1.4. Signification

Pour un Assyrien ou un Babylonien, il est essentiel que l'enfant reçoive un nom, celui-ci lui donne une réalité existentielle. C'est pourquoi l'anthroponymie est surtout fondee sur des idees religieuses. L'homme ou la femme portaient, leur vie durant (sauf changement éventuel dû aux circonstances), un nom qui les protegeait, qui ttait un rappel constant de leur devotion, qui temoignait de leur reconnaissance ou de leur piété. Il existait également des noms profanes; cette distinction entre noms religieux et noms profanes pourrait constituer une typologie, mais elle est peu justifiée dans la mesure où la disproportion entre les deux categories est trop grande. Une autre a été proposée par Stamm (1949), fondee sur la distinction entre les plaintes, les louanges, les expressions de joie ou de crainte, combinée avec le moment ou les paroles sont censees avoir été prononcées. Cette typologie aboutit a une certaine complication et à des redites. En somme, les NP akkadiens se répartissent en trois grandes categories.

1.4.1. Le nom refléte la façon dont les autres voient l'enfant ou celui-ci devenu adulte, ce qui implique la possibilité d'adopter un nouveau nom. Ce sont des NP de structure grammaticale simple: un nom, un adjectif, l'enfant s'appelle «Renard», «Ourson» ou «Bien fait»; c'est parfois un gentilice: «Babylo-

nien», une allusion au moment de la naissance: Nisan (l'enfant est ne ce mois-la).

1.4.2. Le NP se presente comme une constatation objective, sa structure est nominale ou verbale. On énonce que le dieu est bon, favorable, qu'il est une protection, un rempart, qu'il a sauve l'enfant, qu'il l'a nomme ou fait vivre … La divinité, en qui le fidele met sa confiance, se voit attribuer maintes qualites.

1.4.3. Le NP est construit comme une intervention subjective, soit de l'interesse lui-méme, soit de ses parents ou de ses fréres et soeurs. Cet aspect du NP se manifeste grammaticalement: emploi de la lere pers. du sing., d'un suffixe possessif. a) la personne interpelle la divinite, elle declare que le dieu est *son* rempart, *sa* protection, elle prie: «fais-moi vivre, aie pitié de moi». b) les parents interviennent prient, souhaitent, remercient le dieu ou s'adressent a l'enfant.

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124. Eblaite and Amorite Names

1. Introduction

It is a standard convention to consider third millennium Semitic as divided into three major language groups. The first is Old Akkadian, known from texts dating from about 2400 B. C. onwards and originating from mid and lower Mesopotamia. The second is Amorite, known almost exclusively from personal names found in Mesopotamian texts, begin-

ning especially towards the end of the third millennium. And the third is Eblaite (also Eblaic), known exclusively from the archives of the city of Ebla, and dating to shortly after the middle of the third millennium. To this neat tripartite scheme one must however object the following.

1.1. There is a close relationship between Eblaite and Old Akkadian, to the point that several scholars would subsume the former under the latter.

1.2. While Amorite is considered a West Semitic language on account of its similarities with later west Semitic languages such as Hebrew, in point of fact the provenance of most of the pertinent documentation is in the East.

This has been explained by assuming that the Amorites were in some way nomadic groups at home in the steppe, whence they came east to Mesopotamia. An alternative explanation is that they were a rural population of the Middle Euphrates, which took to the steppe and preserved a more original form of the same language spoken in the cities of Mesopotamia: Amorite and Old Akkadian/Eblaite may thus be considered as closely related sociolects, rural and urban respectively, originating from essentially the same region (Buccallati 1992a).

1.3. While some scholars view Amorite as innovative, others would consider it as the more archaic of the two.

The joint treatment of both Eblaite and Amorite onomastics in a single article is justified if one considers the very close structural similarity between the two (which extends also to Old Akkadian, for which however a separate treatment will be found in this volume under Akkadian). Onomastic analysis is particularly important for the study of Amorite because practically our entire knowledge is based on an inventory of a few thousand personal names – of which only a few hundred are already attested at the end of the third millennium. A similar situation obtains for Eblaite: an inventory count is difficult, because it is unclear at times how many different spellings may represent the same name, but there are at least several thousand onomastic items. The writing of the texts found at Ebla is primarily in Sumerian (only about 10% is explicitly in Eblaite); as a result, onomastics provides us with the most extensive documentation of the language. One should note that by Eblaite names we do not mean all the names found in Ebla, but only those which can be identified linguistically as Semitic, without for now being able to make any further distinction between indigenous and foreign Semitic names (Edzard 1988). Because of this special significance of onomastics for our reconstruction of both Amorite and Eblaite, much of the research in this area has centered on phonology, morphology and lexicon; these aspects of the research, however, will not be discussed here because they are not onomastic in nature and hence are extraneous to the argument of this volume (for a treatment of Amorite grammar see especially Huffmon 1965; Gelb 1980; for Eblaite see Fronzaroli 1982; Krebernik 1988; Buccellati 1992b). It should also be noted that, because

of the conservative nature of onomastics, our linguistic reconstruction of both Amorite and Eblaite may well reflect a period somewhat earlier than that of its documentation. It should further be pointed out that in the case of Old Akkadian we have a large corpus of textual evidence, so that onomastics is not, in that case, the only tool for grammatical reconstruction.

Two special caveats should be added for any type of onomastic study of Eblaite in particular. The first is that our understanding of graphemics is still rather limited, so that phonemic considerations have to be based on a very careful assessment of the textual documentation: this makes it very difficult for a linguist without philological preparation to evaluate the available evidence. (In the exemplification given here only phonemic renderings are used, without reference to the graphemic understanding which they presuppose.) The second is that prosopography plays a significant role for linguistic analysis, because it often shows how surprisingly different spellings might be used to refer to the same name-bearer, hence to the same name (Fronzaroli 1988; Platt, Pagan 1990).

2.   Personal Names: Name Composition

2.1. The most frequent name type in both Eblaite (Fronzaroli 1988) and Amorite (Huffmon 1965) is a two element sentence, with either a nominal or a verbal predicate. In Eblaite, the verbal predicate occurs regularly in first position, e.g. *iptur-Dagan* "DN loosened." The nominal predicate, too, occurs more frequently in first position. e.g. Ebl. *aba-Lim* "DN is father"; the inversion of the two elements is found less frequently, e.g. *Hadda-ahu* "DN is brother." Note that the verbal form known in later West Semitic as perfect seems to be attested in Amorite, e.g. *malak-ili* "my god rules," and is for now uncertain in Eblaite.

2.2. Hypocoristica are the next most frequent type. They exhibit a structural differentiation in Eblaite vs. Amorite. While the common pattern, in both languages, consists in the addition of a given suffix to one of the elements of the name, Eblaite resorts even more frequently to the use of a simple verbal form, without any suffix; see the following para-

digm of attested forms from the roots *phr* "to gather" and *hrr* (meaning unknown):

FULL-NAME	HYPOCORISTICA			
	VERB +*u(m)*	VERB +*a*	VERB +*anum*	VERB +Ø
Ebl. *iphur-Kura*	*iphur-**u***	*iphur-a*	—	*iphur*
AM. *yaphur-Lim*	*yaphur-**um***	*(yahrur-a)*	*yaphur-anum*	*(yahrur)*

The forms in parenthesis are rare; note in particular that Eblaite forms with the *t* infix occur only as a suffixless hypocoristicon, e. g. *irtakas* (no **irtakas-DN*)"he bound (for himself?)." Conversely, verbal forms with suffix -*anum* are found only in Amorite.

2.3. Genitive compounds are not infrequent. They may be distinguished depending on the nature of the construent, which can be one of the following: a noun of description, e. g. Ebl. *zikir-Damu* "command of DN", Am. *milki-Dagan* "advice of DN"; a noun of subject, e. g. Ebl. (rare) *dd-Hadda* "the one of DN," Am. *'abdu-Dagan* "servant of DN"; and perhaps a preposition, e. g. Ebl. *mahra-Damu* "in front of DN."

2.4. Single element names (except for hypocoristica) are not very common, and they consist essentially of primary nouns (especially animals), e. g. Ebl. *ja'labu* "fox," Am. *arad-an* "wild donkey," or adjectival formations, e. g. Ebl. *hunabum* "wonderful."

2.5. Address formulas are rare, e. g. Ebl. *minu-Kura* "what is it, o DN?"

3. Personal Names: Semiotics

While the lexical value of the onomastic elements can by and large be derived from etymological considerations, the fuller semiotic value of a name remains often unclear, largely because of the paucity of proper contextual settings and the lack of information about ideology in general. In many cases a semiotic inference may be drawn from the semantics of the individual elements, with varying degrees of probability: thus a name like Ebl. *silli-Dagan* "in the shadow of DN" would seem to refer to the protective role of the divinity, and Am. *yantin-Haddu* "DN gives" to divine generosity. Already more problem-

atic is a name like Ebl. *ipfur-Kura* "DN loosened," which may or may not refer to redemption from sin and harm. But then there are names like Ebl. *indd-Damu* or Am. *yanud-Lim,* which may be translated literally as "DN moves about," but remain quite opaque as to their real meaning.

In spite of all limitations, we can still draw some interesting conclusions about semiotics from an analysis of the structure of the names, for instance with regard to the high incidence of divine names within onomastics. Of the four compositional types described above, only the single element names are essentially descriptive, while all the others are primarily theophoric, i. e. they either have or presuppose (in the case of hypocoristica) a divine name or a divine epithet. Exceptions are few and often uncertain, like Ebl. *arši-aha* "I received a brother," *ma-ašta-šu* "who is near him?" or Am. *'ayyan-Sarri* "where is my king?" (a theophoric interpretation is also possible). This is in contrast, for instance, with the role that the king has in Sumerian onomastics, or with the growing expressions of psychological feelings present in later Akkadian onomastics.

Also, some inferences may be drawn on the basis of comparisons with later onomastics. The high incidence of kinship terms used primarily as divine epithets reflects a common, Semitic onomastic pattern which projects onto the divine world the legal and emotional bonds of family life. A distinctive feature of Amorite in this respect is the common use of the terms *'ammu* and *halu* as paternal and maternal uncle respectively, which are considered to be indicative of the more rural/nomadic background of Amorite society. It is interesting to note that in Eblaite (and Old Akkadian, but not later Akkadian) there are two analogous (if rarer) lexical items which may be possibly interpreted in a similar way.

4. Personal Names: Name-giving

While it should be noted that we know practically nothing about name-giving as such, an interesting related question pertains to the social affiliation of the name-bearers. In Ebla, we seem to have the same types of PN's equally distributed among urban and rural classes, where the first would include for instance palace functionaries, and the latter farmers or shepherds. The proliferation of Amorite names, on the other hand, seems to be inversely proportional to the number of

individuals who were speaking Amorite. This may be explained as follows. In the earlier periods (down to about 2000 B.C.), the Amorites were primarily peasants who would not come frequently in contact with the urban centers to which we owe the record of their existence; some of these peasants would become assimilated linguistically, adopt Sumerian or Akkadian names, but still be identified as Amorites (written MAR.TU in Sumerian) in the texts because of the ethnic distinctiveness which they had retained. After 2000 B.C., they began to expand in such numbers that they could no longer be labeled as (ethnically) Amorite in the texts; while they would retain their names (which are the only trace left of their original ethnic affiliation), they would in fact assimilate thoroughly to the Akkadian milieu, and give up their original dialect, of which no trace is found in the large textual inventory of the period, except for their names.

A peculiarity which Eblaite (but not Amorite) shares with Akkadian is that verbal forms agree in gender with the sex of the name-bearer rather than with the gender of grammatical subject within the name itself: *iphur-Hadda* (ms-ms) vs. *taphur-Hadda* (fm-ms) both meaning "DN (ms.) has gathered," but the first referring to a male, and the second to a female name-bearer (Fronzaroli 1990).

5. Divine Names

Divine names (Pardee 1988; Westenholz 1988; Stieglitz 1990) represent an area where there is the most differentiation between Ebl. and OAkk on the one hand, and on the other considerable overlap between Ebl. and Am. Several DN's can be shown to have a Semitic etymology, whereby a DN may be either a primary noun (e.g. Ebl./Am. *Lim* "thousand" or "clan"; Am. *Samsu* "sun") or a descriptive deverbal nouns (such as Ebl./Am. *Rašap,* a nether world god, from the root *ršp* "to flame"). There seems to be no composite DN, as with Akk. *itur-Mer.* Divine epithets (such as Ebl./Am. *ba'l* "lord") are all Semitic. But there are also several deities of the "Semitic" pantheon for whose name no plausible Semitic etymology can be given, e.g. Ebl./Am. *'attar,* the goddess of the morningstar.

6. Geographical Names

Most of the geographical names found in Ebla (Krecher 1988) are not Semitic, suggesting that they were left-over from the autoch-

thonous population. Hence most of the research dealing with this subject has concentrated on place identification rather than on lingusitic or onomastic analysis (Archi et al. 1993).

Amorite toponyms are also rare. This is due in part to a different reason. Since they were originally a non-urban population, we do not expect apriori that towns or cities should be named after them. Hence we find at most an Amorite element embedded in an Akkadian toponym, e.g. *dur-yahdun-Lim* "fortress of PN," where the PN is, in this case, the name of a king bearing an Amorite name. Interestingly, we do not find toponyms of this type in Ebla. But the scarcity of Amorite toponyms to refer to hydro- and orographic features of the countryside, where the Amorites were at home, suggests that in this area too pre-Semitic toponymy held sway — e.g. the hilly range *Bašar* (today the Jebel Bishri) or the river *Habur* (which retains the same name until today).

There are, nevertheless, some true Amorite toponyms, used to refer to tribal units and their territories, or to certain special features of the Amorite landscape. Those of the first type are often identical to personal names, as with the hypocoristicon *yam'ad* "he promises (?)." Toponyms of the second type can be found in the description of the two river banks, which divide the steppe in two major regions on either side of the Euphrates. Two parallel sets of terms are found (Buccellati 1990), depending on the orientation one takes vis-a-vis the river: *yamina* and *šam'al* are respectively the "right" and "left (bank)" as one looks at the course of the river flowing downstream; while *aharatum* and *aqdamatum* are respectively the "(region) behind" and "in front" as one looks at the river from the western side, where the major cities are located; of the corresponding modern Arabic toponyms *šamiya/jazira* only the second maintains a perceptual reference to the river, but in a more cartographic sense, which echoes the Greek term "Mesopotamia" (*jazira* is the "island" between Euphrates and Tigris).

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125. Ugaritic Names

1.   Language

1.1. Ugaritic was a Canaanite language spoken and fixed in writing in the kingdom whose capital, Ugarit, was located on the Mediterranean Sea in Northern Syria. The destruction of this city shortly after 1200 B. C. spelled the end of this Late-Bronze-Age language.

1.2. In 1929 a French archaeological expedition headed by Claude F.-A. Schaeffer excavated at the hill called Ras Shamra the first clay tablets in the, until then, unknown cuneiform script. This script was deciphered within a short time by the combined efforts of Hans Bauer, Paul (Edouard) Dhorme, and Charles Virolleaud. Its relationship to Hebrew and Phoenician helped both in the decipherment and the recognition of the language as Northwest Semitic.

1.3. The Ugaritic cuneiform alphabet of 30 letters is able to render the consonant phonemes very exactly, but — as in most Semitic alphabetic scripts — the vowels are, in general, not indicated. A felicitous inconsistency introduced in the Ugaritic alphabet allows recognition of some vocalic features: Three letters of the Ugaritic alphabet indicate the glottal stop (from the phonetic viewpoint a zero sound, marked in Semitic alphabets by an Aleph letter) preceded — or followed — by basic vowels /a/, /i/, /u/. — As many Ugaritic personal names are attested in Akkadian syllabic cuneiform tablets, information about their vocalic structures can be obtained from these sources, which do not indicate the consonant phonemes exactly enough.

2.   Sources

2.1. About 1500 alphabetic texts were found in the ruins of the city of Ugarit at Ras Shamra. These texts are accessible in the 1976 edition by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz and

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