See note 37.

<sup>47</sup> Not the variation with RINAP 4 1, 2, and 8, where the eight kings were listed by name, and we see the women Iapa' and Baslu. In this case we only know that the eight kings included two women only through the other texts.

RINAP 4 6

**Te'elḫunu and Tabū'a**

Lacuna

Col. iii'

1'b) *a-di* <sup>f</sup>[*ap-kal-la-tú šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi*]

2') *iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš-šur.KI il-qa-*[*a mḫa-za-DINGIR LUGAL LÚ.a-ri-bi*]

3') *it-ti ta-mar-te-šú ka-bit-te a-na* [NINA.KI URU *be-lu-ti-ia*]

4') *il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia áš-šú na-*[*dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma*]

5') *re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma* <sup>d</sup>*a-tar-sa-ma-a-<sup>f</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-*[*in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a*]

6') <sup>d</sup>*nu-ḫa-a-a* <sup>d</sup>*ru-ul-da-a-a-u* <sup>d</sup>*a-*[*bi-ri-il-lu*]

7') <sup>d</sup>*a-tar-qu-ru-ma-a* DINGIR.MEŠ *šá LÚ.a-ri-bi* [*an-ḫu-su-nu ud-diš-ma*]

8') *da-na-an aš-šur EN-ia* *ù ši-tir MU-*[*ia UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma*]

9') *ú-ter-ma ad-din-šú* <sup>f</sup>*ta-bu-u-a* <sup>f</sup>*tar<sup>1</sup>-*[*bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL-u-ti*]

10') UGU-šú-nu *áš-kun-ma it-ti* DINGIR.MEŠ-šá [*a-na KUR-šá ú-ter-ši*]

11') 65 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ 10 ANŠE.NÍTA.MEŠ UGU [*ma-da-ti maḫ-ri-ti*]

12') *ú-rad-di-ma ú-kin še-ru-uš-šú* <sup>mḫa</sup>[*za-DINGIR šim-tu*]

13') *ú-bil-šú-ma* <sup>m</sup>*ia-ta-a'* DUMU-šú *ina* [GIŠ.GU.ZA-šú *ú-še-šib-ma*]

14') 10 MA.NA KÙ.GI 1 ME NA<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ *bé-ru-te* [50 ANŠE.GAM.MAL.MEŠ]

15') 1 ME KUŠ.*kun-zi* ŠIM.ḪI.A UGU [*man-da-at-ti AD-šú*]

16') *ú-rad-di-ma e-mid-su ar-*[*ka <sup>m</sup>ú-a-bu*]

17') *a-na e-peš LUGAL-ti LÚ.a-ru-*[*bu ka-li-šú*]

18') UGU <sup>m</sup>*ia-ta-a'* *uš-bal-kit-ma* [*a-na-ku <sup>m</sup>aš-šur-PAP-AŠ LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI*]

19') LUGAL *kib-rat LÍMMU-te* *šá kit-tu i-ram-*[*mu-ma ša-lip-tú ik-kib-šú*]

20') LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ *MÈ-ia ana na-ra-ru-ti* <sup>m</sup>[*ia-ta-a' áš-pur-ma*]

21') LÚ.a-ru-bu *ka-li-šú ik-bu-*[*su-ma <sup>m</sup>ú-a-bu*]

22') *a-di* LÚ.ERIM.MEŠ *šá is-si-šú bi-re-*<sup>f</sup>*tú<sup>1</sup>* [*id-du-u-ma ú-bi-lu-nim-ma*]

23') *ši-ga-ru áš-*<sup>f</sup>*kun<sup>1</sup>-*[*šú-nu-ti-ma*]

24') *ina le-et KÁ-ia* [*ar-ku-us-šú-nu-ti*]

Translation:

Col. iii.

1'a-4') with [Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs], he (Sennacherib) plundered and brou[ght] to Assyria – [Hazael, the king of the Arabs], came to [Nineveh, my capital city], with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. [He implored me] to gi[ve (back) his gods, and] 5'-10') I had pity on him. [I refurbished] the gods Atar-samay[in, Dāya], Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, A[birillu], (and) Atar-qurumâ, the gods of the Arabs, [and I inscribed] the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in [my] name [on them and] gave (them) back to him. I placed the lady Tabūa,<sup>48</sup> who was rais[ed in the palace of my father, as ruler] over them and [returned her to her land] with her gods.

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11'-18'a) I added sixty-five camels (and) ten donkeys to [the previous tribute] and imposed (it) on him. H[azael] died and [I placed] Iata', his son, on [his throne]. I added ten minas of gold, one hundred choice stones, [fifty camels], (and)

15') one hundred bags of aromatics to [the tribute of his father] and imposed (it) on him. La[ter, Uabu], to exercise kingship, incited [all of] the Ara[bs] to rebel against Iata'.

18'b-24') [I, Esarhaddon, king of Assyria], king of the four quarters, who loves loyalty [and abhors treachery, sent]

20') my battle troops to the aid of [Iata', and] they trampled all of the Arabs, [threw Uabu], together with the soldiers who were with him, into fetters, [and brought (them) to me]. I placed [them] in neck stocks [and tied them] to the side of my gate.

## RINAP 4 8

### *lapa' and Baslu*

Col. i'.

12') [ina x x] ger-ri-ia KUR.ba-a-zu na-gu-u šá a-šar-šú ru-u-qu

13') [mi-šit] 'na<sup>1</sup>-bi-li qaq-qar MUN a-šar šu-ma-a-me

14') [1 ME 20 KASKAL]. 'GÍD<sup>1</sup> qaq-qar ba-ši pu-qut-te ù NA<sub>4</sub>. 'ZÚ<sup>1</sup>.MAŠ.DÀ

15') [a-šar] 'MUŠ<sup>1</sup> u GÎR.TAB ki-ma kul-ba-bi ma-'lu<sup>1</sup>-[u A.GÀR]

16') [20 KASKAL.GÍD KUR].ḥa-zu-u šad-di NA<sub>4</sub>.SAG.GIL.MUD ana EGIR-ía [ú]-maš-šir-ma

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<sup>48</sup> See note 34.

- 17') [e-ti<sub>7</sub>-iq] na-gu-u šu-a-tú šá ul-tu u<sub>4</sub>-me ul-'lu<sup>1</sup>-ti  
 18') [la il-li-ku] 'LUGAL' pa-ni maḥ-ri-ía ina qí-bit <sup>d</sup>aš-šur EN-ia  
 19') [ina qé-reb-e-šú šal]-ṭa-niš at-tal-lak <sup>m</sup>ki-i-su MAN KUR. 'ḥal<sup>1</sup>-di-su  
 20') [<sup>m</sup>ak-ba-ru MAN] URU.il-pi-a-tú <sup>m</sup>ma-an-sa-ku MAN KUR.ma-gal-a-ni  
 21') [fi-a-pa-a' šar-rat] KUR.di-iḥ-ra-a-ni <sup>m</sup>ḥa-bi-su [MAN URU].qa-[da-ba-a']  
 22') [<sup>m</sup>ni-ḥa-ru LUGAL URU.ga-a'-u-a-ni <sup>ṽ</sup>]ba-as-lu šar-rat [URU.i-ḥi-lum]  
 23') [...] x x x [...]

Translation:

Col. i'.

13'-14') [In] my [...]th campaign, (as for) the land Bāzu, a district in a remote place, [a forgotten place of] dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst,

15'-19') [one hundred and twenty leagues] of desert, thistles, and gazelle-tooth stones, [where sn]akes and scorpions fill [the plain] like ants — I left [Mount] Ḥazû, the mountain of *saggilmud*-stone, [twenty leagues behind me and crossed over to] that district to which [no kin]g before me [had gone] since earliest days. By the command of the god Aššur, my lord,

20'-23') I marched [trium]phantly [in its midst. I defeated] Kīsu, king of the land Ḥaldisu, [Akbaru, king of] the city Ipiatu, Mansāku, king of the land Magalani, [Iapa', queen of] the land Diḥrāni, Ḥabīsu, ki[ng of the la]nd Qa[daba', Niḥaru, king of the city Ga'uani], Baslu, queen [of the city Iḥilum, (and) Ḥabaziru, king of the city Puda', eight kings] from [that] district [...] ... [...]

## RINAP 4 97

### Tabū'a

- 7) [... <sup>m</sup>ḥa-za-DINGIR] MAN LÚ.KUR.a-ri-bi  
 8) [šá it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-ti a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia il-li-ku-ma] u-na-[áš-ši]-qu GÌR.II-ía  
 9) [aš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-a-ni-ma] re-e-mu  
 10) [ar-ši-šú-ma <sup>d</sup>a-tar-sa-ma-a-in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a <sup>d</sup>nu]-ḥa-a-a  
 11) <sup>d</sup>ru-[al-da-a-a-u] <sup>d</sup>a-bi-[ri-il-lu <sup>d</sup>a-tar-qu]-ru-ma-a

12) [DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi] an-ḫu-su-nu ud-diš-ma [... ú]-<sup>f</sup>ter<sup>1</sup>-  
[šú-ma ad-din-šú] <sup>f</sup>ta-bu-u-[a]

13) tar-[bit É.GAL AD-ia a-na LUGAL]-ú-ti ap-qid-ma it-ti  
DINGIR.MEŠ [šá LÚ.a-ri-bi] šá-tu-nu

14a) a-na KUR-ti-šá ú-ter-ši ar-ka <sup>m</sup>ḫa-za-DINGIR [šim-tu ú-bil-šú-  
ma]

Translation:

7) [... Hazael], the king of the Arabs, [who came to Nineveh, my capital city, with his heavy audience gift and] kissed my feet, [implored me to give (back) his gods, and

10) I had] pity [on him]. I refurbished [the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nu]ḫāya, Ru[ldāwu], Abi[rillu, (and) Atar-qu]rumâ, [the gods of the Arabs], and [... I gave (them) b]a[ck to him]. I appointed the lady Tabū[a],<sup>49</sup> who was [raised in the palace of my father, as rul]er and returned her to her land with those gods [of the Arabs].

## RINAP 5 8

### Adiye

Col. ix

1'') <sup>f</sup>a-[di-ia-a šar-rat KUR.a-ri-bi]

2'') di-ik-<sup>f</sup>ta<sup>1</sup>-[šá ma-a 'as-su a-duk]

3'') kul-ta-re-e-<sup>f</sup>šá<sup>1</sup> [ina <sup>d</sup>GIŠ.BAR aq-mu]

4'') šá-a-šá bal-tu-us-[sa ina ŠU.II aš-bat]

5'') it-ti ḫu-bu-ut [KUR-šá<sup>2</sup>]

6'') al-qa-áš-ši [a-na KUR aš-šur.KI]

Translation:

Col. ix.

1''-6'') [I inflicted a heavy] defeat on A[diya, the queen of the land of the Arabs. I burned] her tents [with fire. I captured] her alive (and) brought her [to Assyria], together with the plunder of [*her land*].

## RINAP 5 11

### Adiye

Col. viii

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<sup>49</sup> See note 34.

- 15) *ù šu-u* <sup>m</sup>*am-mu-la-di* MAN KUR.*qé-ed-ri*  
 16) *it-ba-am-ma a-na mit-ḥu-ši* LUGAL.MEŠ KUR MAR.TU.KI  
 17) *ša* AN.ŠÁR <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *u* DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ  
 18) *ú-šad-gi-lu pa-nu-u-a*  
 19) *ina tukul-ti* AN.ŠÁR <sup>d</sup><sub>30</sub> <sup>d</sup>UTU <sup>d</sup>IŠKUR  
 20) <sup>d</sup>EN <sup>d</sup>AG <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *ša* NINA.KI  
 21) <sup>d</sup>GAŠAN-*kid-mu-ri* <sup>d</sup><sub>15</sub> *ša* URU.LÍMMU-DINGIR  
 22) <sup>d</sup>MAŠ <sup>d</sup>U.GUR <sup>d</sup>*nusku*  
 23) BAD<sub>5</sub>.BAD<sub>5</sub>-*šú áš-kun*  
 24) *ša-a-šú bal-ṭu-us-su it-ti* <sup>f</sup>*a-di-ia-a*  
 25) DAM <sup>m</sup>*ú-a-a-te-e* <sup>r</sup> MAN KUR.*a-ri-bi*  
 26) *iš-ba-tu-nim-ma ú-bil-u-ni a-di* <sup>r</sup>*maḥ*<sup>1</sup>-*ri-ia*  
 27) *ina qí-bit* DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ EN.MEŠ-*ia*  
 28) *ul-li* UR.GI<sub>7</sub> *áš-kun-šú-ma*  
 29) *ú-šá-an-šir-šú* GIŠ.*ši-ga-ru*

Translation:

Col. viii.

15-19) Moreover, he, Ammu-ladī(n), the king of the land Qedar, set out to fight with the kings of the land Amurru whom (the god) Aššur, the goddess Ištar, and the great gods had entrusted to me. With the support of the deities Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Adad,

20-24) Bēl (Marduk), Nabû, Ištar of Nineveh, Šarrat-Kidmuri, Ištar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal, (and) Nusku, I brought about his defeat.

25-29) They (my troops) seized him alive together with Adiya, wife of Uaite' (Iauta'), the king of the land of the Arabs, and brought (him) before me. By the command of the great gods, my lords, I placed him (Ammu-ladīn) in a dog collar and made him guard the gate.

## SAA 11 162<sup>50</sup>

### Samsi

Beginning broken away.

Obv.

1') [*x x* <sup>m</sup>*ia*]-*ra-pa-a*

2') [LÚ\*.GAL-*k*]*i-šir*

3') [*x x*] *ša* KUR.*ar-ba-a-a*

4') [*ina* UG]U<sup>1</sup> MÍ.*sam-si*

<sup>50</sup> The online edition of this text can be found at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao/saa11/P334436>.

- 5') <sup>r</sup>ú<sup>1</sup>-ba-al  
 6') [š]a MÍ.sam-si  
 7') ina UGU KUR.ar-ba-a-a  
 8') ú-ba-l[a]  
 9') <sup>m</sup>ia-ra-pa-a GAL-ki-<sup>r</sup>šir<sup>1</sup>  
 10') <sup>m</sup>ḥa-šil-a-nu GAL-ki-šir  
 11') <sup>m</sup>ga-na-bu  
 12') <sup>m</sup>ta-am-ra-a-nu  
 13') PAP 4 LÚ\*.ERIM.MEŠ  
 Rev.  
 1) a-na ZÁḤ.<sup>r</sup>MEŠ<sup>1</sup>  
 2) 6<sup>r</sup>2<sup>1</sup> <sup>m</sup>ḥa-šil-a-nu  
 3) 63 <sup>m</sup>ia-ra-pa-a  
 4) PAP 1-me-25 ANŠE.gam-mal.MEŠ  
 5) pa<sup>1</sup>-šu-u-te  
 Blank space of 4 lines.  
 6) [x]-te-si-ru  
 Blank space of 4 lines to break.

Translation:

(Beginning destroyed)

Obv.

1'-5') [... Ya]-rapâ, [cohort co]mmander, will bring the [fugitives] of the Arabs [up t]o the lady Samsi; (and) he will bring those [o]f the lady Samsi up to the Arabs.

9') Ya-rapâ, cohort commander;

10') Ḥašilanu, cohort commander;

11') Gannabu,

12') Tamranu;

13'-r.1) in all, four people for the fugitives.

Rev.

2) 62, Ḥašilanu;

3) 63, Ya-rapâ:

4-5) in all, 125 stray<sup>51</sup> camels.

6) [*They have been c]ollected.*

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<sup>51</sup> Although this attestation is listed in CAD as *pešû*, and so this should read as '125 white camels' (CAD s.v. '*pešû*').

### A.3.2. TEXTS RELATING TO ASSYRIAN ROYAL WOMEN:

#### RIMA 3 A.O.104.2001

- 1) *ša-lam* <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-mu-ra-mat*
- 2) MUNUS.É.GA[L<sup>52</sup> *ša* <sup>m</sup>*šam*]-*ši*-dIŠKUR
- 3) MAN ŠÚ MAN 'KUR' [<sup>d</sup>*a*]-*šur*
- 4) MUNUS.AMA [*ša* <sup>md</sup>IŠ]KUR-ÉRIN.TÁḤ
- 5) MAN ŠÚ MAN K[UR] <sup>d</sup>*a*-*šur*
- 6) MUNUS *kal-lat* [<sup>md</sup>*šū*]*l-ma-nu*-MAŠ
- 7) MAN *kib-rat* 4-*ti*

Translation:

1) Monument of Semiramis,<sup>53</sup> the palace woman [of Šam]šī-Adad (V), king of the universe, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nārārī (III), king of the universe, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law of Shalmaneser (III), king of the four quarters

#### RIMA 3 A.O.104.2002

- 8b) *a-na* TI <sup>md</sup>IŠKUR-ÉRIN.TÁḤ MAN KUR *aš-šur* EN-šú ù TI
- 9a) <sup>f</sup>*sa-am-mu-ra-mat* MUNUS.É.GAL<sup>54</sup> NIN-šú

Translation:

8b-9a) For the life of Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, his lord, and (for) the life of Semiramis,<sup>55</sup> the palace woman, his mistress:<sup>56</sup>

#### RIMA 3 A.O.104.3

- 1) *ta-ḥu-mu* šá <sup>m</sup>10-ÉRIN.TAḤ MAN KUR *aš-šur*

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<sup>52</sup> Whilst in RIMA 3 this is edited as MUNUS.É.GAL, I have decided to read and discuss this title following the convention where this is given as the MÍ.É.GAL (following Svärd 2015a and Melville 2004, 2005). Borger provides a discussion of whether this should be MUNUS or MÍ, with particular attention to the office of the MÍ.É.GAL (Borger 2004: 346-347).

<sup>53</sup> This is the name given to Sammu-rāmat in RIMA 3, based on a later Greek tradition. In the discussion of this dissertation I will refer to this woman using her Akkadian name, Sammu-rāmat.

<sup>54</sup> See note 46.

<sup>55</sup> See note 53.

<sup>56</sup> Here I believe a better translation is 'his woman', as the term 'mistress' implies in English that Sammu-rāmat was the power behind the throne. This idea has not necessarily been dismissed, but the extent of her power during the reign of Adad-nārārī III was certainly not as powerful as once thought (Siddall 2013: 86-100). See section 3.1.1. for a discussion on the role of Sammu-rāmat during her son's reign.

- 2) A <sup>m</sup>šam-ši-10 MAN KUR aš-šur
- 3) <sup>f</sup>sa-am-mu-ra-mat MUNUS.É.GAL<sup>57</sup>
- 4) šá <sup>m</sup>šam-ši-10 MAN KUR aš-šur
- 5) AMA <sup>m</sup>10-ÉRIN.TAḪ MAN KAL MAN KUR aš-šur
- 6) kal-lat <sup>md</sup>šùl-ma-nu-MAŠ
- 7) MAN kib-<rat> 4-ti ina u<sub>4</sub>-me <sup>muš</sup>pi-lu-lu-me
- 8) MAN URU ku-mu-ḫa-a-a a-na <sup>m</sup>10-ÉRIN.TAḪ MAN KUR aš-šur
- 9) <sup>f</sup>sa-am-mu-ra-mat MUNUS.É.GAL
- 10) ÍD pu-rat-tú ú-še-bi-ru-u-ni
- 11) <sup>m</sup>a-tar-šúm-ki A <sup>m</sup>ad-ra-a-me URU ár-pa-da-a-a
- 12) a-di 8 MAN.MEŠ-ni šá KI-šú ina URU pa-qi-ra-ḫu-bu-na
- 13) si-dir-ta-šú-nu KI-šú-nu am-daḫ-iš uš-ma-na(?)-šú-nu
- 14) e-kim(\*)-šú-nu-ti a-na šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šú-nu
- 15) e-li-ú ina MU.AN.NA šá-a-te
- 16) ta-ḫu-mu šú-a-tú ina bir-ti <sup>muš</sup>pi-lu-lu-me
- 17) MAN URU ku-mu-ḫa-a-a ina bir-ti <sup>m</sup>qa-al-pa-ru-da(?)
- 18) A <sup>m</sup>pa-la-lam MAN URU gúr-gu-ma-a-a ú-še-lu-ni
- 19) man-nu šá <TA> ŠU-at <sup>muš</sup>pi-lu-lu-me
- 20) DUMU.MEŠ-šú DUMU.DUMU.MEŠ-šú e-ki-mu
- 21) aš-šur <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU <sup>d</sup>IŠKUR <sup>d</sup>30 <sup>d</sup>UTU
- 22) a-na di-ni-šú lu la i-za-zu
- 23) ik-kib aš-šur DINGIR-ia <sup>d</sup>30 a-šib URU.KASKAL

Translation:

1-7a) Boundary stone of Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, son of Šamšī-Adad (V), king of Assyria, (and of) Semiramis,<sup>58</sup> the palace-woman of Šamšī-Adad, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nārārī, strong king, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law of Shalmaneser (III), king of the four quarters.

7b-10) When Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, caused Adad-nārārī, king of Assyria, (and) Semiramis, the palace woman,<sup>59</sup> to cross the Euphrates;

11-15a) I fought a pitched battle with them — with Ataršumki, son of Adramu, of the city of Arpad, together with eight kings who were with him at the city Paqaraḫubunu. I took away from them their camp. To save their lives they dispersed.

<sup>57</sup> See note 52.

<sup>58</sup> See note 53.

<sup>59</sup> I do not know why in this case MUNUS.É.GAL has been translated as ‘palace woman’ in this instance, but in the same text has been translated as ‘palace-woman’. I can only assume this was a small editing error in the published edition of RIMA 3.

15b-18) In this (same) year they erected this boundary stone between Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, and Qalparuda, son of Palalam, king of the Gurgumites.

19-23) Whoever (dares) to take (it) away from the possession of Ušpilulume, his sons, his grandsons:

21-22) may the gods Aššur, Marduk, Adad, Sîn, (and) Šamaš not stand (by him) in his lawsuit. May Ashur, Marduk, Adad, Sin and Šamaš not stand by his decisions.

23) Taboo of Aššur, my god, (and) Sîn, who dwells in Ḥarrān.

### SAA 2 8<sup>60</sup>

Obv.

1) [a-d]e-e ṛšá<sup>1</sup> MÍ.za-ku-u-te MÍ.KUR<sup>61</sup> šá<sup>m30</sup>-P[AB<sup>!</sup>.MEŠ-SU]

2) [MA]N KUR-aš AMA<sup>m</sup>aš-šur-PAB-AŠ MAN KUR-aš-šur

3) TA\*<sup>md</sup>GIŠ.ŠIR-MU-G[I].NA PAB ta-li-me-šú

4) TA\*<sup>md</sup>GIŠ.ŠIR-UG<sub>5</sub>.GA-TI.LA ù

5) re-eḫ-te PAB.MEŠ-šú TA\* NUMUN LUGAL TA\*

6) LÚ.GAL.MEŠ LÚ.NAM.MEŠ LÚ.šá-ziq<sup>!</sup>-ni

7) [L]Ú.SAG.MEŠ LÚ.GUB-IGI TA\* LÚ. ṛzak<sup>!</sup>-ke-e

8) ù LÚ.TU<sup>62</sup>-KUR<sup>63</sup> gab-bu o<sup>!</sup> TA\* DUMU.MEŠ KUR-aš-šur

Translation:

Obv.

1-2) The treaty of Zakutu, the queen of Senna[cherib, ki]ng of Assyria, mother of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria,

3-8) with Šamaš-šumu-ukin, his equal brother, with Šamaš-metu-uballit and the rest of his brothers, with the royal seed, with the magnates and the governors, the bearded and the eunuchs, the royal entourage, with the exempts and all who enter the Palace, with Assyrians high and low:

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<sup>60</sup> The online edition to this text can be found at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saa0/saa02/P334814>.

<sup>61</sup> This is an alternative to the title MÍ.É.GAL, this time as the logograms MÍ.KUR, which should be read as 'woman of the palace'. See Borger 2004: 372, 450.

<sup>62</sup> TU should be read as *ēribu*, and thus this should be 'men who enter'. CAD, s.v. 'ēribu'.

<sup>63</sup> Again we see KUR being used for 'palace' (Borger 2004: 372).

### A.3.3. TEXTS RELATING TO 'ARAB' SOCIETY:

**Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: Tablet 2, kol. iv p. 346-351.**

- 26b) *ana-ku* <sup>ld</sup>MAŠ.NÍG.DU.PAP  
27) <sup>lu</sup>GAR KUR *su-ḫi u KUR ma-ri* <sup>lu</sup>te-ma-'a-a-a <sup>lu</sup>šá-ba-'a-a-a  
28) *šá a-šar-šú-nu ru-qu* <sup>lu</sup>A.KIN-šú-nu a-na muḫ-ḫi-ia ul DU<sup>ku</sup>  
29) *ù a-na muḫ-ḫi-ia ul it-ti-qu-ú-nu a-na muḫ-ḫi x x*  
30) PÚ *mar-tu u PÚ ḫa-la-tum a-lak-ta-šú-nu* TE *u it-ti-iq-ma*  
31) *u a-na* <sup>uru</sup>ḫi-in-da-a-nu *ir-ru-bu-nu ina* <sup>uru</sup>kar-<sup>d</sup>A.<sup>d</sup>IM *i-na*  
32) AN.BAR<sub>7</sub> *ši-mu-su-nu áš-mi-e-ma ni-ri aš-mid ina* MI ÍD  
33) *e-bir-ma ina šá-ni-i u<sub>4</sub>-me a-di la* AN.BAR<sub>7</sub> *a-na* <sup>uru</sup>az-la-a-a-nu  
34) *ak-šu-ud-ma 3 u<sub>4</sub>-mi i-na* <sup>uru</sup>az-la-a-nu *ú-šib-ma ina 3-šú u<sub>4</sub>-me*  
35) *ik-šu-du-nim-ma 1* ME-šú-nu *bal-ṭu-su<sup>1</sup>-nu ŠU<sup>2</sup> ik-šu-ud 2* ME  
*gam-ma-lu-šú-nu*  
36) *a<sup>1</sup>-di* GÚ.UN-šú-nu SIKI *ta-kil-tum* SIKI KASKAL? AN.BAR  
<sup>na</sup><sub>4</sub><BABBAR>.DIL<sup>meš</sup><sub>64</sub>*mim-ma mi-reš-ti DÛ.A.BI*  
37) *ik-šu-ud ŠU<sup>2</sup>-a-a* NAM.RI-*su-nu ka-bit-ti áš-lu-lam<sup>1</sup> (EL)-ma*  
38) *ú-še-rib a-na qé-reb* KUR *su-ḫi* MU 7 KÁM  
39) <sup>ld</sup>MAŠ.NÍG.DU.PAP <sup>lu</sup>GAR KUR *su-ḫi u KUR ma-ri da-ba-ba*  
40) *an-na-a da-bi-ib ba-a-ri*

Translation:<sup>65</sup>

- 26b) I, Ninurta-kudurri-ušur,  
27) governor of Suḫu and Mari; the people of Tayma and Šaba'a,  
28) whose remote place, whose messenger did not come before me,  
29) and had previously not come before me, towards...  
30) they went to the well of Martu and Ḫalatu, and in addition their caravan had gone  
31) and entered the city Ḫindanu. In Kar-apla-Adad at  
32) midday I heard their message. I made the yokes ready.  
33a) I crossed the river at night. On the second day before midday  
33b-34) I arrived at Azlayanu. I dwelled (for) 3 days in Azlayanu. They arrived on the third day.  
35) I captured 100 hands alive; I obtained 200 (of) their camels,

<sup>64</sup> Cavigneaux & Ismail suggest this could possibly be a reference to the statues of the 'Arab' gods, but here I have chosen to provide the translation of 'pappardillu-stones'. This is because I believe that Ninurta-kudurri-ušur would have explicitly stated if these were in fact divine statues, and as this appears to be a merchant caravan it would be more likely to contain semi-precious stones in their raw form to trade with craftsmen (Cavigneaux & Ismail 1990: 356).

<sup>65</sup> As with the texts by Fuchs and Borger, the translation provided by Cavigneaux & Ismail is in German. For the sake of accessibility and consistency, I offer an English translation.



## RINAP 4 1

Col. iv

- 1) URU.a-du-ma-tu URU dan-nu-tu LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 2) ša <sup>md</sup>30-PAP.MEŠ-SU LUGAL KUR aš-šur.KI AD ba-nu-u-a
- 3) ik-šu-du-ma NÍG.ŠU-šú NÍG.GA-šú DINGIR.MEŠ-šú
- 4) a-di <sup>f</sup>ap-kal-la-tú šar-rat LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 5) iš-lu-lam-ma a-na KUR aš-šur.KI il-qa-a
- 6) <sup>m</sup>ha-za-DINGIR 'LUGAL' LÚ.a-ri-bi it-ti ta-mar-ti-šú ka-bit-tú
- 7) a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia
- 8) il-lik-am-ma ú-na-áš-ši-iq GÌR.II-ia
- 9) áš-šú na-dan DINGIR.MEŠ-šú ú-šal-la-an-ni-ma re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma
- 10) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in <sup>d</sup>da-a-a <sup>d</sup>nu-ḥa-a-a
- 11) <sup>d</sup>ru-ul-da-a-a-ú <sup>d</sup>a-bi-ri-il-lu
- 12) <sup>d</sup>a-tar-qu-ru-ma-a DINGIR.MEŠ šá LÚ.a-ri-bi
- 13) an-ḥu-su-nu ud-diš-ma da-na-an <sup>d</sup>aš-šur EN-ia
- 14) ù ši-ṭir MU-ia UGU-šú-nu áš-ṭur-ma ut-ter-ma ad-din-šú

Translation:

Col. iv.

- 1) (As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs,
- 5) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city, with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him.
- 10) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-qurumâ, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him.

## RINAP 4 2

Col. iii.

- 24) <sup>m</sup>la-a-a-le-e LUGAL URU.ia-di-i'
- 25) šá ul-tu la-pa-an GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia ip-par-ši-du
- 26) šal-la-at DINGIR.MEŠ-šú iš-mé-e-ma
- 27) a-na NINA.KI URU be-lu-ti-ia
- 28) a-di maḥ-ri-ia il-lik-am-ma

- 29) *ú-na-áš-ši-iq* GÌR.II-ia  
 30) *re-e-mu ar-ši-šú-ma aq-ta-bi-šú a-ḥu-lap*  
 31) DINGIR.MEŠ-šú šá *áš-lu-la da-na-an* <sup>d</sup>*áš-šur* EN-ia  
 32) UGU-šú-nu *áš-ṭur-ma ú-ter-ma ad-din-šú*  
 33) *na-ge-e* KUR.ba-a-zi *šu-a-tú*  
 34) *ú-šad-gil pa-nu-uš-šú*  
 35) GUN *man-da-at-tú be-lu-ti-ia*  
 36) *ú-kin še-ru-uš-šú*

Translation:

Col. iii.

24) Laialê, king of the city Iadi',  
 25-29) who had fled before my weapons, heard of the plundering of his gods and came to Nineveh, my capital city, before me, and kissed my feet.

30-36) I had pity on him and said to him 'Aḥulap!' I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, on his gods that I had carried off and I gave (them) back to him. I put that province of Bāzu under him (and) imposed on him my lordly tribute (and) payment.

### SAA 1 82<sup>66</sup>

Obv.

- 1) [*a-na* LUGA]L E[N<sup>1</sup>-ia]
- 2) <sup>1</sup>ARAD<sup>1</sup>-ka <sup>m</sup>DÛG.[GA-šil-É.ŠÁR.RA]
- 3) *lu* DI-mu *a-na* [LUGAL EN-ia]
- 4) *aš-šur* <sup>d</sup>NIN.LÍL [*a-na* LUGAL EN-ia *lik-ru-bu*]
- 5) *ina* UGU KUR.a[r-[*pa-a-a* ša LUGAL EN]
- 6) *iš-pur-an*-[*ni*<sup>1</sup> *ma-a a-ta-a* UDU.MEŠ-šú-nu]
- 7) ANŠE.A.AB.BA.[MEŠ-šú-nu *ina mad-bar*]
- 8) *i-ra-`u*-[*u x x x x x*]
- 9) *ina bu-bu-t*[*i i-ḥa-bu-tú šat-tú*]
- 10) *an-ni-tú* A.A[N.MEŠ *e-š*]u<sup>1</sup>
- 11) <sup>1</sup>x x<sup>1</sup> SAG [*x x x x*]-ia<sup>1</sup>
- 12) *ina ŠÀ-bi x*[*x x x*]x *šá-ak-nu*
- 13) ša LUGAL <sup>1</sup>EN<sup>1</sup> [*iš-pur*]-an-ni
- 14) *ma-a an-nu-rig a-na* URU.ḥi-in-za-ni
- 15) *ta-lak ma-a i-si-ka*
- 16) *lil-li-ku li-ir*<sup>1</sup>-`u-u

<sup>66</sup> The online edition of this text can be found at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao/saa01/P334372>.

- 17) TA <sup>1</sup>UGU<sup>1</sup> ÍD.*tar-ta-ri*  
 e. 18) *a-du* KUR.*su-ḫi*  
 19) *me-me-ni la-a i-pa-ri-<sup>1</sup>ki<sup>1</sup>*

Rev.

- 1) *an-nu-rig a-na-[k]u*  
 2) *a-na* KUR.*ḫi-in-za-ni* <sup>1</sup>*al-lak<sup>1</sup>*  
 3) *ta-ḫu-mu ša ú-ka-la-mu<sup>1</sup>-šá<sup>1</sup>-nu<sup>1</sup>-ni*  
 4) *ú-ra-mu-u e-ti-qu*  
 5) *ú-sa-ta-pu-lu i-ḫab-bu-tú*  
 6) *a-na* LÚ\*.GAL-*da-a-a-li-ia*  
 7) *ša a-pa-qi-du-ni la-a-šú*  
 8) *la-a i-šá-me-u a-na* LÚ\*.EN.NAM  
 9) *ša* URU.*kal-ḫa li-<sup>1</sup>qi<sup>1</sup>-bi<sup>1</sup>-u*  
 10) LÚ\*.SAG-šú *ina pa-an* KUR.*ar-pa-a-a*  
 11) *ša qa-ti-šú lip-<sup>1</sup>qi-dī<sup>1</sup>*  
 12) *ta-ḫu-mu* [O] *liš-<sup>1</sup>u-lu-u-ni*  
 13) *ina ŠÀ-bi* <sup>1</sup>*li<sup>1</sup>-ir-[<sup>1</sup>u-u]*  
 14) *i-se-niš* TÚG.*maš-kan-a-[ti-šú-nu]*  
 15) *ina* UGU *ta-ḫu-me ša* [LÚ\*.EN.NAM]  
 16) *ša* URU.*kal-ḫa lu-u* [*šá-ak-nu*]  
 17) <sup>1</sup>*šu<sup>1</sup>-nu ina* [Š]À<sup>1</sup> [*x x x*]  
 18e) *li<sup>1</sup>-ir<sup>1</sup>-<sup>1</sup>u-u* [*x x x*]  
 19e) [*x x x*] *i-ba<sup>1</sup>-š[<sup>1</sup>i x x]*  
 20e) [*x x x n*] *i<sup>?</sup> [x x x]*  
 s.1) <sup>1</sup>URU<sup>?</sup>.MEŠ<sup>1</sup> *i-ḫa-bu-tú la-a-šú* UDU.<sup>1</sup>MEŠ<sup>1</sup> ANŠE<sup>1</sup>.*gam<sup>1</sup>-mal<sup>1</sup>.MEŠ*  
 s.2) *l[a]-<sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup> i-ḫa-bu-tú* UN.MEŠ<sup>1</sup> *i-ḫa-bu-tú*

Translation:

Obv.

1-4) [To] the king, [my lo]rd: your servant Ṭab-[šill-Ešarra]. Good health to [the king, my lord! May] Aššur and Mullissu [bless the king, my lord!]

5-9) As to the A[rabs concerning whom the king, my lord] wrote to me: "[Why] do they graze [their sheep and] camel[s in the desert where they must resort to plundering] when hungry?" —

10-12) [Rains have been scarce this [year]; ...[.....] have been settling in [.....].

13-19) (As to) what the king, my lord, [wrote] to me: "Now, go to Hinzanu, and let them go and graze with you! There shall be no

restrictions from the banks of the Tharthar river up to the land of Suhu!",

Rev.

1-7) I will now go to Hinzanu, (but) they (are sure to) leave the territory I am assigning to them, move further downstream and plunder; they pay absolutely no heed to the chief scout I have appointed.

8-11) Let them order the governor of Calah to appoint a eunuch of his in charge of the Arabs under his jurisdiction; they should (then) ask me for a territory where to gra[ze]. All the same, [their] tents should [remain] in the territory of the [governor] of Calah (while) they are grazing in [.....

(Break)

e.1-2) They plunder *cities*; they never plunder sheep or camels, but they do loot people.

#### SAA 1 179<sup>67</sup>

Obv.

- 1) [*a-na* LUGAL EN-*ia*]
- 2) [ARAD-*ka* <sup>m</sup>EN-*liq-bi*]
- 3) [*lu* DI-*mu a-na* LU]GAL [EN-*ia*]
- 4) [KUR.*ma-a-tú* K]UR.*na-gi-u* *ša* L[UGAL DI-*mu*]
- 5) [LÚ\*.*ar*]-*ba-a-a ina bat-ti am-m*[*i-te*]
- 6) [*ša* ÍD.*h*]*a<sup>2</sup>-di-na šak-nu e-ru-b*[*u*]
- 7) [*ina* ŠÀ] <sup>1</sup>*x' i-me-ru ú-šu-u*
- 8) [DI-*mu a*]-*dan-niš* LÚ\*.ENGAR LÚ\*.NU.GIŠ.SAR
- 9) [*ša* <sup>m</sup>*a-mi*]-*li-i' -ti* DUMU <sup>m</sup>*a-me-ri*
- 10) [TA\* ŠÀ U]RU.MEŠ-*ia uk-ta-ši-di*
- 11) [*x x-t*]*ú*<sup>68</sup> *ši-i* *ša* UDU.MEŠ *ša ir-šip-u-ni*
- 12) *un-ta-gír ú-ma-a šu-ú i-tal-ka*
- 13) *ma a-ta-a* LÚ\*.ARAD.ME-*ia tú-še-l*[*i*]
- 14) *ma-a ina* É.GAL *a-šá-pa-ra a-na-ku te-g*[*ír-t*]*ú*
- 15) *a*-[*sa-k*]*an m*[*u-k*]*u* LÚ\*.ARAD.MEŠ-*ka a-na* LÚ\*.ARAD. <sup>1</sup>MEŠ-*[i]a*
- 16) *i*[*h*]-*ta-sa- 'u mu-ku* TA\* *ma-ši* <sup>1</sup>LÚ\*.ARAD<sup>1</sup>
- 17) *ša* LUGAL *at-ta-ni mu-ku* A.ŠÀ.[G]A GIŠ.SAR

<sup>67</sup> The online edition of this text can be found at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saa01/P313425>.

<sup>68</sup> The context here implies that this should be read as some sort of sheepfold, but this cannot be reconstructed with much certainty.

- 18) *ina* KUR.*ia-su-bu-qi la-di-na-ka ša-bat*  
 19) *šum-ma ina* UGU LUGAL EN-*ia i-šá-pa-ra*  
 20) LUGAL *be-lí lu-u-da ša* LUGAL *be-lí iš-<sup>1</sup>pur<sup>1</sup>-a-ni*  
 21) *ma-a* URU.*ḥu-za-za a-na* URU LÚ\*.DAM.QAR  
 22) *te-ta-<sup>1</sup>ap<sup>1</sup>-šá ma-a* AN.BAR UN.MEŠ *a-na*  
 23) LÚ\*.*ar-ba-a-a ina kas-pi i-tan-di-nu*  
 24) [*man-n*]u *šu-nu* LÚ\*.DAM.QAR.ME *ša ina ŠÀ-bi*  
 25) [*i-d*]i-*nu-ni* 3 ERIM.ME LÚ\*.AB.[B]A.M[E]  
 26) [š]a KUR. *'a-ta-a-a ina ŠÀ-bi x[x x]*  
 27) [GIŠ.KI]N.GEŠTIN.MEŠ *lu 20 lu [30 ANŠE]*  
 28) <sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-*mar nu-še-rab-u-ni ú-k[a]-l[u]*  
 29) [a]- <sup>1</sup>na LÚ\*.*ar<sup>1</sup>-ba-a-a i-d[u-nu]*

Rev.

- 1) <sup>1</sup>a-*na-ku* AN.BAR *a-na* LÚ\*<sup>1</sup>.*ḥu-ub-<sup>1</sup>ti<sup>1</sup>-[ma]*  
 2) <sup>1</sup>e<sup>1</sup>-*ra* <sup>1</sup>a-*na*<sup>1</sup> LÚ\*.<sup>1</sup>*ar<sup>1</sup>-ba-a-a a-<sup>1</sup>da-an<sup>1</sup>*  
 3) DINGIR.MEŠ *ša* <sup>1</sup>LUGAL EN<sup>1</sup> *šú[m-ma] ina* URU.*šu-pi-te*  
 4) <sup>1</sup>l<sup>1</sup>a *ka-<sup>1</sup>ra<sup>1</sup>-ku-u-ni* 30 ANŠE <sup>1</sup>GIŠ'.KIN.GEŠTIN<sup>1</sup>.MEŠ  
 5) *ina* URU.*ḥu-za-za ina kas-pi a-ti-din ina* UGU  
 6) *an-ni-ti* LUGAL *be-lí ina ŠU.2-ia* <sup>1</sup>lu<sup>1</sup>-*ba-<sup>1</sup>i*  
 7) 1-*en* [L]Ú\*.*ma-ki-su ina a-bul<sup>1</sup>-<sup>1</sup>li<sup>1</sup> ša* URU.*šu<sup>1</sup>-pat*  
 8) *i-sa-ka-nu ú-ma-a* LÚ\*.2-*ú ina* URU.*ḥu-za-za*  
 9) *i-sa-ka-nu* LÚ\*.*ar-ba-a-a ú-šu ina ŠÀ-bi*  
 10) *la-a i-la-ku-u-ni ig-du-ru a-na-ku*  
 11) *a-mar* LÚ\*.*ma-ki-se-e* TA\* LUGAL EN-*ia*  
 12) *la ke-nak* 1 <sup>1</sup>GÍN<sup>1</sup> KUG.UD <sup>1</sup>ša<sup>1</sup> *il-<sup>1</sup>ki<sup>1</sup>-ia ina ŠÀ-bi*  
 13) <sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-*na-ga-ra* LÚ\*.NAGAR.<sup>1</sup>MEŠ-*ia ša<sup>1</sup> ina* <sup>1</sup>URU.*šu<sup>1</sup>-p[i-te]*  
 14) [*dul-l*]u *e-pa-áš-u-ni* <sup>1</sup>iḥ<sup>1</sup>-[*ta*]l-*qu-u-ni*  
 15) [LUGAL *be-lí*] *i-sa-ap-ra ma-a [ina]* <sup>1</sup>URU<sup>1</sup>.BÀD-MAN-G[IN]  
 16) [*li-is*]-*ḥu-ru a-ša-bat ú-s[e]-ri-d[i]*  
 17) 1-*en in-ta-ra-ša* ÚŠ 1-*en* <sup>1</sup>i-*su<sup>1</sup>-ḥur*  
 18) *iḥ-tal-qa* LUGAL *be-lí ú-da* LÚ\*.UM.ME.A.MEŠ  
 19) [T]A\* *pa-ni-ia i-tú-ši-ú la a-na bat-qi*  
 20) [*la*] <sup>1</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-*na* GIŠ.*gu-ma-ki-li e-pa-a-ši*  
 21) [TA IGI]-*ia lu-ra-mi-šu-nu<sup>1</sup> m<sup>a</sup>-<sup>1</sup>ba<sup>1</sup>-tú*  
 22) [LÚ\*.NAGAR]-*mu-gir m<sup>a</sup>qa-ni-e* LÚ\*.SIMU[G]  
 23) [LÚ\*.ARAD.M]EŠ-*ni ša m<sup>a</sup>EN-MAN-[x ina* UGU-*ḥi-ia]*  
 24) [*i-tal-ku*]-*ni m[a-a x x x x x x]*  
 Rest (about two lines) broken away.

Translation:

Obv.

1-4) [To the king, my lord: your servant Bel-liqbi. Good health to the ki]ng, [my lord]! The k[ing's land and d]istrict [are well].

5-9) [The Ar]abs are settled on the other side of the [H]adina river; they come [...] ... and go, everything is [fine].

10-19) I have driven the farmer(s) and gardener(s) [of Ammi]li'ti son of Amiri [out of] my towns and torn down a [...] of sheep he had constructed. Now, he came to me saying: "Why have you expelled my subjects? I shall write to the Palace!" I *proposed a bargain*, saying: "Your subjects molested my subjects. But *since* you are the king's servant, I will give you fields and gardens in the land of Yasubuqu. Take it!" The king my lord should know this in case he writes to the king my lord.

20-r.2) As to what the king, my lord, wrote to me: "You have made Huzaza into a merchant town! The people have been selling iron for money to the Arabs!" — who are the merchants that have been selling there? Three men, elders of the 'Ateans, [are ...] there; they stock grapes, 20 or [30 homers], as much as we bring in, and sell them to the Arabs. I sell iron to the deportees [only], copper to the Arabs.

Rev.

3-6) By the gods of the king my lord (I swear) I am staying in Şupat! In Huzaza I have only sold 30 homers of grapes for silver. The king my lord should (only) hold me accountable for this!

7-12) A toll collector has been placed at the city-gate of Şupat, and now they have placed another one in Huzaza; the Arabs are leaving and not coming any more because they have become scared. Am I less loyal to the king my lord than a toll collector? And do I *appropriate* a shekel from my duty for doing it?

13-17) My carpenters who worked in Şupat ran away from me. [The king, my lord], wrote that [they should re]turn to Dur-Şarruken, so I got hold of them and brought them down, but one of them got sick and died while the other ran away again.

18-24) The king my lord knows that I have been losing artisans; I would not like to relinquish them either for *repair* work or for making ...s. Abattu, a chariot-maker, and Qanê, a smith, (both) servants of Bel-şarru-[u]şur, came to] me saying: "[.....

SAA 2 10<sup>69</sup>

Obv.

Beginning (at least 5 lines) broken away

- 1') [TA\* <sup>m</sup>x x x] A <sup>m</sup>ia-ú<sup>1</sup>-[ta-a' x x x]  
2') [(IGI) DINGIR.MEŠ KUR]-aš-šur DINGIR.MEŠ KUR.qi-id-[ri DÛ-šú-nu]
- 

- 3') [aš-šur] <sup>d</sup>NI[N].LÍL <sup>d</sup>š[e<sup>1</sup>-ru-u-a]
- 

- 4') [pit<sup>2</sup>-ti<sup>2</sup> š]á <sup>m</sup>ia-ú-ta-a' la MU[N-a-nu<sup>2</sup>]  
5') [pi-i G]ÍR.AN.BAR a-na ħa-lu-[qi o<sup>1</sup>]  
6') [KUR.a-ru-b]u<sup>2</sup> gab-bu id-din-<sup>r</sup>u<sup>1</sup>-[ni o<sup>1</sup>]  
7') [ina pi]- <sup>r</sup>i<sup>1</sup> GÍR.AN.BAR iš-kun-u-ka-nu-n[i]  
8') [<sup>m</sup>aš-šur]-<sup>r</sup>DÛ<sup>1</sup>-A <sup>r</sup>MAN<sup>1</sup> KUR-aš-šur EN-ku-nu  
9') <sup>r</sup>Ī<sup>1</sup>.GIŠ iš-kun-ak-ka-nu-u-ni  
10') pa-ni-šú SIG<sub>5</sub>.MEŠ ina UGU-ħi-ku-nu  
11') iš-kun-u-ni  
12') šum-ma at-tu-nu TA\* <sup>m</sup>ia-ú-ta-a'  
13') a-na MUN ta-qar-rib-a-ni  
14') šum-[ma TA\*] ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ku-nu ŠEŠ.ME A[D.MEŠ-ku-nu]  
15') [x x x x]x tu KUR [x x x x]  
16') [x x x x]x is [x x x x]  
Rest (at least 8) lines broken away

Rev.

Beginning (at least 6 lines) broken away

- 1') [x at]-tu-<sup>r</sup>nu<sup>1</sup> [x x x x x x]  
2') [šum-m]a GÎR.2-šú [x x x x x x x]  
3') [i-d]a-tu-uš-[šu x x x x x x]  
4') ina ŠU.2 me-me-ni ta-šap-pa[r]- <sup>r</sup>a<sup>1</sup>-[ni-(-šú-ni)]  
5') ina pu-ut sa-an-ka-a-te šá e-p[u-šu-u-ni]  
6') ina [U]GU du-a-ki-šú la ta-kap-pu-d[a-a-ni]  
7') la ta-ša[r]-rim-a-ni
- 

- 8') [<sup>d</sup>aš-šur <sup>d</sup>NI]N.LÍL <sup>d</sup>30 <sup>d</sup>UTU  
9') [<sup>d</sup>EN <sup>d</sup>P]A <sup>d</sup>r<sub>15</sub><sup>1</sup> [šá] NINA.[KI <sup>d</sup><sub>1</sub>]5  
10') [ša arba-íl <sup>d</sup>]U.GUR x[x x x]

<sup>69</sup> The online edition of this text can be found at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao/saao2/P336217>.

11') [x x x x x] x [x x x x]  
Rest broken away

Translation:

Obv.

(Break)

1'-2') [The treaty of Assurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria, son of Esarhaddon, likewise king of the world, king of Assyria, with *Abiyate'* son of *Te'ri*, his sons, grandsons, brothers and nephews, with all Qedarites, young and old, and with ...] son of Yau[ta', in the presence of all the gods of] Assyria and Qedar:

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3') [(Swear by) Aššur], Mullissu and Š[erua]:

---

4'-7') [*Considering* th]at Yauta' (your) malef[actor] handed all [Arab]s over to destruction [through] the iron sword, and put you to the sword,  
8'-11') [and that Assur]banipal, king of Assyria, your lord, put oil on you and turned his friendly face towards you,  
12'-13') you shall not strive for peace with Yauta',  
14') you shall not [... with] your brothers, [your] uncles ...  
(Break)

Rev.

6 lines broken away at beginning.

1') You shall [.....];

2'-4') [you] sh[all keep] his feet [off ...], and shall not send [...] after him by the hand of anyone,

5'-7') (but), considering the *terrible* things which he did, you shall make every effort to kill him.

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8'-10') [May Aššur, Mu]llissu, Sin, Šamaš, [Bel, Na]bû, Ištar [of Nineveh, Iš]tar [of Arbela], Nergal [...

(Rest destroyed)

**Sargon Geography, line 1.<sup>70</sup>**

- 1) [*ultu* .....] x *ti-tur-ri Ba-za*<sup>ki</sup> *šá pāt(zag) ḥarrān(kaskal) māt Me-luḥ-ḥ[a]*<sup>ki</sup>
- 2) [*adi... šadê e*] *rēni māt Ḥa-nu-ú 9 šarrānu(lugal.e.ne)*
- 3) [*ultu šadê er*] *ēni adi An-za-an <<ZA AN>>*<sup>ki</sup> *māt Subartu(su.bir<sub>4</sub>)*<sup>ki</sup>

Translation:

- 1) [From .....] ... the bridge of Baza on the edge of the road to the land Meluḥḥa,
- 2) [to ... the mountain of] cedar: the Ḥanaean land, nine kings.
- 3) [From the mountain of] cedar to Anzan: land of Subartu.

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<sup>70</sup> As edited in Grayson 1982.

## APPENDIX B: PALACE RELIEFS

This appendix contains a short table with the details of the three key palace reliefs included in this dissertation. These are the palace reliefs of the ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi, and the relief depicting dead, dying, and tortured ‘Arab’ women. I have included their figure numbers, which can be used to find the relief and discussion surrounding it in the main body of the dissertation, as well as a brief description of the contents of the relief, where it has been published, and the relevant museum numbers.

Figure Number	Description of scene	Bibliographic Information	Museum Numbers	Findspot
Fig. 5	‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi in a tribute-bearing posing, bringing aromatics and dromedaries to Tiglath-pileser III.	Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XXVI	BM 118901	Central Palace, Kalhu
Fig. 7	Line drawing of lost relief by Austen Henry Layard. Depicts ‘Queen of the Arabs’ Samsi fleeing the battlefield atop a dromedary.	Barnett & Falkner 1962: pl. XVII	[Original lost] Or. Dr. III. Central XIV.	Central Palace, Kalhu
Fig. 17	‘Arab’ camp raided by Assyrian soldiers. ‘Arab’ women are killed, and one is suffering a forced abortion at the hands of the Assyrian soldiers.	Barnett 1976: XXXIII; Dubovsky 2009.	BM 124927	North Palace, Nineveh

## APPENDIX C: THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

The 'Queen of Sheba' is the most famous female ruler of an Arabian population. She is still a powerful figure today, particularly in marginalised groups like the African-American community.<sup>1</sup> Yet the 'Queen of Sheba' has not featured in this study of the 'Queens of the Arabs' since her historical existence is questionable, as she is only present as a literary device in the Hebrew Bible.

The Hebrew Bible is a very complicated source, and there are serious risks in reading the events recorded within it literally. This is because the Hebrew Bible represents the basis of a major modern religion, which has resulted in some being cautious in their critical reading of this text, but others have emphasised its representation of factual events over other sources.<sup>2</sup> The latter has led some to use history and archaeology from the region to legitimise events found in this text.<sup>3</sup> This is a dangerous method, since the primary motivation is to prove that all events in the Hebrew Bible are factual. Yet despite these dubious uses of this religious text, it is evident that there are at least kernels of truth about events in the Hebrew Bible – particularly in the events that were also recorded in the Assyrian sources.<sup>4</sup> In these situations, the Hebrew Bible can provide a peripheral viewpoint to counter the Assyrian perspective, and comparisons can be made of historical events. The Hebrew Bible portrayed a cultural memory of these events, as much of this text was written well after the events it described. The latter is how I believe we should read the incident involving the 'Queen of Sheba'.

The 'Queen of Sheba' appeared in Kings 1, which was part of a larger history called the 'Deuteronomistic' history. This included Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel 1 and 2, and finally Kings 1 and 2.<sup>5</sup> The formation of these works is far from certain, and Fritz outlined the two main explanations of how they were formed: 'Stufenmodell' and 'Schichtenmodell'.<sup>6</sup> The 'Stufenmodell' is where the first edition of the Deuteronomistic history was completed by the end of the monarchy in approximately 587 BCE, which created a national identity. Then the narrative was expanded during the period of exile to explain the change in historical situation. The 'Schichtenmodell' is where the Deuteronomistic history was composed during the period of exile, and was expanded through revisions into the text we have now.<sup>7</sup> As the 'Queen of Sheba' has been dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See figure 30, a depiction of the Queen of Sheba from the African-American artist Romare Bearden. For an in-depth reading of these traditions see Pritchard 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Sweeney 2007: 2.

<sup>3</sup> An example of this is Coggins 1990: 42-54. After stating in one of Coggins' chapters that the Hebrew Bible should be treated as a literary work, the chapter following reads as if Coggins is justifying the study of archaeology in Israel by relating this field only to the Hebrew Bible.

<sup>4</sup> Coggins 1990: 23-40.

<sup>5</sup> Fritz 2003: 2.

<sup>6</sup> Fritz 2003: 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> Fritz 2003: 2-3.

century, even if we adopt the earlier dates of the ‘Stufenmodell’, we see that four hundred years have passed since this event, and Fritz has noted that it simply isn’t possible to trace the narrative back to this time.<sup>8</sup>

Kings is more like an ‘interpretive commentary’ on the royal history, with a complex and fractured chronology.<sup>9</sup> The information at the disposal of the author (who is known as the ‘Deuteronomistic Historian’) was used to present a particular viewpoint of Israelite history. If this was an accurate retelling of these events, the ‘Deuteronomistic Historian’ would have required access to sources that were written during the tenth century, but it is not certain whether any of these would have survived. This is the immediately issue when discussing the ‘Queen of Sheba’, as the passage of time between the events and their recording would have meant some aspects of this story would have been altered.

The events that involve the ‘Queens of Sheba’ are extremely limited, as she only appears in 13 lines of Kings 1, with a brief interlude in lines 11-12 regarding Hiram from Ophir:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>: <sup>10</sup>When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon (fame due to the name of the Lord), she came to test him with hard questions. <sup>2</sup>She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. <sup>3</sup>Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. <sup>4</sup>When the queen of Sheba had observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, <sup>5</sup>the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his valets, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.

<sup>6</sup>So she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom, <sup>7</sup>but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. Not even half had been told me; your wisdom and prosperity far surpass the report that I had heard. <sup>8</sup>Happy are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! <sup>9</sup>Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel forever, he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness.” <sup>10</sup>Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones; never again did spices come in such quantity as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

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<sup>8</sup> Fritz 2003: 118.

<sup>9</sup> Brueggemann 2000: 1-5.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Kings 10:1-13 (NRSV).

<sup>11</sup>Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which carried gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a great quantity of almug wood and precious stones. <sup>12</sup>From the almug wood the king made supports for the house of the Lord, and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers; no such almug wood has come or been seen to this day.

<sup>13</sup>Meanwhile King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, as well as what he gave her out of Solomon's royal bounty. Then she returned to her own land, with her servants.

The passage begins with a statement of how far the fame of Solomon had reached, and that the anonymous 'Queen of Sheba' wanted to test this reputation with a series of riddles.<sup>11</sup> The first purpose of this passage is given in its first line, as a foreign ruler from a distant land wished to test the veracity of Solomon's reputation. This is inkeeping with the overall aim of the book of Kings, which concerned itself with the 'royal history' of Israel from King David to the release of King Jehoiakim from Babylonian prison.<sup>12</sup> According to the 'Deuteronomistic Historian', the monarchic behaviour found in the rulers in Kings was the reason for the downfall of Israel, and in the same way the exile of Israel was a punishment for a nation failing to observe the Torah.<sup>13</sup> In order to stress this downfall, the author had to demonstrate just how far they fell, and thus had to stress the greatness of Solomon. In the same way as the Assyrian royal inscriptions, the book of Kings was written with a particular purpose and message.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the royal inscriptions, the events were in the distant past – several hundred years or so before the book of Kings was written. This means that the historical veracity of this event is in severe doubt.

There has been much debate over where precisely 'Sheba' should be located, but due to the lack of mentions in the Hebrew Bible, all agree that this was not a region local to Israel.<sup>15</sup> Three locations have been suggested: Ethiopia, Saba'a, and North Arabia. The Ethiopian argument I find flawed, as this is based on the reception of the 'Queen of Sheba' narrative in modern Ethiopia, and as such I agree with Sweeney that this backwards projection is inappropriate.<sup>16</sup> The second theory is that this woman came from the Sabaean kingdom in the South Arabian Peninsula, as the list of items she brought with her were also items famously from

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<sup>11</sup> The 'true' identity of this female ruler has vexed modern scholars, and has meant that the motivation behind her 'historical' visit to Solomon is more difficult to ascertain. I shall not delve into this question, as to me it is clear the 'Queen of Sheba' was a literary motif intended to prove the wisdom and impressive nature of Solomon (Sweeney 2007: 149; Fritz 2003: 118).

<sup>12</sup> Brueggemann 2000: 1; Sweeney 2007: 1.

<sup>13</sup> Sweeney 2007: 3; Cogan 2008: 97.

<sup>14</sup> For a discussion about this with regards to the royal inscriptions, see chapter 2, section 2.1.

<sup>15</sup> Brueggemann 2000: 131.

<sup>16</sup> Sweeney 2007: 149.

this region.<sup>17</sup> This is more plausible, but the arduous journey from the south of the Arabian Peninsula to Israel means it is doubtful that a leader would undertake this expedition simply to see if a rumour was true. In light of this, other scholars have suggested that this woman may represent a Sabaeen group, a ‘colony’, or trading post in the northern part of the Peninsula.<sup>18</sup> Whilst the exact location intended by the ‘Deuteronomistic Historian’ may never be fully explained, the point intended was clear – ‘Sheba’ was seen as a remote and unknown location, only accessible at the height of Solomon’s power, and was used to emphasise how far the fame of this king had reached.<sup>19</sup>

The ‘Queen of Sheba’ visited Solomon with the intention of testing his wisdom for proof that his reputation was accurate. Testing a ruler through riddles was a typical way of expressing the wisdom of a monarch, and here both parties were framed as intellectual equals.<sup>20</sup> When Solomon answered every riddle correctly, the ‘Queen of Sheba’ elevated him above any other wise king, and the ‘Deuteronomistic historian’ then used this as an opportunity for the ‘Queen of Sheba’ to declare that God had chosen the correct ruler.<sup>21</sup> The true motivations for this passage was to prove that Solomon was the legitimate monarch, as even the ruler of a far away and exotic location (the ‘Queen of Sheba’) could see that he was the rightful ruler.

The reason for the inclusion of the ‘Queen of Sheba’ is clear, as she was a literary figure used to illustrate the greatness and legitimacy of king Solomon. Yet this does not mean that every aspect was fictitious. The items given from her retinue bear a striking resemblance to the items given by the ‘Queens of the Arabs’ in the Neo-Assyrian period, hinting at a cultural memory of the wealth and items traded by earlier ‘Arab’ groups.<sup>22</sup> There has also been an interesting interpretation of this narrative as a cultural memory of a trade negotiation between Solomon and the ‘Arabs’. Brueggemann pointed out that gifts were given by the ‘Queen of Sheba’, but unknown gifts were also given to her by Solomon.<sup>23</sup> Eph‘al also followed this interpretation, adding that the location of Solomon would have meant he would have dominated all of the Palestinian trade routes for the wealth of the Arabian Peninsula to be traded through.<sup>24</sup> Fritz disagreed with this

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<sup>17</sup> Kings 1:10; Sweeney 2007: 150; For a discussion regarding these items and their economic role in the Arabian Peninsula, see chapter 4, section 4.1.

<sup>18</sup> Eph‘al and Fritz disagree with this argument (Eph‘al 1982: 64; Fritz 2003: 118).

<sup>19</sup> Brueggemann also adds that this exotic nature of the ‘Queen of Sheba’ would have added a sense of wonder to the story (Brueggemann 2000: 131; Fritz 2003: 119). This is the same motivation behind the inclusion of Dilmun in the inscriptions of Sennacherib (RINAP 3/2 168 36b-44a).

<sup>20</sup> Fritz 2003: 119; Sweeney 2007: 150.

<sup>21</sup> Fritz 2003: 120.

<sup>22</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.2 for more regarding the trade of goods through the Arabian Peninsula during the Neo-Assyrian period.

<sup>23</sup> Brueggemann 2000: 135. Sweeney also agrees with this position and pointed out that despite modern interpretations and receptions of this narrative, the Hebrew does not infer any sexual aspect to this transaction (Sweeney 2007: 151).

<sup>24</sup> Eph‘al 1982: 64. It is important to note that Eph‘al’s interpretation is reliant upon the ‘single journey’ model of trade through the Peninsula as outlined in chapter 4, section 4.2. This means Eph‘al

interpretation, as he rightfully noted that gift exchanges were a common ceremony between rulers, and that this particular aspect of the passage was used to demonstrate Solomon's generosity.<sup>25</sup> I do not go so far as Fritz, who said there is no truth to this story, as I believe this narrative is reliant upon the cultural memory of prominent female rulers of the 'Arabs'. These female rulers may have existed before our earliest Assyrian accounts from the eighth century, and may have conducted trade agreements with populations along the Levantine coast.<sup>26</sup> This suggests that there was a vague knowledge about trade deals with 'Arab' leaders during the Neo-Assyrian period to ensure wealthy items were available in Israel, and this knowledge may have been passed down to the 'Deuteronomistic Historian' in some fashion.

There are simply too many similarities between the 'Queen of Sheba' and the 'Queens of the Arabs' to say that they were completely unrelated. Some form of cultural memory of female rulers from the North Arabian Peninsula who interacted with Israel for trade negotiations survived for many years after their last attestation in the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions in the seventh century. From this point the memory was either written down or orally transmitted for the 'Deuteronomistic Historian' to use in his account of Solomon, to prove this king was worthy of rule. Even exotic female rulers had heard of how great a monarch he was.

These female 'Arab' rulers clearly left an impression upon not only the Assyrian kings, but other populations in the ancient Near East. Their inclusion as the literary and anonymous figure the 'Queen of Sheba' in the Hebrew Bible has meant they have also made a deep impression upon other audiences. Bellis has provided an excellent overview of the various receptions of the 'Queen of Sheba', and here I will outline some interesting aspects of the development of this character's narrative.<sup>27</sup> In the New Testament, the narrative became a story of conversion, where the 'Queen of Sheba' converted to Solomon's religion.<sup>28</sup> In the medieval period, there was a more misogynist twist, as she inexplicably became hairy – in some stories only on her legs (which she was tricked into revealing), and in some she was hairy all over.<sup>29</sup> It is only in the Qur'an where the 'Queen of Sheba' was given a name (Bilqis), but there was an evolution from hairiness to a more serious physical deformity she hid under her skirt.<sup>30</sup> In the Ethiopian

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believed this was a ruler from the south of the Peninsula travelling to ensure trade through the whole Peninsula was secured.

<sup>25</sup> Fritz 2003: 118, 120.

<sup>26</sup> Fritz 2003: 118.

<sup>27</sup> Bellis 1994.

<sup>28</sup> In Luke 11:31 and Matt. 12:42 the 'Queen of Sheba' – notably here she is called the 'Queen of the South' – was used by Jesus when he rebuked his generation as evil, as he said she will rise at judgement and condemn his generation. Bellis explained that Jesus was using the 'Queen of Sheba' to make clear that his generation should submit to him in the same manner as the 'Queen of Sheba' submitted to Solomon (Bellis 1994: 18).

<sup>29</sup> Bellis 1994: 18-19.

<sup>30</sup> Bellis 1994: 20.

tradition, the 'Queen of Sheba' was sexually assaulted by Solomon, and she gave birth to the founder of the Ethiopian monarchy.<sup>31</sup> The key aspect in all of these receptions is that the message had evolved from the glory of Solomon to the ability of Solomon to convert even the most exotic woman (through any means) to worshipping his god.<sup>32</sup>



**Figure 30** *One of the modern interpretations of the 'Queen of Sheba'. Romare Bearden (1970) She-Ba. [Collage] Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, USA.*

The 'Queen of Sheba' has captured the imaginations of modern audiences as well. In figure 30, Romare Bearden depicted this woman in a collage, and in the television series 'American Gods' based on Neil Gaiman's book, the 'Queen of Sheba' is present as the character Bilquis.<sup>33</sup> Both of these rely heavily upon modern conceptions and ideas of the 'Queen of Sheba', which is best seen in the character Bilquis who is a goddess of love and sex. This character has therefore evolved from one where the focus was on the glory of Solomon, to a character who symbolises the exotic and sexual aspects of humanity. Whilst this is a far cry from the depictions of the 'Queens of the Arabs' in the Assyrian sources, the enduring

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<sup>31</sup> Bellis 1994: 22-3.

<sup>32</sup> Bellis 1994: 23.

<sup>33</sup> American Gods 2017-2019.

fascination with ancient female rulers of what Western audiences view as 'exotic' locations means their influence over modern popular culture is hard to ignore.

The memory of female rulers in the Arabian Peninsula has stood the test of time, and has inspired the imaginations of many writers over generations. Many different groups have even co-opted these women for their own narratives and stories. The simple addition of a character intended to demonstrate just how far the reputation of Solomon has reached has meant that the cultural memory of the 'Queens of the Arabs' has extended into the present day.

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