

# Ebla and Beyond

Ancient Near Eastern Studies  
after Fifty Years of Discoveries at Tell Mardikh

Proceedings of the International Congress Held in Rome,  
15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Edited by

Paolo Matthiae, Frances Pinnock and Marta D'Andrea

2018

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden



## CONTENTS

PROGRAM .....	vii
Maamoun ABDULKERIM	
Greeting Address .....	1
Frances PINNOCK	
Opening Speech .....	3
Michel AL-MAQDISSI	
Notes d'Archéologie Levantine LII. Remarques introductives sur des Archives de R. du Mesnil du Buisson conservées au DAO du Musée du Louvre .....	7
Agnese VACCA	
Centralization Before the Palace. The EB III-IVA1 Sequence on the Acropolis of Tell Mardikh/Ebla .....	35
Corinne CASTEL	
Urban Planning and Urbanization in 3 <sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC Syria. Tell Al-Rawda in Context .....	75
Walther SALLABERGER	
Kura, Youthful Ruler and Martial City-God of Ebla .....	107
Pascal BUTTERLIN	
From Mari to Ebla, Designs of Interculturality? .....	141
Manfred KREBERNIK	
Syllables in Eblaite and Their Representation .....	169
Lisa COOPER	
Half-Empty or Half-Full? Past and Present Research on EB IV Caliciform Goblets and their Chronological and Socio-Economic Implications .....	181
Benjamin FOSTER	
The Akkadian Adventure in Syria .....	209
Marta D'ANDREA	
The Early Bronze IVB Pottery of Ebla: Stratigraphy, Chronology, Typology and Style .....	221

Mohammed ALKHALID One Hundred Years of Change at Ebla. The Pottery Assemblages between the 3 <sup>rd</sup> and the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC .....	257
Ahmed Fatima KZZO Cappadocian Style Seals at Ebla .....	283
Davide NADALI Inward/Outward: A Re-Examination of the City-Gates at Ebla .....	295
Andrea POLCARO Urban Landscape and Funerary Ideology in Old Syrian Ebla .....	317
Jean-Marie DURAND Les textes d'Ébla "paléobabylonienne" .....	345
Grégory CHAMBON La mesure de longueur "coudée" à Mari Amorrite .....	379
Adelheid OTTO Basins in the Temples of Ebla, Syria and Upper Mesopotamia: An Essential Cult Requisite? .....	397
Marian FELDMAN Tracing Northern Networks among the Arts of Syria in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages .....	421
Glenn M. SCHWARTZ The Value of the Vestigial: From Middle to Late Bronze in Ebla and Western Syria .....	439
Sara PIZZIMENTI Ebla in the Iron Age: New Evidence from the Acropolis. Remarks from a Work in Progress .....	475
Maria Gabriella MICALE Clay Figurines in the Persian Achaemenid Near East as Seen from Tell Mardikh .....	495
Paolo MATTHIAE Final Considerations .....	517

## PROGRAM

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December

Comune di Roma, Sala della Protomoteca, Piazza del Campidoglio, Palazzo Senatorio

9:30 Opening Session

Ignazio Marino, Mayor of Rome

Louis Godart, Counsellor of the President of Italian Republic

Francesco Rutelli, President of the Association Priorità Cultura

Eugenio Gaudio, President of Sapienza University of Rome

Roberto Antonelli, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei

Roberto Nicolai, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Sapienza University of Rome

Enzo Lippolis, Director of the Department of Old World Studies, Sapienza University of Rome

\*Maamoun Abdulkerim, Director-General, Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus

\*Frances Pinnock, Sapienza University of Rome, Co-Director of the Archaeological Expedition at Ebla

Morning Session (Chair: Stefania Mazzoni)

11:30 P. Steinkeller (Harvard University), Ebla's Place in the International Trade Network at ca. 2350 BC

\*12:00 P. Butterlin (Université Paris I – Sorbonne), Du lapis, de la cornaline et de la chlorite: Mari et les échanges au III<sup>e</sup> millénaire

\*12:30 W. Sallaberger (Ludwig-Maximilian Universität), God Kura in a Comparative Perspective

Afternoon Session (Chair: Nicolò Marchetti)

Sapienza Università di Roma, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Aula I, Piazzale Aldo Moro 5

\*15:00 B. Foster (Yale University), The Akkadian Adventure in Syria

15:30 L. Kogan (Russian State University for Humanities), East Meets West: The Impact of Ebla on the East/West Semitic Lexical Dichotomy

\*16:00 G. Chambon (Université de Lille), Comparaison dans les notations des chiffres et des mesures à Ebla, au III<sup>e</sup> et au II<sup>e</sup> millénaires

17:00 A. McMahon (University of Cambridge), Spinning and Weaving: The Textile Industry at Tell Brak in Light of the Evidence from Ebla

- \*17:30 C. Castel (Maison de l'Orient Méditerranéen, Université de Lyon 2), Urbanisme et urbanisation dans la Syrie du III<sup>e</sup> millénaire  
\*18:00 A. Vacca (Sapienza University of Rome), "Ebla wasn't built in a day" ... Reappraising the Formative Phases Preceding the State Archive Period at Tell Mardikh-Ebla

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December

Sapienza Università di Roma, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Aula I, Piazzale Aldo Moro 5

Morning Session (Chair: Alfonso Archi)

- \*9:30 M. Krebernik (Universität Jena), Syllables in Eblaite and Their Representation in the Eblaite Writing System  
\*10:00 A. Kzzo (Sapienza University of Rome), Cappadocian Style Seals at Ebla  
\*11:00 L. Cooper (University of British Columbia), Half-Full or Half-Empty? Past and Recent Research of EBIV 'Caliciform' Goblets and Their Chronological and Socio-Economic Implications  
11:30 G. Philip (University of Durham), North of South: Inter-Regional Connections and Contrasts in EBA Syria-Palestine  
\*12:00 M. D'Andrea (Sapienza University of Rome), The Early Bronze IVB Pottery of Ebla: Stratigraphy, Chronology, Typology, and Style. Remarks from a Work-in-Progress

Afternoon Session (Chair: Maria Giovanna Biga)

- \*13:30 J.-M. Durand (Collège de France), La documentation paléo-babylonienne d'Ebla et sa situation par rapport à la documentation syrienne  
14:00 A.A. Burke (UCLA, University of California), Ebla and the Identification of the Levantine Amorite *Koiné*  
\*14:30 D. Nadali (Sapienza University of Rome), Inward/Outward: A Re-Exam of the Four City-Gates at Ebla  
15:30 I.J. Winter (Harvard University), Wood and Ivory: Ebla's Contribution to Understanding Ancient Architectural Decoration and Furniture of Ancient West Asia  
\*16:00 M. Al-Maqdissi (Chargé de Mission, DGAM Damas), Mishrifeh-Qatna, quatre-vingt-dix ans de recherches archéologiques '1924-2014'  
\*16:30 A. Polcaro (Università degli Studi di Perugia), Urban Landscape and Funerary Ideology in Old Syrian Ebla: Analysis of the Tombs in Areas B and FF

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December

Sapienza Università di Roma, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Aula I, Piazzale Aldo Moro 5

Morning Session (Chair: Luca Peyronel)

- \*9:00 M. Feldman (Johns Hopkins University), Tracing Northern Networks Among the Arts of Syria in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages

- \*9:30 A. Otto (Ludwig-Maximilian Universität), Basins in the Temples of Ebla and Upper Mesopotamia: An Essential Cult Requisite?
- \*10:00 M. Alkhalid (Sapienza University of Rome), From Ebla to the East and Back to the South: Ceramic Horizons in the Transition Phases Between the MB I and MB II
- \*10:50 G. Schwartz (Johns Hopkins University), The Value of the Vestigial: From Middle to Late Bronze in Ebla and Western Syria
- \*11:20 S. Pizzimenti (Sapienza University of Rome), Ebla in the Iron Age. New Evidences from the Acropolis Excavations. Remarks from a Work in Progress
- \*11:40 M.G. Micale (Sapienza University of Rome), Clay Figurines in the Persian Achaemenid Near East as seen from Tell Mardikh
- \*12:30 Conclusions, P. Matthiae, Sapienza University of Rome, Director of the Archaeological Expedition at Ebla

\* Contributions published in this volume, in some instance with a different title.

KURA, YOUTHFUL RULER AND MARTIAL CITY-GOD OF EBLA

1. EBLA'S PANTHEON IN AN EARLY BRONZE AGE CONTEXT<sup>1</sup>

In polytheism, the complex organization of the cosmos is mirrored in the pantheon, where deities represent certain functions both in nature and in culture. The relations between the gods define and limit the functions and realms of a deity, as Gladigow (1998; 2002) underlined in a theoretical perspective.<sup>2</sup> In the Mesopotamian pantheon of the Early Bronze Age, for example, Ningirsu was defined as the husband of Bau and as the city-god of Girsu. The divine pair constituted the local ruling couple and thus paralleled the city-ruler and his wife. From a political perspective, Ningirsu represented the city-state of Girsu, in the same way as Šara, Inana's son, represented the neighbouring state of Umma. However, Ningirsu was not the divine ruling king, but the son and "warrior of Enlil" of Nippur, and was charged with the responsibility of managing the agricultural land and directing the army. Other warrior gods like Ningirsu were all conceptualized as sons of Enlil, but they were associated with other cities, such as Ninurta of Nippur, Zababa of Kiš, Uraš of Dilbat. The youthful warrior Ašgi might have been a similar type of deity, but his character was defined as the son of the mother-goddess Nindur of Keš.

Thus, in a polytheistic system, it is not enough to describe the character of a god according to his function as a "warrior", "ruler", "storm-god", "mother-goddess" etc.; many additional factors contribute to the role of a deity and his or her *persona* (Pongratz-Leisten 2014). In light of this basic principle, the historical context evidently proves to be substantial in order to understand divine roles. The moon-god, for example, played a different role under the kings of Ur than in the Neo-Assyrian empire; or, similarly, Ea's leading function in magic during the later periods is not foreshadowed by Enki in incantations from the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium (Ceccarelli 2015); and although Ur-Namma of Ur had a large temple built for the mother-goddess at Keš, this site was soon abandoned. Clearly, the social, economic and political conditions as well as the transformations of Mesopotamian history shaped the role of the gods.

1 I am grateful to Paolo Matthiae and Frances Pinnock for the invitation to Rome, to them and Marta D'Andrea for the wonderful organization and their extraordinary patience with my contribution. For discussions related to this article, help with secondary literature and useful remarks, I am primarily indebted to Alfonso Archi, Maria Giovanna Biga, Marco Bonechi, Amalia Catagnoti, Dominique Charpin, Manfred Krebernik, Adelheid Otto, Zsolt Simon and Maria Vittoria Tonietti. Catherine Jones corrected the English with greatest care.

2 For Mesopotamia see Krebernik 2002; Sallaberger 2004.



Studies on the pantheon of Ebla in the period of the royal archives (24<sup>th</sup> century BC), have highlighted the tradition of divine names and their roles in Ebla itself and in the larger region of Syria and beyond: besides the comprehensive monograph on Eblaite divine names by Pomponio and Xella (1997), single deities have been examined such as the storm-god Hadda of Halab (Archi 2010a) and his consort Halbatu/Haybatu/Ĥepat (Archi 1994), Išhara and Ištar,<sup>3</sup> Dagan<sup>4</sup> and his consort Šalaš (Archi 1995). These discussions have made it clear that traditions of the Eblaite pantheon can rarely be traced down to Old Babylonian Mari (19<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), but lead more often to the cities of the Mittani kingdom, were partly absorbed by the Hittite kingdom, and can often be traced to Ugarit on the Mediterranean coast, the sources dating to the Late Bronze Age (16<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries BC).

Kura, Ebla's city-god, left no well recognizable traces in later traditions (see section 2) and thus his character is more difficult to understand. The rich cuneiform corpus from Ebla itself mainly consists of administrative documents, and thus gods are only referred to as the recipients of gifts or in the context of short notes concerning rituals. Neither monumental texts focusing on the ruler's relationship to a deity nor narrative texts are known from Ebla that describe the gods of the local pantheon.<sup>5</sup>

However, despite this fact, some aspects of Kura can be fairly well understood if compared with the role of other gods in contemporary southern Mesopotamia. Seen from the perspective of later millennia, it might be bold to include Ebla in the wider Syro-Mesopotamian horizon. In the case of the Early Bronze Age, i.e. the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, the consideration of such a wide perspective is supported by the geopolitical situation and is in fact a prerequisite of it. When Ebla was at its peak during the Pre-Sargonic period, or in absolute terms the 24<sup>th</sup> century BC, Upper Mesopotamia was a flourishing region which mediated between Babylonia and Assyria on the one side and Syria, the region to the west of the Euphrates, with Ebla on the other. This broad horizon is well documented by cultural, economic and political connections; and among the more impressive examples one might refer to like the lexical and literary texts that attest to the Mesopotamian tradition at Ebla; or to the political alliance and dynastic marriages with Kish and with Nagar in the Habur triangle; or thirdly to the fact that news referring to actions in Babylonia were reported at the court of Ebla such as the defeats of Adab, Akshak, or Kish. With the dramatic decline of the urban culture in Upper Mesopotamia especially in the 23<sup>rd</sup> century during the Sargonic period, these close ties suddenly came to an end.<sup>6</sup> The decline of these cities also resulted in the disappearance of associated cultural identities and local cults. Whereas in Lower Mesopotamia

3 Archi 1993; Prechel 1996.

4 Feliu 2003; Otto 2006; Archi 2008.

5 Note that the literary texts (*ARET 5*) describe a (Northern) Mesopotamian pantheon.

6 Sallaberger 2007; 2011 on the historical development of Upper Mesopotamia as a region linking Babylonia and Syria; for a more detailed view on Ebla only, see e.g. Archi 2015.

many gods were venerated at the same city from the 3rd to the 1st millennium, similar traditions rarely existed in Upper Mesopotamia as most cities were not continually occupied. Without the documents from Tell Beydar, for example, it would not have been possible to ascertain the importance of Šamagan, god of the gazelles, in the Habur region (Sallaberger 1996a: 87).

The decline of urban culture and the dominance of pastoralists in Upper Mesopotamia at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium led to a new division between Mesopotamia proper and Syria, and both regions developed more independently. For the Early Bronze Age, however, this division had not yet occurred, and it is against this background that I adduce aspects from Lower Mesopotamia to elucidate cultural practices at Ebla.

## 2. THE NAME OF KURA

In the cuneiform script, the god's name is invariably written <sup>d</sup>KU.RA. The syllabic reading <sup>d</sup>ku-ra seems to be unambiguous: KU is read *ku* in Ebla,<sup>7</sup> as well as in Mari (Charpin 1987: 126), and RA is only *ra*.

Bonechi (1997: 499–501; similarly 2016a: 106, fn. 69), following the observations of Krebernik (1988 *s.vv.*) on the variation of names, pointed to the variation of the element *šu-ra-* // *ku-ra-* in the names of the individuals *šu*/KU-*ra-da-mu*, a royal prince, and *šu*/KU-*ra-gar-ru*<sub>12</sub>, a political leader. Bonechi (1997) therefore proposed that *ku-ra* should be read as *šu<sub>x</sub>-ra* and that it should be understood as *tūğra* (or: *tū'ra*) "victoire (guerrière), arme victorieuse", an unattested PuRS noun formation derived from *tğr/t'ğr*,<sup>8</sup> the verb known as *ša'ārum* "to be victorious" in Old Akkadian. Bonechi (1997: 499–501) also suggested that the divine name <sup>d</sup>ku-ra could be understood in the same way as the element of the personal names, namely as <sup>d</sup>šu<sub>x</sub>-ra, "victory, victorious weapon". In a later study, he furthermore excluded that the name is related to the word *tūrum* "bull" (Bonechi 2016a: 69, fn. 10).

The variation *šu-ra*/KU-*ra* in the form of the two personal names should not be ignored. KU and *šu* could be taken as variant phonographic writings, as Bonechi (1997: 500) did. His reading *šu<sub>x</sub>* for KU remains an *ad hoc* interpretation (as would a hypothetical *ku<sub>x</sub>* for *šu*), since phonographic uses of KU as *su*<sub>h</sub><sub>5</sub> (Sallaberger 2003: 610, fn. 5) or *ši<sub>5</sub>/še<sub>10</sub>* (see Borger 2010: 205 *sub* 808) seem not to be attested elsewhere. One cannot expect additional help from Krebernik's (1988: 22) observation that the personal name KU-*ir-ma-lik* (ARET 3, 930; no photo) can be compared to *si-ir-ma-lik* (ARET 1, 11 obv. vii 3) and can thus be corrected to *šē<sup>l</sup>-ir-*, since the names refer to different individuals. In addition, KU-*ir-ma-lik* is attested elsewhere (ARET 4, 11 obv. x 5, rev. xiii 11; photo clear KU/DÚR). In our discussion of the

7 Krebernik 1992; Catagnoti 2013: 56, no. 323.

8 On the root see Kogan 2011: 165–166, fn. 3 (reference courtesy of M. Krebernik); see also Catagnoti 2012: 59, fn. 226.

reading of the divine name <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* it should be underlined that the element *šu-ra-/ku-ra* is almost only attested in the two names mentioned by Bonechi,<sup>9</sup> with the *šu-ra-* variant slightly more frequent than *ku-ra-* (8× *ku-ra-gār-ru*<sub>12</sub> – 8× *šu-ra-gār-ru*<sub>12</sub>; 5× *ku-ra-da-mu* – 12× *šu-ra-da-mu*). The divine name *Kura*, however, always appears in the form <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra*. Therefore, the divine name was probably not related to the predicate element of the personal names.

Can the divine name <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* be read in another way? The sign *KU* (with a determinative) appears once in a lexical list (*VE* 495a) as <sup>DES</sup>*TUKUL* “weapon”. But, given the often syllabic writing of divine names, a Sumerographic interpretation of *KU.RA* as, hypothetically, *TUKUL-RA* “hitting with the weapon” seems unlikely, especially since this is not an idiomatic expression in Sumerian.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, as already noted by Bonechi (1997: 499) in his discussion of the divine name, the syllable *ku* is usually written with the sign *GÚ* at Ebla. On the basis of the nowadays available evidence, however, *ku* can surely be seen as a phonogram representing *ku* in Eblaite texts. *ku* (*κU*) mostly appears in personal names with *i/a-ku-* (*yakūn-*) and in the Semitic logogram *ku-tu* (Catagnoti 2012: 23); Catagnoti (*ibid.*) points to the rare case of *ku-bu*<sub>16-a</sub> in an early letter (*ARET* 13, 13 obv. vii 5). The divine name <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* is attested in the early administrative texts from the time of Arrugum (*ARET* 15), i.e. 35 to 40 years before the end of Ebla, and also in an approximately contemporary text from Mari.<sup>11</sup> According to the photo (Cavigneaux 2014: 339), the Mari text confirms the identification of the first sign as *KU* and not *DÚR*, since (narrow) *KU* (with all three horizontals starting at the left vertical) and (broader) *DÚR* (with a shorter middle horizontal wedge) are clearly differentiated in Mari (Charpin 1987: 126–127) and Tell Beydar whereas at Ebla, *KU* is mostly, but not always, written differently than *DÚR* (Paoletti 2015: 62–63 with references).

Thus, after this long review of the orthography, <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* can be understood as a syllabically written Semitic logogram. However, I would like to add a cautionary remark as surprises should not be excluded with regards to early cuneiform writing.

The reading <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* in a Mari-Mesopotamian orthography does not necessarily indicate the etymology of the name. At the moment, it even remains speculative whether the name should be regarded as Semitic, if it stems from a local, pre-Semite substrate (with Archi 1993: 72) or whether it is an import from the north (with Lipiński 2009: 39–40).<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, in Mesopotamian orthography *KU* may represent

- 9 Otherwise only in *šu-ra-da-ma-lik* in *ARET* 3, 828 obv.? i' 3 after EbDA (in the edition *šu-ra-ma-lik*).
- 10 Bonechi's (1997) hypothesis would even allow an interpretation as *TUKUL*<sup>PA</sup> (representing *tuḡra/tu'ra*) “victorious weapon”, but this is, of course, purely speculative and highly unlikely.
- 11 Cavigneaux 2014: 307 *ad* Texte 28: “assez nettement plus ancienne que les textes du palais”; see below 7.2.
- 12 Lipiński (1995: 240) suggested that *Kura* should be understood as the deified “millstone” in view of an alleged Sumerian word “*kura*” that was reconstructed by Lieberman, who however discusses the word for “granary” (Lieberman 1977: 363, no. 420: *kuru*<sub>13</sub>, *guru*<sub>7</sub> =

*ku* or *qú*, even *gu*; and, following Catagnoti (2012, 9–10), a CV syllable most probably stands for CV (*ku*, *qu*, *gu*; *ra*) or CVH, thus ending in a guttural (ʕ, ʕ, *h*, *h*) or a semi-vowel (*y*, *w*). As argued above and is also the case for other Semitic logograms at Ebla, <sup>4</sup>*ku-ra* is probably a logogram written with two syllabograms. The most probable phonemic renderings can be abstractly noted as *Gura*, *GuHra*, or *GuraH* (or *GuHraH*) where *G* stands for a velar (*g/k/q*), *H* for a guttural or semivowel (ʕ, ʕ, *h*, *h*, *y*, *w*). Furthermore, vowel length or consonant length are not indicated. The divine name written <sup>4</sup>*ku-ra* may be Semitic,<sup>13</sup> but without further indications it is simply not possible to identify the correct root amongst the many options. For the sake of convenience, I will continue to use the traditional reading of the divine name as *Kura*, but this should be taken as an approximate representation of the name, and not as the exact phonemic rendering.

### 3. THE DIVINE NAMES KURWE, KURA, KURE AND OTHERS IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 1<sup>ST</sup> MILLENNIA BC

The preceding remarks on the reading of the divine name caution against a simple search for a phonetic *Kura* in later traditions: this may or may not be a rendering of the name of the god of Ebla. Despite this difficulty, the prominence of *Kura* in the Eblaite pantheon and the evident traditions of the names of other Eblaite gods such as Hadda/Addu or Rašap/Resheph have always encouraged scholars to look for possible later attestations of the same name. The first were Dalley and Postgate (1984: 100), who pointed to seemingly similar names in Old Babylonian Mari, in Late Bronze Age Nuzi, and Neo-Assyrian. Recently, their list was repeated and supplemented by Younger (2009), who includes names from a larger chronological and geographical horizon. It cannot be excluded that certain references may indeed denote a late descendant of Ebla's *Kura*, but since many of Youngers' examples clearly do not belong in this context, a critical review seems in order.<sup>14</sup>

*qarú*, *qarítu*, *qirítu*). Lipiński comes to this conclusion since one of the offerings dedicated to *Kura* is dated to the month of cutting grain (ŠE.KIN; *MEE* 10, 1 obv. i 3–10), regardless of the different spheres of harvest on the fields and milling in the houses after threshing and storage. Lipiński's conclusion that "Baal *Kura*" was a god of harvest and agriculture with a fertility cult, as well as a dying god who was linked to the renewal of nature, is based on speculation rather than on the evidence.

- 13 Krebernik 1988: 88 sub *gú-ra* and *gur* hesitates to relate this element to *Kura* ("Wohl nicht mit <sup>4</sup>*ku-ra* identisch"); Wilhelm 1992: 24 also refers to this element. Given the consistent writing of the divine name as "Semitogram", an identical word in "normal" Eblaite orthography is not impossible.
- 14 Mander 2005: 50, fn. 193 also mentions other ideas about later forms of *Kura* which are not based on philological and historical arguments, e.g. K. Butz, who refers to *kurrinnu*, a jewel, but assumed by Butz to refer to "green (land)", and C. Gordon, who simply searched for a similar sounding name of a demon and subsequently found *qūlār* in a Jewish magical text.

### 3.1. Nuzi Kurwe and Neo-Assyrian Kura, god of Azuḫinnu/Arzuḫina

Dalley and Postgate (1984: 100) and Younger (2009: 7) list two references to a god *Kurwe* from Late Bronze Age Nuzi. The god is mentioned as the recipient of oil offerings (Pfeiffer and Speiser 1935–36: no. 47:1 <sup>d</sup>ku-ur-we-e, no.48:1 <sup>d</sup>gur-we-e), and as Deller (1976: 40) has already made clear, the male god *Kurwe* appears here as the foremost god of the town of Azuḫinnu. In the lists, *Kurwe* even precedes *Kumurwe* = *Kumarpi*, and may therefore represent the city-god of Azuḫinnu.

With this in mind, the divine element of the name [ʽ]bd-kr (BT 124), read *Ab-di-Kurra* “Servant of Kurra” by K. Radner and F.M. Fales (PNA I/1 [1998] 6), might in fact refer to the same god, since the name was borne by the governor of Arzuḫina in 668 BC; Arzuḫina is the Neo-Assyrian form of Azuḫinnu, a town localized close to the Lower Zab north of Kirkuk/Arrapḫe (following Fincke 1993: 64, 68–69).

In the Neo-Assyrian period, a divine element *Kura* (also transcribed as *Kurra*) appears in the just mentioned personal name *Abdi-Kura* (written in cuneiform <sup>m</sup>ab-di-kur-ra and <sup>d</sup>kur-a, PNA I/1, 6) and in ʽz-kr from Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad (Röllig 2001).

### 3.2. Hurrian Kurri

In the Hittite Hišuwā festival, which originated from Kizzuwatna, the region later called Cilicia, and which features North-Syrian influence, a god *Kurri* (<sup>d</sup>ku-ur-ri) received offerings in the temple of Allani, the Hurrian goddess of the Netherworld, when the king came from the temple of Išḫara (Wilhelm 1992; for Ebla’s *Kura* grouped with *Ninkur*, see below 7.2).

### 3.3. KUR as a logogram for šadû “mountain” or mātu “land”

The Sumerogram KUR, “(foreign) land”, stands logographically for Akkadian words such as *šadû* “mountain”, or *mātu* “land”. This logographic reading should be kept strictly apart from the phonographic rendering. Two allegedly “2<sup>nd</sup>-millennium references” to “Kura” indeed refer to the Sumerian word or the Sumerogram. Dalley and Postgate (1984: 100), and also Younger (2009: 7) list “<sup>m</sup>abī-Kur-I” as a Mari personal name without checking the reference; but in fact the name, according to ARMT 16/1: 48 attested in ARM 10, 177: 3’, 4’ and perhaps ARM 9, 293, should be read <sup>m</sup>a-bi-KUR-i, i.e. *Abī-šadī*, meaning “my Father is my mountain”.

The lexical list An: *Anu ša amēli* line 6 (Litke 1998: 299, pl. XLIII: 103), which is attested in manuscripts from the library of Assurbanipal (and thus not 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, as labelled by Younger 2009: 7) and is probably a 1<sup>st</sup> millennium composition on the basis of its format, explains the Sumerian term kur-ra (i.e. “of the land” and not a divine name!) = *Anu ša māti* “Anu of the land”; this has nothing to do with god *Kura*.

In Neo-Assyrian, the exact reading of KUR that are followed directly by a vowel such as KUR-a/e/i. For example, the name <sup>m</sup>KUR-a-a is read Šaddâiu by K. Åkerman and H.D. Baker in the

last volume of *PNA* (*PNA* 3 [2011] 1180) because of the parallel phonographically written <sup>m</sup>šá-da-ia-a, but they note that in earlier volumes of *PNA*, the same name written <sup>m</sup>KUR-a-a was read as *Mādāiu* (Åkerman and Baker, *PNA* 2/II [2001] 673 f., “<sup>m</sup>mad-a-a” and interpreted as “The Mede”). Similarly, the Ninivite temple written as É <sup>d</sup>KUR-a (or DINGIR-KUR-a; *ADD* 1252 = *SAA* 14, 111 obv. 13) cannot, at least without any further evidence, simply be read as the “temple of Kura”, as long as it is not possible to exclude other readings which avoid breaking the syllable boundary, e.g. *Šadâya*, *Mādaiya* etc.

### 3.4. Kassite Kure/Kuri

The Kassite vocabulary explains the royal name *Kuri-galzu* (perhaps somewhat imaginatively) as *rē'i Kaššī* “shepherd of the Kassites” (Balkan 1954: 163). However, according to the comprehensive analysis of Kassite divine names by Bartelmus (2017), *kuri* is not attested as the name of a god during the Kassite period. E. Lipiński in *PNA* 2/I (2000) 640–641, explains an alleged element *Kur'e-* in personal names (*R-ēreš*, *-Inūrta*, *-nādin-aḥi*, *-uballit*) as Kassite and translates it as the “Herd-god”. However, all names, except of course, *Kurigalzu* (*PNA* 2/I, 640f.), are written KUR, KUR-e or KUR<sup>-2</sup>-e/i, and thus, as noted *sub* 3.3. above, other readings (e.g. *šadê*) are possible and even probable.

### 3.5. Kurillaya

The name *Kurillaya*, written in various ways, often with *ku-ri-*, *ku-ra-*, or *kur-ra/ri-*, but also *kur-DINGIR-a-a*, *kur-la-a*, in Aramaic as *krly* (Younger 2009: 11), was understood by Baker as *Kur-ilā'i* (“Kur is my god”) in *PNA* 2/I (2000) 641, but she also refers to the interpretation of Lipiński (most recent reference: Lipiński 2010: 152). According to Lipiński, the personal name better derives from *kurillu*, *kurullu* “shock, pile of sheaves”, which served as the name of a month in Nuzi. Therefore, this is another attestation of the well-known name type that includes a reference to a month (e.g. *Addārāiu*, *Ulūlāiu*) or to the harvest (see *Ebūrāiu*, *Ēšidāiu*), and is probably associated with the time when the name-bearer was born.

### 3.6. Phoenician b<sup>l</sup> kr in Cilicia and on a vase from Sidon

A deity *b<sup>l</sup> kr* is known in the Phoenician version of two inscriptions from 7<sup>th</sup> century Cilicia, one from Çineköy that was written by the ruler Wraykas (line 16-17, Tekoğlu and Lemaire 2000), and one from Cebelireis Dağı (line 5B).<sup>15</sup> As Z. Simon kindly informed me, the Phoenician *b<sup>l</sup> kr* probably renders the Luwian storm-god, Tarhunt, as the protector of the vineyard, since the statue of the inscription

15 Mosca and Russell 1987; see Lipiński 1995, 239f.; Röllig 2001; Younger 2009.



was placed precisely in a vineyard.<sup>16</sup> A *b<sup>l</sup> kr* “Lord of *kr*” appears in the 4<sup>th</sup> century Phoenician inscription on a vase from Sidon, and much can be speculated about the exact relationship with the earlier Cilician inscriptions (the import/export of objects and of deities, phonetic similarity etc.). In this context, Röllig (2001: 49) notes that it still remains unclear whether the god should be understood as the “Lord of the furnace” or as the “Lord of the pasture”. Not only the interpretation of the name but also the relationship to the other divine names compiled by Younger (2009) remains obscure at the moment.

### 3.7. Synthesis

In conclusion, the alleged list of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> millennium references to a deity *Kura* (Younger 2009) can be reduced to a great extent, after a quick review of the sources and the relevant secondary literature. Only three instances of the names of gods that are perhaps similar to the Eblaite *Kura* remain: *Kurwe/Kura* as the name of the god of Azuḫinnu (Late Bronze Age)/Arzuḫina (Neo-Assyrian) in the East Tigris region (3.1.); the Hurrian *Kurri* in the temple of Allani in the kingdom of Hatti (3.2.); and *b<sup>l</sup> kr* as the local storm-god of the vineyard(?) in 7<sup>th</sup> century Cilicia (3.6.). Given the Hurrian milieu, the well-known *Kurri* in the *Hišuwu* festival is possibly identical to *Kurwe* of Azuḫinnu, who might have survived as *kr* (*Kura*?) into Neo-Assyrian times.<sup>17</sup> It can neither be proven nor ruled out as to whether a direct connection existed between Ebla’s *Kura* and/or the Cilician storm god *b<sup>l</sup> kr*, perhaps a god associated with vineyards. And certain cases such as the goddess Išhara demonstrate that Eblaite traditions can be traced over long periods of time to Middle and Late Bronze Age Northern Mesopotamia and Anatolia.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, as argued above in section 2, even the phonemic reconstruction of the Eblaite name that is rendered as *Kura* remains unclear. Besides the perhaps illusionary similarity of the names, no further indications such as a continuity of cult sites, the grouping of deities, or the function and cosmic sphere are known.

## 4. KURA, CITY-GOD OF EBLA

*Kura* was the tutelary deity of the city of Ebla in the period of the Royal Palace G and its archives.<sup>19</sup> Although no monumental texts, which represent the most im-

16 Simon in press; for the Luwian storm-god in vineyards, see Hutter 2003: 224, reference courtesy of Z. Simon; unfortunately there seems to be no way to connect *kr* with *krm* “vineyard” in the two inscriptions.

17 As Wilhelm (1992), Röllig (2001: 50–51), and, less strictly, Younger (2009: 18) note, there is no indication other than the assumed phonetic similarity between *Kura* of Ebla and the later names *Kurri* and *Kur(r)a* that we are, in fact, dealing with the same deity, especially as the function of these three (or more) gods is not known.

18 See e.g. Archi 1993; Prechel 1996.

19 The role of *Kura* as the city-god of Ebla is now generally acknowledged; see e.g. Archi

portant source to reconstruct the composition of a local pantheon, are known from Ebla that date to this period, the textual evidence leaves no doubt about the role of Kura as its city-god. Three central aspects will be considered in the following:

1. Kura and Barama represent the king and queen of Ebla in the context of the royal ritual;
2. Kura receives the most substantial dedications and sacrifices among the gods venerated in the city of Ebla;
3. oaths of allegiance were sworn to Kura.

#### 4.1. Kura and Barama in the Context of the Royal Ritual

An extraordinary ritual was performed on two occasions, firstly with king Irkab-Damu and subsequently with his successor Iš'ar-Damu and their respective wives. The outline of this ritual and the respective expenditures were carefully noted in three documents. In the marriage ceremony, the future queen arrived from her father's house and was then introduced to her position in the centre of the royal family.<sup>20</sup> The first dedicatory gifts were devoted to the god Kura and his wife Barama and then the royal couple travelled together with these gods from the palace of Ebla to the mausoleum of the dynasty's ancestors situated at Nenaš/Binaš. There, Kura and Barama took their places together with the king and queen for the central part of the ritual, when "the Divine Mother (<sup>d</sup>ru) renewed Kura, renewed Barama, renewed the king, renewed the queen" (ARET 11, 1 (65) = 2 (68)). Both the divine and the human royal couple spent the ritual period together and were involved in parallel actions. Thus, the god Kura represented Ebla's officiating ruler as his eternal counterpart.

#### 4.2. Silver for Kura

Every year, the king dedicated "one mina of silver for the silver 'head' of Kura", and this dedication was the first entry of the annual lists of silver expenditure documents (Archi 2005; see below 6.2). This is also the highest amount of silver that was dedicated to a deity who resided in the city of Ebla itself, and underlines

2013: 214–216. Earlier publications contain outdated statements that Kura was (merely) an "important god" at Ebla or that there was a trias of ruling gods (e.g. Kura, Hadda, sun-god).  
 20 Edition by Fronzaroli 1993; most recent discussion by Bonechi 2016a, who imagines the ritual as a marriage that served as a prelude to the conception and birth of the royal baby. His interpretation, however, is mainly based on the reading of two terms in the ritual, which are – as is most often the case with the Ebla texts – extremely difficult and uncertain, namely *gú-a-tum* (pp. 61–63) and *maš-tá-più* (pp. 63–64). The textual analysis is then construed in this direction. In ancient Mesopotamia however, marriage meant the entrance of the bride to the bridegroom's house (see e.g. Wilcke 1985), and sexual intercourse and conception did not belong to the central aspects of the marriage. Nevertheless, Bonechi's interpretation has improved our understanding of the text with regard to many details.



the close relationship between the god and the king. The role of Kura in the city is corroborated by the king's constant support with sheep for the god's sacrifices (Pettinato 1979; see 6.1 below).

In the internal organization of an Early Bronze Age city-state, regardless of whether this was located in Sumer or in the North, in Ebla in the West or in Girsu and Ur in the south, only the ruler distributed the treasures of silver and gold, and the temples were always among the recipients of these precious gifts, and were, clearly not the least recipients (Sallaberger 2013). At Ebla, about one tenth of the annual expenditure of silver was donated to the temples; this is comparable to the amount that was invested in foreign policy as diplomatic gifts and as donations to messengers. On one occasion, the temple of Kura was embellished with the high amount of 4.7 kg of gold (10 minas)<sup>21</sup> that was sponsored by the king. The flow of gold and silver to the temples should not only be viewed as an expression of piety, but can also be explained by more pragmatic reasons as the temples represented a safe place for future needs: they could use their treasures in cases of emergency, and so the temples served as banks for the land and the people.

#### 4.3. Oaths before Kura

Rulers and representatives of allied city-states came to Ebla and swore an oath of allegiance in the temple of Kura when concluding a treaty. In addition, members of the elite confirmed their loyalty in front of Kura (Catagnoti 1997).<sup>22</sup> One specific case is the donation of land by the king to the minister Ibrium, which was confirmed before Kura, the sun-god, Hadda and all gods (75.1444 = *ARET* 16, 27 §§ 8, 27). Only exceptional cases are known whereby political oaths were sworn in other temples: by representatives of the first rank powers Mari or Nagar in the temple of the "Lord of Tuttul", Dagan; and by those of the city Hadu, situated in the region of Mari, both in front of Kura and Hadda of Halab (75.2561 = *ARET* 13, 19).<sup>23</sup>

In the final curse formula of the Abarsal treaty, the sun-god, Hadda and "all the gods" (?) (DINGIR.DINGIR:DINGIR.DINGIR) should pursue the evildoer (*ARET* 13, 5: 5'). In this curse, the protector of justice, the sun-god, and the highest regional (and not local) god of the land, Hadda of Halab, are invoked. In a similar way, the curses in Eanatum's Stela of Vultures, are directed towards the highest deities of

21 Bonechi 2016b: 28f., fn. 144, on TM.75.G.1464 obv. xiv 12-17 (Pomponio and Xella 1997: 238): 10 minas of gold (worth 50 minas of silver) for manufacturing (KIN<sub>5</sub>-AKA) at the temple of Kura.

22 For additional references to Catagnoti 1997, see Pomponio and Xella 1997: 223–248. The oath in the temple of Kura is especially well attested in the early texts from the period of Arrugum. These texts have been published by Pomponio (*ARET* 15).

23 The gods in the treaties have often been the object of discussion in scientific research; on this see also Archi 2010a: 5.

Sumer (Enlil, Ninḫursaṅa, Enki, Suen, Utu, and Ninki).<sup>24</sup> At that time, Hadda of Halab was the highest divine authority in the land, as impressively confirmed by the quality and character of the donations sent there by the king (Archi 2010a). He was respected by the cities and states of Northern Syria beyond Ebla, as was the “Lord of Tuttul”, Dagan, in the Euphrates valley. In the case of the oaths, the gods served as eternal representatives of the regions, states or cities that were involved: Hadda of Halab and the “Lord of Tuttul” as regional lords of Northern Syria and the Euphrates region respectively, or Kura for the city of Ebla.

#### 4.4. *Kura as the God of Ebla*

In another ritual practice, the temple of Kura at Ebla plays an important role similar to that of Hadda (at Ebla), namely as a place for divination by haruspicy (Archi 2010b). Divination as related to the ruler’s actions was fundamentally political, and this may have influenced the choice of the temple of the city-god Kura as the right place for this practice as well as the local sanctuary of Hadda, the regionally venerated storm-god. In addition to these two places, divination often took place in various cities.

The significance of Kura for oaths (and, perhaps in a similar way, for divination) reflects his political role: the god represented the city and its state in both an eternal and powerful, supra-human form. Oaths were sworn in the presence of politically relevant gods, as is confirmed throughout the history of the ancient Near East. In contemporary Mesopotamia, the famous passages from Enmetena’s inscriptions can be cited here: when Mesalim, the king of Kiš, defined the border between the states Lagaš and Umma, it was referred to as a border between the city-gods Ningirsu and Šara. In this case, the final oath to protect the border was sworn to the divine overlord Enlil of Nippur and to the local god Ningirsu (Ent. 28-29 = *RIME* 1, E1.9.5.1). Nippur, the religious centre of Lower Mesopotamia, was never a political capital,<sup>25</sup> and perhaps it is not too far-fetched to see the relationship between Ebla and Halab in a similar way as that between a city-state like Lagaš and Nippur. The presence of Hadda and Kura in oaths and their respective veneration by the king of Ebla can be adduced as comparable features. In the city-state of Lagaš, Ningirsu received dedications and temple buildings from the ruler, he was pictured as the god who personally selected and enthroned the ruler, and he was even offered sacrifices at rituals that remembered deceased ancestors (Selz 1995: 218–251). This comparative perspective underlines the important features of a city-god: he was prominently venerated in a city, received the most important

24 *RIME* 1, E1.9.3.1; on the oath formula in this text, see Sallaberger 2015: 184, fn. 10.

25 The special case of oaths at Nippur should be noted here: in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium, oaths were sworn in front of Enlil’s son Ninurta, who took on typical aspects of the city-god. Ninurta kept the role as the protector of oaths in the state of the Third Dynasty of Ur, when oaths of political allegiance were sworn in front of him; see Steinkeller 1989: 73–74, fn. 209.

sacrifices and dedications; as the supra-human counterpart of the ruler, he was set in a close, personal relationship to the state's ruler; and he represented the state in political ideology.<sup>26</sup>

The function of Kura as a city-god and all its related aspects should be seen independently of his role in the pantheon, as is testified by the situation of city-gods in Early Bronze Age Syro-Mesopotamia. Among these city-gods, various types are attested like the "royal" "Lord of the Land" at Mari, Bēlat-Nagar at Nagar and Šamagan at Nabada (Tell Beydar), the warriors Zababa at Kiš or Ningirsu at Girsu, the sun-god at Sippar, the moon-god Nanna at Ur, the divine mother Nindur at Keš, etc. In this larger contemporary cultural context, an oath-receiving deity cannot be defined (merely) according to his or her cosmic or cultural character.<sup>27</sup>

To conclude this section, it should be emphasized that Kura was apparently only venerated in Ebla itself. Pomponio and Xella (1997: 244) proposed that Kura was also venerated at other places, but the respective passages do not allow such a conclusion. There is no evidence of a Kura of the city of Armi, but the respective text mentions silver from Armi that was dedicated to Kura (Archi 2011: 14; on 75.10201). In the same way, Kura receives a gift from the city of Silaḥa,<sup>28</sup> and instead of "Kura of the city of Manutium", the passage (75.1418 = *ARET* 15, 19 §22) mentions a person from Manutium, who was the recipient of the clothes related to a ceremony for Kura. Therefore, there is no evidence for a second cult-centre dedicated to Kura outside of Ebla.

## 5. KURA'S TEMPLE

The most explicit reference to Kura's temple is when a person proclaimed from its roof that the queen had given birth to a boy.<sup>29</sup> This unique reference evidently does not give any indication of the localization of the temple and its spatial relationship to the female quarters of the palace. From an ideological perspective, this act can be connected with the royal marriage ritual that began in the temple of

26 The role of a city-god evidently includes what Archi (2010a: 5) calls Kura's role as "god of kingship at Ebla".

27 Pasquali (2008) claims that oaths were typically sworn in the name of storm-gods, and that the highest gods were mostly associated with celestial weather phenomena. However, the corroborative evidence which is cited by Pasquali comes from distant cultures, namely from classical Rome and Greece, and thus is of little argumentative value. As argued here in the introduction, Early Bronze Age Ebla should be seen in a wider Syro-Mesopotamian cultural context.

28 *MEE* 2, 48 obv. vi 10–vii 6: "6 shekels of silver for 1 plaque with eagles, dedication to Kura, (from?) Silaḥa the queen has dedicated" (6 GÍN.DILMUN KÙ:BABBAR / 1 KÙ.SAL TI<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup>.TI<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup> / NÍG.BA / <sup>4</sup>ku.ra / si-la-ḥa<sup>ki</sup> / ma-lik-tum / NÍG.BA.

29 *ARET* 1, 15 § 22 (month II): 2 textiles for PN GÙ.DI-2 al<sub>6</sub> ÛR É <sup>4</sup>ku-ra LÚ ma-lik-tum TU.DA DUMU. NITA. The translation used in Ebla studies is the ambiguous "terrace" (Bonechi 1989: 137; 1992). Since this term refers to the flat roof of a house and does not describe a terrace building, I prefer the standard translation "roof".

Kura, and to the role of Kura as the protector of the royal dynasty, as exemplified by his presence at the family's mausoleum at Nenaš/Binaš.

In the specialist literature, Matthiae's proposal to identify two monumental temples as temples for Kura has been well received. The Temple of the Rock (ca. 28 × 21.5 m) located in the south-eastern city quarter and near to the city-gate was identified as the original temple of Kura, and the Red Temple on the acropolis (ca. 24 × 17 m), buried under the Middle Bronze Age Temple D, was defined as the palatial temple of Kura, "built over the intentionally razed ruins of a peripheral sector of the West Unit of the Central Complex of the Royal Palace G" (Matthiae 2015: 78).<sup>30</sup> This argument was subsequently discussed by Bonechi (2016b), who compared the results with the textual evidence for building activities at Ebla and concluded that only the older Temple of the Rock should be considered as Kura's temple, whereas the Red Temple could possibly be identified as the "temple of the gods".

Matthiae (2015: 78–79, fn. 17) bases his arguments for the existence of two temples of Kura in the royal ritual text (*ARET* 11; Fronzaroli 1993): "I wish to point out that, in the first part of the important ritual, when they mention Kura's Gate, they do not mention the SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>, which makes it quite clear that there were two different sanctuaries, one near the town walls and Kura's Gate, and another in the SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>". "Kura's Gate" is seen as the EB IVA predecessor of the MB "Steppe Gate" (Matthiae 2015: 78; also Bonechi 2016b: 33).

The Ebla ritual text is a delicate textual source since it is very specific on the quality and quantity of goods that should be provided, but does not focus on an accurate description of the ritual's space and time. The passage concerning the "gate of Kura" is only preserved in text 3 § 3, i.e. the small tablet that documents the actions and goods that were added at the second performance for king Iš'ar-Damu (text 2), but were not yet present at the first performance for king Irkab-Damu (text 1). Some phrases indicate the context of the added information, and therefore the narrative sections of text 3 are much shorter than those in texts 1 and 2.<sup>31</sup>

According to both texts 1 and 2, the future queen left her father's house on the first day, and spent the night outside of the "walls" (BĀD<sup>ki</sup>), i.e. the city-wall of Ebla (Bonechi 2016b: 23, fn. 115, 33), before she entered the temple of Kura on the next day.

With regard to the events of the next day, i.e. entering the Kura temple, the two versions differ slightly. During the second performance of the ritual by king

30 Matthiae 2015 presents a summary of the most important archaeological data and the central arguments (for his proposal).

31 The sequence is therefore a) the composition of text 1 for Irkab-Damu's ritual, and for the second performance for Iš'ar-Damu, b) a tablet noting only the additions (= text 3), and then c) a final complete version which integrates the initial version together with the additions (= text 2). This sequence of the tablets was proposed by Sallaberger 1996b: 144, fn. 13, but this reference was often overlooked by Ebla specialists.

Iš'ar-Damu (*ARET* 11, 2 and 3), “the queen enters the gate of Kura towards the (place called) *ma'rašum*” (κᾶ <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra ma-lik-tum* MU.KU<sub>x</sub>(DU) [*s*]i-in *má-ra-sum*; *ARET* 11, 3 obv. iii 1–6). In the *ma'rašum*, she dresses, covers her head, and “enters the temple of Kura and stays (there)” (*wa* MU.KU<sub>x</sub>(DU) <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra wa* AL<sub>6</sub>.TUŠ; *ARET* 11, 3 obv. iv 10–15). In the Kura temple (text 3), she then “delivers” (ŠU.MU.TAKA<sub>4</sub>) the silver jewels that she has brought from her father's house for Kura and his wife Barama, and for the two minor deities Išru and Anilu (*ARET* 11, 2 §15). Furthermore, she subsequently dedicates cultic paraphernalia to Kura and Barama as well as to Išhara (*ARET* 11, 1 § 8–14 // *ARET* 11, 2 § 16). Finally, attendants and weavers are set to work.

During the earlier first performance under king Irkab-Damu (*ARET* 11, 1), the *ma'rašum* section is missing, but the actions in the Kura temple start with the dedication of the cultic paraphernalia and the employment of the attendants. These events are then followed by a sacrifice: “On the day when the queen arrives at the ‘palace’ (*mi-in* U<sub>4</sub> BA<sub>4</sub>.TI *ma-lik-tum si-in* SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>), then the queen brings it (i.e. the sacrifice) to the temple of Kura” (*ARET* 11, 1 § 17 = obv. v 16–26), and the queen sacrifices (NÍDBA; *ibid.* vi 8) the sheep and wine from her paternal home to the four deities Kura and Barama, Išru and Anilu, “when she arrives at the Kura temple” (*ARET* 11, 1 obv. vi 9–12).

Whilst the “gate of Kura” and the Kura temple were combined during the second performance (*ARET* 11, 2 and 3), during the earlier performance the arrival (BA<sub>4</sub>.TI)<sup>32</sup> at the “palace” (SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>) was set parallel to the arrival at the Kura temple. This allows the conclusion that only one Kura temple existed, namely in or near the “palace” (SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>), where the deities, who were mentioned in both texts with largely parallel dedications of cultic paraphernalia, were venerated. The information provided in this instance as well as in the passage about the return (of the royal couple) to the city centre of Ebla (*ARET* 11, 2 §99) is not precise enough to allow a localization of the temple on the acropolis itself or in any other area within the city on the way to an area of the palace, since both instances only note the movement “towards” the palace.<sup>33</sup> Evidently, the meaning of SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup> as “palace” needs a critical evaluation,<sup>34</sup> but a useful working hypothesis is to use the term in a way similar to the Mesopotamian word for “palace” *é-gal/ekallum*, which indicates both the specific architectural structure built in a certain place as well as the

32 On BA<sub>4</sub>.TI with the general meaning “to approach (from, to)” based on the meaning of the Sumerian word *te, ti* see Sallaberger 2008: 104 (“sich nähern”); Bonechi (2016a: 67) tried to redefine it as “to depart” (which instead focuses on the point of departure). Evidently the exact relationship of *ĭ.TI*, MU.TI and BA<sub>4</sub>.TI should be carefully restudied.

33 On the preposition *šin*, see Toniatti 2013: 90–93 and 100–105, and on the omission of prepositions with the noun phrase <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* *ibid.* 122–123.

34 Doubts on the traditional translation as “acropolis” are expressed by Bonechi and Archi; a study is announced by Bonechi 2016a (see there p. 68) as “forthcoming d”, and Archi gave a presentation on the topic at the CDOG at Frankfurt in March 2016 which will hopefully be published in the near future.

institution “palace” which of course also encompassed royal possessions outside the fixed palace area.

The “gate of Kura” does not necessarily refer to a city gate, as tacitly assumed. On the contrary, there are sound arguments to identify the “gate of Kura” as part of the sacred precinct of Kura’s temple: during the second performance, the queen dressed and covered her head in the *ma’rašum*, which she reached by entering the “gate of Kura” (*ARET* 11, 2 § 9–16 = 3 § 3–6) before she entered the “temple of Kura”. On the previous day, she was not allowed to dress “before she enters the temple of Kura” (*ARET* 11, 3 § 2). Among the possible scenarios, the most plausible one appears to me to be the following reconstruction: after spending one night outside of the city, the queen entered Ebla on the next day, and after entering the “gate of Kura”, i.e. the gate to his sacred precinct, she dressed in a washing room close to the entrance, the *ma’rašum*. Then she proceeded to the “temple of Kura” (𐎠 𐎠*ku-ra*) itself, which in the Early Bronze Age was a temple *in antis*. In the Early Bronze Age, the central temple buildings were surrounded by sacred enclosures as demonstrated clearly by the archaeological evidence in Halawa or Al-Rawda (Castel 2010: esp. 139–144): consequently, the queen dressed near to the entrance that led into the temple precinct, and then approached the temple. This reconstruction can perhaps be corroborated by the fact that a well was situated at the “door of Kura”, on which some maintenance work or control was carried out.<sup>35</sup> This could have been the source of water for the person entering the temple precinct, who then washed himself/herself and dressed with the appropriate clothes. The term for the precinct was evidently 𐎠𐎠*ki* “enclosure” which refers to a large open space, surrounded by walls. Such structures were present in temples as well as in the palace area, and could also be used as an enclosure for animals.<sup>36</sup> On one occasion the queen made a dedication to the sun-god within the sacred enclosure, the temenos of Kura: she made an offering of eight small silver figurines of mouflons weighing half a shekel each (2.35 g), and probably also four toggle-pins each decorated with two figurines (8 *ti-ša-nu* NÍG.BA *ma-lik-tum* 𐎠𐎠*UTU* 𐎠𐎠*ki* 𐎠*ku-ra*, *MEE* 10, 20 rev. xii 4–12).<sup>37</sup>

35 *ARET* 12, 1056 rev. ii: 1 G[U...] 1 ÍB-3<sup>us</sup> BABBAR ŠU.RA PÚ LÚ KÁ 𐎠*ku-ra* “(textiles for the person) controlling/maintaining the well at the gate of Kura”; on ŠU.RA, see e.g. Bonechi 2016b: 30 with fn. 153.

36 On the term 𐎠𐎠*ki*, see especially the discussion by Bonechi 2007: 201–203, and with further references Bonechi 2016b: 5 fn. 20. Note that the sequence KÁ DINGIR “gate of the god” → 𐎠𐎠*ki* “sacred precinct” is reversed in the memorandum concerning the misdeeds of Mari, *ARET* 13, 15 § 39–42: “And he stayed in the precinct, until the door of the god was opened. (40) And when the door of the god was opened, (41) he sacrificed; (42) and he brought out a calf in both of his arms” (see also Sallaberger 2008: 105–107). Here, the “gate of the god” is clearly only the door of the central building, i.e. the temple *in antis*. The comparison of the ritual text *ARET* 11, 2 § 9–16 = 3 § 3–6 with *ARET* 13, 15 § 39 proves expectedly that the ambiguous term “gate of a god” could be used either for the gate of the precinct or for the gate of the central temple building.

37 Bonechi (2016a: 69, fn. 106) has pointed to the fact that Kura and 𐎠*UTU* are listed together in the excerpt of the bilingual lexical list *MEE* 4, 73 obv. ii 1f. But any further interpretation



In conclusion, when the text of the ritual is closely read, it does not help to identify one of the excavated temples (the Temple of the Rock and the Red Temple) as the temple of Kura. On the other hand, the text does not allow us to exclude any of the proposed identifications. Therefore, in the meantime, the philologically attested “temple of Kura” should be kept distinctly separate from the impressive archaeological buildings.

## 6. THE CULT OF KURA

### 6.1. *The donations of meat and bread*

As already noted above in the context of section 4.2, Kura was the god of Ebla who received the most constant supply of animals from the royal herds. The documents from Ebla that provide information on animals for slaughter (four of them published by Pettinato 1979) resemble other royal archives in scope and quality, especially those from Ur III Puzriš-Dagan, the administration of the royal herds.<sup>38</sup> At Ebla, as was also the case in the state of Ur, animals were prepared for individuals associated with the palace, i.e. all of the messengers, visitors, guests, and members of the army, but in both instances the state cult was another central part of the royal endowments. The gods of Ebla received an impressive amount of slaughtered animals: about one third to a half of the sheep listed in these texts were dedicated to the gods, and this is the reason why the respective documents were published by Pettinato (1979) under the title *Il culto ufficiale ad Ebla*. Kura figures prominently, but is not the foremost deity, according to the four texts published by Pettinato, if one simply counts the number of animals: here Rašap of Atani, Nidabal of Luban, Nidabal of Arukatu and the god NĪ.LAM were more important. Rašap, the warrior god (and later also the god of death, pestilence and fire) was most prominently venerated in the region around Ebla. Nidabal was apparently the dominant deity in the Western region of the Ebla kingdom, with his zone of influence extending to and including the Orontes valley. Nidabal was probably a moon-god, since in the later tradition, Yarīḫ, the moon-god, was venerated at his cult site Larugatu.<sup>39</sup> Kura, the foremost god at Ebla itself, is listed with less sheep, but is mentioned the most regularly, i.e. every month and especially connected to day 8 (with an unknown meaning), and his sacrifices were donated by the king and the queen, and by the crown-prince Ir’ak-Damu. Therefore, more animals were donated to the other gods at certain festivals, but they did not receive the same constant supply. It should, however, be kept in mind that this picture will change when the circa 20 texts belonging to this group are published *in toto*.

(reference to the sun as pointing to a ritual or to a cult statue?) must remain speculative.

38 For a comparison of the two archives in scope and structure, see Sallaberger 2013.

39 For the most recent publication on the geography of Ebla’s cult, see Biga 2015 with further references.

The royal support of the state cult with animals should be seen in a wider perspective. Amongst the sacrifices, meat was the most valuable, but was clearly not the only foodstuff presented to the gods, since the divine meal mainly included bread and beer, but sometimes also vegetables, fruit, sweets etc. In ancient Syro-Mesopotamia, fresh bread and beer were usually prepared in the temple itself so that it could be consumed instantly, whereas the animals could be brought to the temples from external sources. In some rare instances, such as the cult at Ur in the Ur III period<sup>40</sup> or during the festivals at Emar,<sup>41</sup> it can be discerned that various institutions cooperated for the preparation of the sacred meal: the temple (or the city's citizens) produced bread and beer, whereas the ruler contributed the most valuable animals. In my view, the same holds true for Ebla: the king sent his animals to Rašap or to Nidabal to support the local cults and to venerate the respective deities. Consequently, both the local temple and the state made contributions to the preparation of the sacred meal, and in this way the cult became the symbolic ground for the integration of the various institutions that formed the society as a whole.

Kura was the only god of Ebla who regularly received bread as a food offering from the royal kitchen and bakery that fed the individuals living in the palace and temporary guests.<sup>42</sup> This ties in nicely with what is otherwise known about the outstanding and unique role that Kura played for Ebla's king (see above section 4). The obligation of the palace to send bread regularly to the temple relieved the latter partly of the burden of providing the god with food on a daily basis. More importantly, the constant flow of sheep and bread from the palace to the temple can also be interpreted in socio-economic terms: the food sacrificed to the gods was later consumed by a small group of entitled individuals,<sup>43</sup> namely persons associated with the temple including the priests who prepared the meals. The bread, which was made from 10 *gubar* of grain and was sent to the temple of Kura from the palace every month (Milano and Tonietti 2012: 44), would have sufficed to feed around 20 adult individuals every day,<sup>44</sup> and the 4, 12, 18 or 28+x sheep given per month (Pettinato 1979: 114) allowed an even larger group of people to partic-

40 Sallaberger 1993, I: 74 on texts documenting animals "from the city-ruler in office" (*ki ensi<sub>2</sub> bala-a-ta*) and "from the palace" (*é-gal-ta*) (i.e. from the royal herds) earmarked for regular offerings at the temple of Nanna in Ur.

41 Sallaberger 2012 on the contributors to festivals that took place in Emar, namely a) the citizens and the temple for bread and beer, b) the city for sheep and c) the king for the most valued offerings including wine and animals for slaughter.

42 The relevant texts are published in *ARET* 9 by Milano 1990. For further information in addition to the commentaries in the latter publication, see Milano and Tonietti 2012: 43–49, who underline the specific donations that were made to Kura compared with gifts made to other gods, most often those residing outside of the city of Ebla.

43 For information on people eating the remaining food of royal cultic meals, see Milano and Tonietti 2012: 58–62; on the use of royal gifts made to the temple, see *ibid.* 67–68 (on *ARET* 13, 1).

44 This data has been adopted from Milano 1990: 340.



ipate.<sup>45</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that the relevant people were not entirely supported via the leftovers of Kura's sacrifices, so on a regular basis quite a large group of people would have received meat and bread that originally came from the palace. By means of these sacrifices, the king indirectly regaled the inhabitants of his city with meat and bread by venerating their common god Kura, and therefore it was the city-god Kura who nourished Ebla's people via the sacred meal. Thus, the king, who provided the gods with sustenance, supported his people through the channel of the eternal and politically neutral cult of the city-god, and this system may have contributed to the king's gain and/or loss of support which was of key importance for a successful rule.

### 6.2. Kura's New Year festival

An annual festival for Kura was performed in the first month of every year.<sup>46</sup> The basic rite for Kura was "a proclamation of the righteous one" (DU<sub>11</sub>.GA *i-sa-i/ri*, in earlier texts GÜ.DI *i-sa-ri*; GÜ.GÁ.II *i-sá-ri*), and it appears in the monthly documents that record the expenditure of textiles, since wool was also given to the god, and the person acting as the speaker (first Azi, then Idanikimu and finally ŠUBUR) received two garments.<sup>47</sup> Clearly this was a ritual performance, since the act formed a central part of a larger religious festival. Therefore, the "proclamation of the righteous one"<sup>48</sup> can perhaps be understood as an annual instalment of the ruler as the true holder of this office, who was proclaimed by the city-god Kura and announced by a cultic agent. Together with this announcer (GÜ.DI etc.), the *dāminu*

45 Bilind Shushe from Kurdistan (pers. comm.) informed me that at a festival, around 12 to 15 people can be fed from one sheep, whereas Wadea Zerkly from Syria (pers. comm.) estimates that one sheep could provide enough meat for 20 to 25 persons. Therefore, 4 to 28 sheep would provide sufficient meat to support 60 to 420 persons (or even 100 to 700 persons) every month.

46 Identified by Bonechi (1989). Discussed later by Viganò (1995) and Archi (1996: 44–49). Archi 1996: 52–54 provides a list of the references. Exceptionally, expenditures referring to the festival could also be dated to month II: ARET 15, 46.

47 Viganò 1995 and in agreement, Mander (2005: 92) understand this rite as a "regular offering". This proposal, however, can be rejected on the basis of the data provided by Archi 1996: 45–46. The translation by Bonechi (1989) and following him Archi (1996, 45) as a "prayer for favourable omens" ("pregare, trarre auspici favorevoli"), however was based on a lexical misunderstanding. Bonechi (1989: 135) erroneously based his translation on AL<sub>6</sub> DU<sub>11</sub>.GA "wish", which in fact is the Sumerian al du<sub>11</sub>-g/e/di "to wish, to desire" (see e.g. Attinger 1993: 429–438), and this idiomatic phrase should be differentiated from the simple DU<sub>11</sub> and cannot be used to derive a meaning for DU<sub>11</sub>.GA. Furthermore, the terminology for divination is now well-known, see e.g. Biga 1999, Archi 2010b, and there is no indication that Kura's rite has anything to do with divination.

48 It is difficult to specify the adjective *yīšari* as a neutral form with the meaning "the correct (words)", since the feminine form (*yīšartu*) or a noun formation is to be expected in this case. Therefore, I view it as a nominal use of the adjective.

“lamenters”, probably a kind of singer or reciter, also took part in the ritual.<sup>49</sup> This interpretation of a proclamation is also suggested by the variant formulation in *ARET* 4, 21 § 24 (Archi 1996: 52, fn. 2): in § 8, Mr. ŠUBUR had already received the usual set of two textiles as his personal gift for the performance of the proclamation (DU<sub>11.GA</sub> *i-sa-rî*); and § 24 only lists the two deliveries of 5 *zi-rî* of wool used by the main agents in the rite itself and usually connected with the “proclamation” and a “sacrifice” (NIGDABA) performed by the lamenter (*dāmimu*): “5 *ziri* of wool: Mr ŠUBUR, 5 *ziri* of wool: the lamenter (*dāmimu*), who sacrificed to Kura (and) proclaimed the righteous one” (LÚ NIGDABA <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* DU<sub>11.GA</sub> *i-sa-rî*). Similar ritual acts can be reconstructed for Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia, where royal festivals could result in the renewal of the ruler’s office.<sup>50</sup>

The close connection between the temple of Kura, the royal palace and the act of renewal during this festival is underlined by a rite that was performed in the same context by the “attendant” (PA<sub>4.ŠEŠ</sub>) of Kura. This attendant received textiles as gifts for his deed described as “cleaning (in) the house of the king” (A:TU<sub>5</sub>/<sup>à</sup>*li-ù* É EN) (Archi 1996: 44–49), a lustration of the king or of the royal palace. During this event, the religious fraternity of the ŠEŠ-II-IB was occasionally active in the palace (SA.ZA<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>), and sometimes a precious garment and two small gold rings (*kulilum*) were given to Kura as dedicatory gifts (NIG.BA). Therefore, at the beginning of the year around the spring equinox, a festival for the city-god Kura took place which apparently served to renew the office of kingship.

Although not directly stated, the rich annual donation of one mina of silver (ca. 470 g) for the “silver head” of Kura may well have taken place in the context of this festival during the first month of the year.<sup>51</sup> Usually, this donation is understood literally with a reference to the “silver head” of the statue of Kura.<sup>52</sup> The formulation in the texts is “1 mina of silver (for) the silver ‘head’ of Kura” (1 *ma-na* KÙ:BABBAR SAG KÙ:BABBAR <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra*), but the wording “1 mina of silver (for) Kura, (for) the silver head, income” (1 *ma-na* KÙ:BABBAR / <sup>d</sup>*ku-ra* / SAG KÙ:BABBAR / MU.DU, *ARET* 7 79 §6) is also attested. The sumerogram SAG undoubtedly means “head”, and the “head (SAG) of Kura” is even mentioned in the royal ritual as being covered (*ARET* 11, 2 § 115).

49 Archi (1996: 46) points to the appearance of both “invocators” and “lamenters” in the royal marriage ritual (*ARET* 11) as well.

50 During the Ur III period, the documents make it clear that the king participated in festivals, and his proclamation is described in the literary texts as the “decision of his fate” (*nam tar*) by the ruling gods. A good example of such a case is the Ur III Tummam festival, Sallaberger 1993/l: 141–142 (referring to the royal hymn Šulgi R). For the Presargonic period, comparable evidence is missing, but the participation of the ruler and his family in the most important festivals of his city-state is well attested (e.g. at Girsu, see Selz 1995), and the city-god Ningirsu was venerated as the deity who selected the ruler and installed him in office.

51 As proposed by Archi 1996: 49. For information on the “head of Kura”, see Archi 2005.

52 See the study by Archi 2005, and e.g. Waetzoldt 2001: 342: “Der Kopf dürfte aus anderem Material (z.B. Holz oder Stein) bestanden haben und im Rahmen eines bestimmten Festes oder Rituals mit einem neuen Gesicht<sup>7</sup> aus Silber(blech) versehen worden sein”.

However, the passages (cited by Archi 2005) concerning the statues of other deities make it clear that the “heads” of statues (AN.DÙL) are usually covered by plating (NU<sub>11</sub>.ZA). This terminology, however, is not attested once amongst the relevant texts that mention the one mina silver for Kura. Furthermore, in an administrative document with concise and unambiguous terminology, the phrase “silver for the silver head” (SAG KÙ:BABBAR) can only be understood as an act whereby one mina of silver was (annually) attached to an already existing “silver head” of the god. The philologically more exact rendering (“silver for the silver ‘head’”) excludes in my opinion the notion of a statue. The problem can be solved in a very simple way: SAG, literally “head”, was also used at Ebla in a figurative sense to denote “property, possession”, as shown by some documents from the chancery.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the mina of silver is not attached to the “head” of a statue, but is added to the “silver possessions” (SAG KÙ:BABBAR), i.e. the treasure of the god Kura. As already indicated above (section 4.2), this substantial dedication annually augmented the resources of the Kura temple and would have allowed the temple to use the silver economically especially in cases of emergency. Comparable evidence stems from the contemporary city-state of Lagaš: there, the queen donated precious jewels to the goddesses Nanše and Ninmarki during their festivals (Selz 1995: 199–200, 257). For the dedication of silver in association with a temple’s treasury, the spring and autumn Akiti festivals of Ur in the 21st century BC are relevant as well: the taxes of the provinces were converted into gold rings, and in this form they were sent to Ur as a contribution to the festival (Sumerian máš-da-ri-a). Together with other taxes such as the “tithe of the seafaring merchants”, the gold and silver was then brought to the temple of the god Nanna of Ur, the city-god of the royal capital. The opening of the treasury was in fact a specific act within the annual festivals of Ur.<sup>54</sup>

### 6.3. Other Rites and Cultic Personnel

In addition to the annual festival of Kura that took place at the beginning of the year, other ritual acts of unknown meaning were performed for Kura. One rite, for example, was called the “rising of the king in the temple of Kura (ZI.GA EN É <sup>d</sup>ku-ra)”, which allows for many associations given the close relationship of the king to Ebla’s divine patron.<sup>55</sup>

In the tenth month of one of the last years of Ebla, the king sacrificed a sheep for Kura “on the day of the GÍrgunû bird” (in U<sub>4</sub> GÍrgunû<sup>mušen</sup>, Pettinato 1979: no. 2 =

53 See Fronzaroli 2003: 142 on ARET 13, 13 rev. iv 13, who proposes a meaning in the sense of “possession, proprietà” for sag and refers to the Akkadian *rēšu*; Catagnoti and Fronzaroli 2010: 261 (index) s.v. sag “proprietà” (in ARET 16, 24 rev. iii 3).

54 For references, see Sallaberger 1993 and for a summary, see Sallaberger 2014.

55 Mander 2005: 91f. assumes that the king rises in the temple after having spent the night there, similar to the royal marriage ritual (ARET 11, see section 4.1 above). Other proposals are possible, e.g. the use of Sumerian zig to express a levy of troops.

MEE 12, 5 §2g). This enigmatic day of the flying creature *ġirgunû*<sup>56</sup> is also attested in texts from the treasury as an occasion for donations.<sup>57</sup> The question therefore presents itself as to whether this refers to a specific festival or whether the patron deity of Ebla is invoked in the event of an incursion of insects, perhaps locusts (although the terms are different). Or is this an annual festival with the aim of protecting the fields?

Cultic personnel in the service of Kura were primarily his two “attendants” (PA<sub>4</sub>.ŠEŠ) who figure prominently as priests in various rituals (Archi 1996: esp. 43–56; see above 6.2.).

## 7. KURA IN THE EBLAITE PANTHEON

### 7.1. The Goddesses Barama, Mother (Nin)dur, and Išhara

The role of Kura within the pantheon of Ebla can also be described by studying the gods that appear with him. His wife was Barama, whose name was perhaps derived from the root *brm* “colourful”,<sup>58</sup> and who practically never appeared alone.

According to their role in the city of Ebla, the divine couple Kura and Barama figured prominently in the royal ritual as representatives of the king and his wife. They were set in relation to the divine mother (<sup>d</sup>TU, Sumerian Du(r), Nindur) who proclaimed the renewal of Kura and Barama as well as of the king and the queen (see above section 4.1). Almost all references to the divine mother (Nin)dur (<sup>d</sup>TU) in Ebla come from the ritual of the royal couple, and in one of the rare other instances (Pomponio and Xella 1997: 331–333), her close relationship to Kura is underlined by the involvement of the two attendants (PA<sub>4</sub>.ŠEŠ) of Kura in a rite called “the day of dressing the divine mother” (*in* U<sub>4</sub> MU<sub>4</sub><sup>mu</sup> <sup>d</sup>TU).<sup>59</sup> On the basis of this evidence, it is therefore possible to conclude that Kura did not belong to the generation of the “fathers”, since he was ‘reborn’ by the divine mother during the royal ritual. From the perspective of Mesopotamian terminology, Kura was, con-

56 For information on the bird’s name, see the references presented by Waetzoldt (2001: 106), who refers to the Ebla Bird List and PSD B: 213 *s.v.* buru<sub>5</sub>-kiša. Veldhuis (2004: 249) correctly points out that a distinction should be made between *ġir*<sup>mušen</sup>, the “flying scorpion”, attested elsewhere, and the *ġirgunû*<sup>mušen</sup> of the festival. The term may be read as *ád*<sup>mušen</sup>, but Veldhuis argues against an identification because of the specific orthography of the Ebla Bird List. However, if the orthography of the Ebla Bird List was informed by local writing habits, it may well be possible to view the *ġirgunû*<sup>mušen</sup> = *ád*<sup>mušen</sup> of the festival attested in administrative documents as a local variant writing of buru<sub>5</sub>-az<sup>mušen</sup> (Veldhuis 2004: 231), which is attested in 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium literature and perhaps designates small birds (buru<sub>3</sub>).

57 See Pomponio and Xella 1997: 241, no. 214, TM.75.G.10135 obv. i 8–10 (Fronzaroli 2015: 81): in U<sub>4</sub> *ġirgunû*<sup>mušen</sup> *ġku-ra*.

58 E.g. Pasquali 2008 who proposes that \**brm* in this case refers to the (goddess’) coloured clothes.

59 ARET 1, 12 iv §§ 4–6 (month XI).

sequently, not of an Enlil-type, but belonged to the generation of younger gods.<sup>60</sup> This would point to a role as a warrior god such as in the case of Rašap, and Rašap is in fact the only male god who appears in a rite together with Kura.<sup>61</sup> The divine mother was otherwise mentioned together with Rašap's wife, Adamma, in their shrine at Atani (Pomponio and Xella 1997: 333), which demonstrates the similar position of Kura and Rašap in terms of their family role within the Syrian pantheon that is attested at Ebla.

Another goddess who is often attested in close relation to Kura is Išhara. Besides Kura and Barama, she received dedications of wooden containers presented by the queen on her arrival in Ebla (*ARET* 11, 1 § 8 = 2 § 16f.), and finally after the royal couple's return to the palace a silver statue by the king (*ibid.* 1 § 101 = 2 § 111). The close relationship between Kura, the king, and Išhara is demonstrated by two early documents from the time of Arrugum which reveal that the "Išhara of the king" received donations in the temple of Kura.<sup>62</sup> Išhara was one of the most prominent deities of Upper Mesopotamia and Syria throughout the Bronze Age (Prechel 1996), and often replaced Ištar as the dominant deity. As is the case with the latter deity, she similarly did not appear with a set male companion. The gods who are mentioned most often at Išhara's side are the moon-god especially in the context of oaths and, at Late Bronze Age Emar, the city-god Ninurta. One thousand years earlier, Emar stood under the political influence of Ebla and Išhara was also venerated there in the circle of the city-god Kura. Does this tradition and combination of deities allow us to view Kura as a type of Ninurta, i.e. a mighty warrior who protects his city?

### 7.2. Kura at Presargonic Mari

According to a recently published administrative text on sacrifices (Cavigneaux 2014: 307–308, Text 28, TH07-T9; dated month VI, year 13) Kura was also known at Mari during the Presargonic period. The distribution of sheep to the gods of Mari runs as follows (numbered in sequence):

60 Bonechi 2016a: 69, fn. 106, speculates about the role of Kura and thinks explicitly of a role similar to Dagan/El (based on the statement "If Kura is not Hadda, he could be Hadda's father"). This assumption is apparently inspired by the idea that a city-god should fulfil the role of a "divine king" in the regional pantheon (which is not the case, see section 4 above). He sees the difficulty of identifying Barama as a mother-goddess because of the appearance of (Nin)dur in the rituals, and therefore returns to his former opinion (Bonechi 1997) that "in general the Ebla king mirrored Hadda of Halab".

61 *ARET* 8, 522 xix 21–xx 1 (month II): Wool for DU<sub>11</sub>.GA NIGDABA <sup>d</sup>ra-sa-ap gú-nu wa <sup>d</sup>ku-ra.

62 *ARET* 15, 9 (= *MEE* 2, 33 = TM 75.G.1349; Pomponio and Xella 1997: 223 ff., no. 154 = 172; dated to month II) § 71: 1 SIKI zi-rí / tuš / <sup>(d)</sup>BARA<sub>7</sub> / EN / É / <sup>d</sup>ku-ra "1 ziri-measure of wool for the seat of the Išhara of the king in the temple of Kura"; *ARET* 15, 19 (= TM 75.G.1418; Pomponio and Xella 1997: 223 ff., no. 178, dated to month I) § 91: 1 zi-rí SIKI SAG / <sup>d</sup>SIG<sub>7</sub>.AMA / EN / É / <sup>d</sup>ku-ra "1 ziri-measure of high quality wool for the Išhara of the king in the temple of Kura".

- 1 5 UDU 4 SILA<sub>4</sub>  
 2 1 UDU 1 ÁŠ.(GÀR) <sup>d</sup>INANA  
 3 [...] x  
 4 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>TU  
 5 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>TU  
 6 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>INANA×ZA.ZA  
 7 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>NIN-NA-<sup>1</sup>gàr<sup>1</sup>  
 8 4 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>ra-sa-ba-an  
 9 1 (UDU) AN-EN-KI  
 10 2 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>il-ha-lab<sub>x</sub>  
 11 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>INANA×ZA.ZA  
 12 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>ša-ma-gan  
 13 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>2à-da  
 14 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>NIN.TUL<sub>8</sub>  
 15 1 (MÁŠ) <sup>d</sup>NIN.KUR  
 16 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>ku-ra  
 17 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>AMA.UŠUMGAL  
 18 1 (UDU) <sup>d</sup>NIN.KAR  
 19 1 (udu) GABA

The tablet confirms the dominant role of the “Lord of the Land”, *Bēl-mātim* (1) at Mari, the god of the temple terrace *Massif Rouge* (Butterlin and Lecomte 2014: 620–625), who is listed as the foremost deity and receives the highest number of sheep. At Mari, his temple is spatially connected with the temple of the divine mother Ninḫursan (Butterlin 2014: 107) and they may thus have formed a pair. Therefore, the “Lord of the Land” could have been a ruling god of the father-generation. The new Presargonic text mentions both Hadda (13) and the “God of Halab” (10) and therefore shows that various forms of the same deity can be venerated at the same place, a fact which is well known from the temples in Syro-Mesopotamia throughout the millennia, and is also attested at Ebla.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, the “Lord of the Land” may well be identified as a local variant of Dagan, the divine ruler of regional importance who was venerated in the Middle Euphrates valley with his cult centre at Tuttul (see also 4.3). The “Lord of the Land”, “the Lord of Terqa”, and “Dagan” also appear together in administrative documents of the Presargonic and the late Šakkanakku periods.<sup>64</sup>

The new Presargonic text from Mari is the only (primary) source from that city to include the Eblaite god Kura (16). The incorporation of Kura can also be seen in

63 As an example, Archi (2010a: 4) cites TM.76.G.223 with Hadda and Hadda of Halab in lines 1–2.

64 Presargonic document: Charpin 1987: 79–80, 114–115, text 20 (month VIII, year 4): <sup>d</sup>LUGAL-[KALAM-*f*]im? – <sup>d</sup>LUGAL-*ter*<sub>5</sub>-ga – <sup>d</sup>il-ha-lab<sub>x</sub> – ... – <sup>d</sup>NIN-ha-da-Lum – <sup>d</sup>NIN-na-<sup>1</sup>gàr<sup>1</sup> – <sup>d</sup>[...]. Šakkanakku period, *Pantheon de Mari* (Lambert 1970, text no. 3): INANA, Anunītum, Dagan – LUGAL-*mātin*, Ninḫursan, LUGAL-*Terqa* etc.

political terms<sup>65</sup> as the main god of a dependent city was venerated in the centre of Mari. Parallel cases are the “Lady of Nagar” (7), which points to the political relationship between the Ḫābūr region and Mari, and Šamagan (12), who was venerated at Nabada/Tell Beydar; he may also be included as a reference to the plains that were inhabited by gazelles in Northern Mesopotamia. The political background of this offering list is corroborated by the chronological placement of the text: as Cavigneaux (2014: 307) noted, both the palaeography and the notation of the date (with the sequence year–month instead of the later order of month–year) indicate a date earlier than most of the Presargonic tablets from Mari that can be assigned to the very end of *Ville II*, i.e. shortly before the city’s destruction by Sargon. The introduction of Ebla’s city-god Kura at Mari thus reflects the political situation in the early period of the Ebla archives, i.e. the time of Irkab-Damu (ca. 40 years before its destruction), when Ebla was politically dependent on Mari (Archi and Biga 2003: 1–5). The general geo-political dimension of this document is of great significance as according to its content, deities from various vassals and allies also received offerings in the cultic centre of the metropolis of Mari.

In the list, Kura (16) follows <sup>d</sup>NIN.TUL<sub>8</sub> (14), the “Lady of the Well” and <sup>d</sup>NIN.KUR (15), the “Lady of the Land” or “of the Earth”. In another Mari document, Ninkur is listed directly before the “Lord of Terqa” (LUGAL-*Terqa*), and therefore might have represented a divine queen. But the element KUR (as opposed to KALAM) might point to a deity of the Earth and perhaps even of the Netherworld, similar to the Mesopotamian Ereškigal, literally “Lady of the Large Place”, or the Late Bronze Age Allani, “the Lady”.<sup>66</sup> Amaušumgal (17), was venerated at Mari under his later name Dumuzi during the Amorite period (e.g. Durand 1995: 171, 206–207). In the Presargonic period, he was known at Ebla from two parallel literary texts that were found in Palace G (*ARET* 5, 20 and 21). In these texts, Amaušumgal is mentioned together with Inana, he was called the “friend of Enlil”, and perhaps acts as shepherd. These are also aspects that are known from Old Babylonian poetry concerning Dumuzi, but his early death is not referred to in the Ebla texts (Krebernik 2003). The evidence of the Mari offering list, however, should not be overstressed, since the order of the divine names depends on many different aspects especially in the lower portions of an administrative document.

#### 8. DEDICATIONS TO KURA AS INDICATORS OF THE GOD’S ROLE

In ancient Syro-Mesopotamia, the objects dedicated to a deity also included specific objects that referred to the deity’s role in the divine world. Archi stressed this fact, writing that “never receiving gifts of weapons, Kura was a local deity of

<sup>65</sup> See also Cavigneaux 2014: 308.

<sup>66</sup> For the suggestion of identifying Ninkur at Emar as an Allani type, see Sallaberger 1996b: 145. Note that the Late Bronze Age *hapax* Kurri was venerated in the temple of Allani; see 3.4 above.



prosperity, not a warrior god" (Archi 2013: 215). By contrast, "maces" (*ha-bù*) were offered to the storm-god Hadda and Rašap, so that their character as warriors is clear. Maces were also given to the Lord of Gananaum, Kamiš, Nidabal of (L) arugatu and of Luban, Ala, and to the goddess Ninkar. "Kura, protector of Ebla's kingship, is entirely separate from this type of warrior god" (Archi 2010a: 11–13).

The dedications of silver and gold in the course of the ritual for Kura's wife, Barama, conform to the gender-specific expectations: she received jewels and garments for females and thus was treated as a grand lady apparently without specific features (e.g. *ARET* 11, 1 § 14 = 2 § 16b).

The picture for Kura is more diverse. In the ritual of the royal couple, Kura and Barama as well as the minor deities Išru and ANIRU, received jewels (*ARET* 11, 2 § 15). According to Fronzaroli (1993: 74), these jewels included one in the form of a bird (*BURU*<sub>4</sub><sup>mušen</sup>)<sup>67</sup> which – according to the same text (*ARET* 11, 1 § 37 = 2 § 40; 1 § 55 = 2 § 58) – was also given to other deities and a divine ancestor. The four black bulls presented to Kura and his chariot most probably served as draught animals and do not allow for any conclusions to be made about the god's character (*ARET* 11, 1 § 26 = 2 § 26). Certain offerings such as gold rings (*kulilum*) are given to all deities and thus do not yield any specific information about their character.<sup>68</sup>

Kura must have been characterized by a certain type of headgear that marked him as a ruler or simply as a deity: in the royal ritual, the queen sends him two "horns" (*SI.DÙ*) and two "diadems(?)" (*GILIM*) (*ARET* 11, 1 § 13 = 2 § 16d), and in another context, golden decoration for his "headgear".<sup>69</sup>

Another jewel for Kura was adorned by eagles (*TI*<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup>)<sup>70</sup> which could point to a warrior-like character (see also 9. below): Aštabil, a warrior-god in Late Bronze Age Syro-Anatolia and thus probably also a warrior-god at Ebla, received eagle-formed jewels as well.<sup>71</sup> Further connections between these two deities exist, since the priest of Kura also performed a rite in the temple of Aštabil.<sup>72</sup>

67 This bird has been interpreted in many ways including identification as a vulture or a crow. See the short discussion and references collected by Bonechi 2016a: 65, fn. 88.

68 Another non-specific (but not very clear) text passage is mentioned by Pomponio and Xella 1997: 236 no. 161, *MEE* 7, 34 rev. vi 33–vii 5: 2 shekels of silver for: *ḥa-za-nu sa-ḥa-tim* GABA <sup>ḳ</sup>*ku-ra wa* EN "for the grains/pearls (of the jewel) (in the form of) a bulb in front of Kura and the king".

69 Pomponio and Xella 1997: 240, no. 205, TM.75.G.2508 obv. xviii 11–14: Silver for gold (for a) *ti-ba-ra-nu* SAG.KÉŠDA <sup>ḳ</sup>*ku-ra ma-lik-tum* IN.NA.ŠÚM "pour l'écharpe du turban de Kura", given by the queen.

70 *MEE* 2, 48 (see above fn. 22); Pomponio and Xella 1997: 240 no. 208, TM.75.G.2508 rev. iv 32–v 10: Silver for 1 *TI*<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup> [...] TUM [...] TU LÚ É <sup>ḳ</sup>*ku-ra* ŠÈ MU<sub>4</sub><sup>mu</sup>.MU<sub>4</sub><sup>mu</sup> "1 eagle ... of the temple of Kura for the clothing ceremony".

71 Pomponio and Xella 1997: 73–74, no. 50, TM.75.G.2507 rev. vii 12'–25': Gold for 4 *MA*<sub>5</sub> *TI*<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup> "4 bridles (decorated with an/in the form of an) eagle" and the suspension of a dagger; royal gift to Aštabil. In comparison to Kura, however, Aštabil also received Amorite daggers made of gold.

72 *ARET* 4, 7 § 21 (month II): 1 set of textiles for Ennani, "the attendant of Kura, on the day the



The martial character of Kura, or at least his role as a mighty ruler who also executes his power by force, is confirmed by two further attributes. The first is the “whip” (USAN<sub>3</sub>) of Kura, which was referred to in the context of a ritual action.<sup>73</sup> The whip is also associated with the god Kamiš,<sup>74</sup> whose name literally means the “subduer”. Kamiš was therefore a god of the warrior-type and was equated with Nergal as is the case with Rašap. The whip (Waetzoldt 2003–05), which was used to punish the disobedient, was a well-known attribute of deities especially in Mesopotamia: Sumerian literature includes the image of both the divine king Enlil and his heroic son Ninurta using the whip to control the country. According to Akkadian texts, the storm-god Adad and the warrior Nergal also handle the whip. Various gods are depicted with whips on Sargonic seals, apparently as a sign of control and the execution of power.

The second bellicose attribute is the axe (<sup>giš</sup>ŠILIG), a weapon that was used by military leaders and was presented to Kura, as was also the case with the warrior Rašap.<sup>75</sup> The axe and the whip thus mark Kura as a martial leader.

## 9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The god Kura was venerated as the city-god of Ebla, and resided exclusively at the city of Ebla. He thus functioned as the protector of the king, and similarly his wife, Barama, tutored the queen (4). Although the exact phonemic reconstruction of the god’s name is unknown, the spelling <sup>d</sup>ku-ra represents a frozen writing as it was also used for some other Semitic words, however an etymological explanation of the name cannot be proposed at the present time (2).

Kura’s cult at Ebla regularly received contributions of bread and sheep from the palace. Via the distribution of the foodstuffs after the sacrifice, the king fed and supported his people in the name of the city-god (4.4, 6.1). His annual festival that took place in the first month included a ritual cleansing of the ruler and probably also led to a renewal of kingship (6.2). Every year, and probably in the course of this festival, one mina of silver was added to the deity’s treasury, i.e. to

son of(?) the queen ... in the temple of Aštabil” (PA<sub>4</sub>:ŠEŠ / <sup>d</sup>ku-ra / in U<sub>4</sub> / DUMU.NITA / ma-lik-tum / GIŠ.DU / É / <sup>d</sup>āš-da-bil). Also the palace of Ebla sent food made from cereals for dedication to Aštabil as one of the very few gods (besides prominently Kura, see section 6.1) to receive food offerings from the king (ARET 9).

73 Pomponio and Xella 1997: 224, no. 18, ARET 3, 105 obv. v 2–8: 2 textiles for 2 persons, “of the fraternity, (acting for) the whip of Kura” (ŠEŠ-II-IB / USAN / <sup>d</sup>ku-ra).

74 ARET 3, 61 obv. iii 1’–5’ for Kamiš: 1 GU-DÜL<sup>tu</sup>g MU<sub>4</sub><sup>mu</sup> 2 ÍB-GÜN-SA<sub>6</sub><sup>tu</sup>g SAG / EN / in U<sub>4</sub> / USAN / <sup>d</sup>ga-mi-iš “1 gudul cape as dress, 2 high-quality coloured belts (for) the king on the day of the whip of Kamiš”.

75 ARET 12, 309 rev. iv’ 7–13 (month XI): 1 <sup>giš</sup>ŠILIG 1 ÍB-iii GÜN<sup>tu</sup>g <sup>d</sup>ku-ra, 1 KÜ.SAL KÜ:BABBAR <sup>d</sup>ba-ra-ma, 1 <sup>giš</sup>ŠILIG 1 ÍB-iii GÜN<sup>tu</sup>g <sup>d</sup>ra-sa-ap LÚ ?à-da-NI<sup>ki</sup>, “1 axe and a coloured belt (for) Kura; 1 silver jewel for Barama; 1 axe and a coloured belt (for) Rašap of Atani”; similarly ARET 15, 44 rev. vi 6–11: 2 zara<sub>6</sub>-capes, 1 axe, 1 jewel (KÜ.SAL), 1 “long dress” (GÍD.TÚG): gift for Kura, gift for Barama, from/in Atani. On the term <sup>giš</sup>šilig “axe”, see Waetzoldt 1990: 23–24.

his “capital”, which is literally rendered as “head” (SAG) in the texts. The charming idea of a refurbishment of the “head” of a statue of Kura should thus be abandoned (6.2). In all likelihood, Kura’s temple was situated within the city of Ebla, and a temple *in antis* may be posited as the central building, surrounded by a *temenos* (GÁ<sup>ki</sup>), a precinct, which included Kura’s gate (KÁ) and a place for ritual washing. The identification of the “Temple of the Rock” and the “Red Temple” as Kura’s temple can neither be proven nor refuted, and thus the archaeological and historical terminologies should be kept apart (5).

Kura does not share attributes with the storm-god such as the bull or the mace (7.2), and indeed city-gods in Syro-Mesopotamia do not necessarily correspond to ruling deities, since every divine character, for example a mother-goddess, a divine warrior or the god of the sun or the moon, could be respected as an urban ruler. The supra-regional veneration of the storm-god Hadda of Halab (4.3) in this regard corresponds to the role of Nippur’s Enlil in Mesopotamia or of Dagan of Tuttul for the Middle Euphrates region.

The collective evidence makes it possible to define Kura’s character in more precise terms. In the royal ritual, Kura and Barama were renewed by the divine mother (Nin)dur, and therefore Kura belonged to the generation of the younger rulers and not to the generation of the parental gods (7.1). Kura shares the axe as a weapon with Rašap, the Syrian cousin of the lord of the Netherworld, Nergal, the warrior god and god of healing, who protected the cemeteries and who was represented in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC as a warrior-god with a mace or an axe in his upraised hand and a shield or lance in the lower one.<sup>76</sup> In a similar way, Kura was associated with the same attribute as the warrior Aštabil, i.e. a whip. The whip was an instrument for the corporal punishment of subjects in order to preserve internal order and stability. Both Aštabil and Kura received jewels in the form of an eagle. The eagle was the symbol of Zababa the warrior, son of Enlil and city-god of Kiš. This type of warrior, namely the princely son of the divine king who supports the human ruler, leads the army and controls the land, and thus could well describe Kura’s character. In Mesopotamia, it is fascinating to see how many city-gods were “sons” of Enlil, thereby indicating the cultural bonds of the cities towards their father and lord at Nippur. These include Ningirsu at Girsu, Nergal at Kutha, Tišpak at Ešnuna, Zababa at Kiš, and others. The case of Zababa as the city-god of Kiš, the dominant royal city of the period, is especially noteworthy in this context, since Kiš’ cultural influence had a strong impact on Ebla. The heroic character of city-gods was most relevant in the period of the city-states with their constant military expeditions and battles. In this context, even the moon-god Suen received the epithet “impetuous calf (amar bānda<sup>da</sup>) of Enlil” in

76 As perceived also by the scribes of Ebla: *MEE* 4, 290 VE 806 <sup>4</sup>n<sub>ergal</sub>(kiš.UNU) = *ra-sa-ap*. A concise overview is given by Streck 2006–08 and Seidl 2006–08. See also Lipiński 2009 and Münnich 2013.

the Stele of Vultures (*RIME* 1, E1.9.3.1 xxii 8–10), thus underlining the close ties between the divine ruler (Enlil) and the junior hero (Zababa, Ningirsu etc.). The close relationship between Kura and the goddess of love, oaths and procreation, namely Išhara, could point in the same direction, if the late Bronze Age affinity between Išhara and the city-god Ninurta at Emar is considered (7.1). Therefore, the attested dedications and the position in the local pantheon strongly indicate that Kura was a martial god and defender of his land and should be viewed similarly to Zababa, Ninurta or Nergal in Mesopotamia, and related to both Aštabil and Rašap in Syria, perhaps as a local manifestation of one of these gods.

The evidence available at present does not suffice to identify the gods of the Hurrian milieu, i.e. Kurri in Cilicia (3.2) or Kurwe/Kura of Azuḫinnu (3.1) as later forms of Kura of Ebla with any certainty, but there are no sources known to date to contradict this suggestion either.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Archi, A.  
 1993 Divinités sémitiques et divinités de substrat: Le cas d'Išhara et d'Ištar à Ébla, *Mari. Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires* 7: 71–78.  
 1994 Studies in the Pantheon of Ebla, *Orientalia* NS 63: 249–56.  
 1995 Šalaš Consort of Dagan and Kumarbi, in Th.P.J. van den Hout and J. de Roos (eds), *Studio Historiae Ardens: Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Philo J. Houwink ten Cate on the Occasion of his 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, Leiden: 1–6.  
 1996 Eblaita: *pāšišu* “colui che è addetto all'unzione; sacerdote purificatore; cameriere al servizio di una persona”, *Vicino Oriente* 10: 37–71.  
 2005 The Head of Kura – the Head of 'Adabal, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 64: 81–100.  
 2010a Hadda of Ḫalab and His Temple in the Ebla Period, *Iraq* 72: 3–18.  
 2010b Divination at Ebla, in J. Fincke (ed.), *Festschrift für Gernot Wilhelm anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages am 28. Januar 2010*, Dresden: 45–56.  
 2011 In Search of Armi, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 63: 5–34.  
 2013 Ritualization at Ebla, *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion* 13: 212–237.  
 2015 Syria and Mesopotamia Before the Akkadian Dynasty: Geopolitical Relations, in A. Archi, *Ebla and its Archives* (SANER 7), Boston and Berlin: 3–12.
- Archi, A., and Biga, M.G.  
 2003 A Victory Over Mari and the Fall of Ebla, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 55: 1–44.
- Attinger, P.  
 1993 *Éléments de linguistique sumérienne. La construction de du<sub>11</sub>/eldi “dire”* (OBO Sonderband), Fribourg.
- Balkan, K.  
 1954 *Kassitenstudien. I. Die Sprache der Kassiten* (AOS 37), New Haven CT.
- Bartelmus, A.  
 2017 Die Götter der Kassitenzeit. Eine Analyse ihres Vorkommens in zeitgenössischen Textquellen, in A. Bartelmus and K. Sternitzke (eds), *Karduniaš. Babylonien zur Kassitenzeit. Babylonia under the Kassites* (UAVA 11), Berlin and New York: 245–312.

- Biga, M.G.  
 1999 Omens and Divination at Ebla, *NABU* 1999/109: 103–104.  
 2015 La città di Arugu e la geografia del culto nei testi di Ebla (Siria, III millennio a. C.), *Isimu* 12 (Fs Liverani II): 105–116.
- Bonechi, M.  
 1989 Un atto di culto a Ebla, in P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *Miscellanea Eblaitica* 2 (QuSem 16), Firenze: 131–147.  
 1992 A propos de la terrasse cultuelle à Ebla protosyrienne, *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 1992/128: 94–95.  
 1997 Lexique et idéologie royale à l'époque proto-syrienne, *Mari. Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires* 8: 477–535.  
 2007 Studies in the Ebla Lexical Lists, I. MEE 4, 77, 83, 87\*, *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica - Università di Firenze* 17: 199–214.  
 2016a A Passive, and Therefore Prized, Bride. New Proposals for the Queen's Wedding in the *Ebla Royal Rituals*, *Revue d'Assyriologie* 110: 53–78.  
 2016b Building Works at Palace G. The Ebla King Between Major-domos, Carriers and Construction Workers, *Studia Eblaitica* 2: 1–46.
- Borger, R.  
 2010 *Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon*, Zweite, revidierte und aktualisierte Auflage, Münster.
- Butterlin, P.  
 2014 Recherches au Massif Rouge, données nouvelles sur le centre monumental de Mari et son histoire, in *Mari, ni Est, ni Ouest* (Syria, Suppl. 2), Beyrouth: 81–110.
- Butterlin, P. and Lecompte, C.  
 2014 Mari, ni Est, ni Ouest, et les statuettes de la cachette du temple du "Seigneur du Pays", in *Mari, ni Est, ni Ouest* (Syria, Suppl. 2), Beyrouth: 605–628.
- Castel, C.  
 2010 The First Temples *in antis*. The Sanctuary of Tell Al-Rawda in the Context of 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium Syria, in J. Becker et al. (eds), *Kulturlandschaft Syrien. Zentrum und Peripherie. Festschrift für Jan-Waalke Meyer* (AOAT 371), Münster: 123–164.
- Catagnoti, A.  
 1997 Sul lessico dei giuramenti a Ebla: nam-ku<sub>5</sub>. in P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *Miscellanea Eblaitica* 4 (QuSem 19), Firenze: 111–137.  
 2012 *La grammatica della lingua di Ebla* (QuSem 29), Firenze.  
 2013 *La paleografia dei testi dell'amministrazione e della cancelleria di Ebla* (QuSem 30), Firenze.
- Catagnoti, A. and Fronzaroli, P.  
 2010 *Archivi Reali di Ebla, Testi 16. Testi di cancelleria: Il re e i funzionari, I*, Roma.
- Cavigneaux, A.  
 2014 Nouveaux textes de Mari Ville II (campagnes 1998 à 2007), in *Mari, ni Est, ni Ouest* (Syria, Suppl. 2), Beyrouth: 291–340.
- Ceccarelli, M.  
 2015 Bemerkungen zur Entwicklung der Beschwörungen des Marduk-Ea-Typs: Die Rolle Enlils, in A. Archi (ed.), *Tradition and Innovation in the Ancient Near East. Proceedings of the 57<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Rome 4–8 July 2011*, Winona Lake IN: 193–204.
- Charpin, D.  
 1987 Tablettes présagoniques de Mari, *Mari. Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires* 5: 65–127.
- Dalley, St. and Postgate, N.  
 1984 *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser* (CTN 3), London.

- Deller, K.-H.  
1976 Materialien zu den Lokal panthea des Königreichs Arraphé, *Orientalia* NS 45: 33–45.
- Durand, J.-M.  
1995 La religión en Siria durante la época de los reinos amorreos según la documentación de Mari, in P. Mander and J.-M. Durand (eds), *Mitología y Religión del Oriente Antiguo II/1: Semita Occidentales (Ebla, Mari)*, Sabadell: 125–576.
- Feliu, L.  
2003 *The God Dagan in Bronze Age Syria*, Leiden.
- Fincke, J.  
1993 *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der Nuzi-Texte*, (Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes 10), Wiesbaden.
- Fronzaroli, P.  
1993 *Archivi Reali di Ebla, Testi 11. Testi rituali della regalità*, Roma.  
2003 *Archivi Reali di Ebla, Testi 13. Testi di cancelleria: I rapporti con le città*, Roma.
- Gladigow, B.  
1998 Polytheismus, in H. Cancik et al. (eds), *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* Vol. 4, Stuttgart: 321–330.  
2002 Polytheismus und Monotheismus, in M. Krebernik and J. van Oorschot (eds), *Polytheismus und Monotheismus in den Religionen des Vorderen Orients* (AOAT 298), Münster: 3–20.
- Haas, V.  
1981 Zwei Gottheiten aus Ebla in hethitischer Überlieferung, *Oriens Antiquus* 20: 251–257.
- Hutter, M.  
2003 Aspects of Luwian religion, in H. Craig Melchert (ed.), *The Luwians*, (HdOr I/68), Leiden and Boston: 211–280.
- Keetman, J.  
2008 Schrift und Phoneme im Reichsakkadischen, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 60: 101–115.
- Kogan, L.  
2011 Old Babylonian Copies of Sargonic Royal Inscriptions as Linguistic Evidence, in G. Barjamovic et al. (eds), *Akkade is King! A Collection of Papers by Friends and Colleagues Presented to Aage Westenholz on the Occasion of His 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday 15th of May 2009*, Leiden: 163–188.
- Krebernik, M.  
1988 *Die Personennamen der Ebla-Texte. Eine Zwischenbilanz* (Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient 7), Berlin.  
2002 Vielzahl und Einheit im altmesopotamischen Pantheon, in M. Krebernik and J. van Oorschot (eds), *Polytheismus und Monotheismus in den Religionen des Vorderen Orients* (AOAT 298), Münster: 33–51.  
2003 Drachennutter und Himmelsrebe? Zur Frühgeschichte Dumuzis und seiner Familie, in W. Sallaberger et al. (eds), *Literatur, Politik und Recht in Mesopotamien. Festschrift Claus Wilcke*, Wiesbaden: 151–180.
- Lambert, M.  
1970 Textes de Mari – dix-huitième campagne – 1969, *Syria* 47: 245–260.
- Lieberman, St.  
1977 *The Sumerian Loanwords in Old-Babylonian Akkadian* (Harvard Semitic Studies 22), Missoula MT.
- Lipiński, E.  
1995 *Dieux et déesses de l'univers phénicien et punique* (OLA 64), Leuven.

- 2009 *Resheph. A Syro-Canaanite Deity* (OLA 181), Leuven.
- 2010 *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics III* (OLA 200), Leuven.
- Litke, R.L.  
1998 *A Reconstruction and Analysis of the First-Millennium B.C. Lists of the Gods of Assyria and Babylonia*, Bethesda MD.
- Mander, P.  
2005 *Le religioni del Vicino Oriente antico: 1. La religione di Ebla (XXV-XXIV sec. a.C.)* (Quaderni Napoletani di Assiriologia 5), Roma.
- Matthiae, P.  
2010 *Ebla. La città del trono. Archeologia e storia*, Torino.  
2015 Cult Architecture at Ebla between Early Bronze IVA and Middle Bronze I: Continuity and Innovation in the Formative Phase of a Great Tradition. An Evaluation, *Studia Eblaitica* 1: 75–108.
- Milano, L.  
1990 *Archivi Reali di Ebla, Testi 9. Testi amministrativi: Assegnazioni di prodotti alimentari*, Roma.
- Milano, L. and Tonietti, M.V.  
2012 Cerimonialità alimentare ad Ebla: offerte, pasti, sacrifici, in L. Milano (ed.), *Mangiare divinamente. Pratiche e simbologie alimentari nell'antico Oriente* (Eothen 20), Firenze: 33–81.
- Milano, L., Maiocchi, M. and Di Filippo, F.  
Ebla Digital Archives. <http://virgo.unive.it/eblaonline/cgi-bin/home.cgi> (last access 01/2017).
- Mosca, P.G. and Russell, J.  
1987 A Phoenician Inscription from Cebel İres Dağı in Rough Cilicia, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 9: 1–27.
- Münnich, M.M.  
2013 *The God Resheph in the Ancient Near East* (ORA 11), Tübingen.
- Otto, A.  
2006 Das Oberhaupt des westsemitischen Pantheons ohne Abbild? Überlegungen zur Darstellung des Gottes Dagan, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 96: 242–268.
- Paoletti, P.  
2015 The Lexical Texts from Ebla: Palaeography, Sign Identification and Scribes in the Early Dynastic Period, in E. Devecchi *et al.* (eds), *Current Research in Cuneiform Paleography. Proceedings of the Workshop Held at the 60<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Warsaw 2014*, Gladbeck: 49–69.
- Pasquali, J.  
2008 Une hypothèse à propos du rôle de <sup>4</sup>Ku-ra dans le rituel royal éblaïte, *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Breves et Utilitaires* 2008/50: 67–69.
- Pettinato, G.  
1979 *Culto ufficiale ad Ebla durante il regno di Ibbi-sipiš* (Orientis Antiqui Collectio 16), Roma.
- Pomponio, F. and Xella, P.  
1997 *Les dieux d'Ebla* (AOAT 245), Münster.
- Pfeiffer, R.H. and Speiser, E.A.  
1935–36 *One Hundred New Selected Nuzi Texts* (AASOR 16), Baltimore MD.
- Pongratz-Leisten, B.  
2014 Entwurf zu einer Handlungstheorie des altorientalischen Polytheismus, in A. Wagner (ed.), *Göttliche Körper – Göttliche Gefühle* (OBO 270), Fribourg and Göttingen: 101–116.



- Prechel, D.  
1996 *Die Göttin Išhara. Ein Beitrag zur altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte* (ALASP 11), Münster.
- Röllig, W.  
2001 Phönizisches aus Nordsyrien und der Gott Kurra, in K. Geus and K. Zimmermann (eds), *Punica-Libya-Ptolemaica. Festschrift für Werner Huss* (OLA 104), Leuven: 41–52.
- Sallaberger, W.  
1993 *Der kultische Kalender der Ur III-Zeit* (UAVA 7), Berlin and New York.  
1996a Calendar and Pantheon, in F. Ismail et al. (eds), *Administrative Documents from Tell Beydar (Seasons 1993–1995)* (Subartu 2), Turnhout: 85–87.  
1996b Review of D.E. Fleming, *The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar* (HSS 42), 1992, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 86: 140–147.  
2003 Nachrichten an den Palast von Ebla. Eine Deutung von niġ-mul(-an), in P. Marrassini (ed.), *Semitic and Assyriological Studies Presented to Pelio Fronzaroli by Pupils and Colleagues*, Wiesbaden: 600–625.  
2004 Pantheon A.I. Mesopotamien, in D.O. Edzard (ed.), *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 10, Berlin: 294–308.  
2007 From Urban Culture to Nomadism. A History of Upper Mesopotamia in the Late Third Millennium, in C. Kuzucuoğlu and C. Marro (eds), *Sociétés humaines et changement climatique à la fin du troisième millénaire: Une crise a-t-elle eu lieu en Haute Mésopotamie? Actes du Colloque de Lyon, 5-8 décembre 2005* (VA 19), Paris: 417–456.  
2008 Rechtsbrüche in Handel, Diplomatie und Kult. Ein Memorandum aus Ebla über Verfehlungen Maris (ARET 13, 15), *Kaskal* 5: 93–110.  
2011 History and Philology, in M. Lebeau (ed.), *Associated Regional Chronologies for the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean 1: Jezirah*, Turnhout: 327–343.  
2012 Home-made Bread, Municipal Mutton, Royal Wine. Establishing Social Relations during the Preparation and Consumption of Food in Religious Festivals at Late Bronze Age Emar, in S. Pollock (ed.), *Between Feasts and Daily Meals: Toward an Archaeology of Commensal Spaces* (eTopoi. Journal for Ancient Studies, Special Volume 2), Berlin: 157–177.  
2013 The Management of the Royal Treasure: Palace Archives and Palatial Economy in the Ancient Near East, in J.A. Hill et al. (eds), *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority. Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*, Philadelphia PA: 219–255.  
2014 Kulturelle Kohärenz durch Prestige. Die Feste der mesopotamischen Königsstadt Ur, in B. Backes and C. von Nicolai (eds), *Kulturelle Kohärenz durch Prestige* (Münchner Studien zur Alten Welt 10), München: 219–255.  
2015 Sumerische und altbabylonische Eidesformeln in lexikalischer und kulturhistorischer Perspektive, in H. Barta et al. (eds), *Prozessrecht und Eid: Recht und Rechtsfindung in antiken Kulturen, Teil 1* (Philippika 86,1), Wiesbaden: 179–192.
- Seidl, U.  
2006–08 Rašap. B. Darstellungen, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 11: 253–254.
- Selz, G.  
1995 *Untersuchungen zur Götterwelt des altsumerischen Stadtstaates von Lagaš* (Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund 13), Philadelphia PA.
- Simon, Z.  
in pr. Die Griechen und das Phönizische im späthethitischen Staat Hiyawa: die zypriische Verbindung, in P.-A. Mumm and W. Sallaberger (eds), *Völker und Sprachen*, Berlin.

- Steinkeller, P.  
1989 *Sale Documents of the Ur III Period* (FAOS 17), Stuttgart.
- Streck, M.  
2006–08 Rašap. A. In den schriftlichen Quellen, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 11: 251–253.
- Tekoğlu R. and Lémaire, A.  
2000 La bilingue royale louvito-phénicienne de Çineköy, *Comptes-Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptiions et Belles-Lettres*: 961–1006.
- Tonietti, M.V.  
2013 *Aspetti del sistema preposizionale dell'Eblaita* (Antichistica 2), Venezia.
- Veldhuis, N.  
2004 *Religion, Literature, and Scholarship: The Sumerian Composition "Nanše and the Birds"* (Cuneiform Monographs 22), Leiden and Boston.
- Viganò, L.  
1995 Rituals at Ebla, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54: 215–222.
- Waetzoldt, H.  
1990 Zur Bewaffnung des Heeres von Ebla, *Oriens Antiquus* 29: 1–38.  
2001 *Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungstexte aus Ebla. Archiv L.2769* (Materiali Epigrafici di Ebla 12), Roma.
- 2003–05 Peitsche, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 10: 382–386.
- Wilcke, C.  
1985 Familiengründung im Alten Babylonien, in E.W. Müller (ed.), *Geschlechtsreife und Legitimation zur Zeugung* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Historische Anthropologie 3), Freiburg and München: 213–317.
- Wilhelm, G.  
1992 Zum eblaitischen Gott Kura, *Vicino Oriente* 8/2: 23–31.
- Younger, K.L.  
2009 The Deity Kur(r)a in the First Millennium Sources, *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 9: 1–23.



