



CHAPTER ONE

Near Eastern Archives and Libraries

Introduction

Modern editions of the Hebrew Bible are conveniently available because scribes copied and preserved the text from the time of its composition until the advent of Gutenberg's printing press in the fifteenth century C.E. This phenomenon is quite exceptional; the vast majority of ancient Near Eastern texts were long ago forgotten, buried beneath many feet of earth and rubble. When nineteenth- and twentieth-century archaeologists began to unearth these texts, it did not take long to recognize that some of them were quite similar to those in the Hebrew Bible. This naturally generated an interest in comparing biblical and Near Eastern literature. Our access to the Near Eastern texts has been facilitated by the ancient tendency to collect them in libraries and archives. Originally, the archival and library materials were composed on a variety of materials, including not only clay tablets—probably the medium most familiar to modern readers—but also “wax boards” (wax-covered wooden or ivory tablets), wood, ostraca (pottery shards), metal, stone, parchment (animal skins), and papyrus. Many of these materials are perishable, and those that are not—stone, metal, and ostraca—were not commonly used. Fortunately, thousands of texts were composed on clay tablets in ancient Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, Egypt, and the Levant. These tablets were preserved because they were deliberately hardened by kiln or sunshine or, as sometimes happened, because they were baked inadvertently when invaders burned the buildings that held them.

Many of the ancient archives and libraries were housed in public buildings such as palaces and temples while others were stored in private collections. It is conceptually helpful to distinguish the libraries from the archives, although we should stress that both could be kept at the same site. Ancient libraries, like their modern counterparts, made the cultural resources found in canonical texts

(scientific, literary, religious, and historical texts) more easily accessible to scholars for reading, consultation, and research. Archives, on the other hand, were administrative sites where various types of official records were stored, such as receipts, inventories, loan and business contracts, diplomatic texts, legal records, marriage and adoption contracts, astrological reports, oracle queries, census reports, tribute lists, royal grants, treaties, letters, and all manner of other documentation. A further distinction can be made between *storage* archives and *functional* archives. The former included records that were unlikely to be consulted on a regular basis whereas the latter made texts conveniently accessible. Modern examples of each could include birth records (storage archives) and medical records (functional archives). It is worth noting that some archival records served only temporary purposes and so were quickly discarded. For instance, in Mesopotamia, it appears that temporary records were usually written on horizontally-oriented tablets (the *u'iltu* format used in temporary copies of contracts) while permanent archival records were written in a vertical-column format called *tuppu* (see Parpola 1997, liii; Radner). A good collection of English translations of archival documents is available in *COS* 3.

O. Pedersén is producing an exhaustive study of Near Eastern libraries and archives. He has already prepared a monograph (*ALANE*) that covers the period from 1500 to 300 B.C.E., and a second volume covering the earlier period is under way. Pedersén's first volume can be provisionally regarded as representative of the earlier contexts it does not discuss. According to Pedersén, a total of 253 libraries and archives from the period between 1500 and 300 B.C.E. have been unearthed from fifty different cities. These finds include 28 libraries, 198 archives, and 27 library/archive collections. About half of the collections were found in public buildings (127), the other half in private homes (126). The private collections—which included both archives and libraries—were owned by priests, scribes, diviners, exorcists, temple singers, businessmen, and public officials. Private archives were generally the property of businessmen, containing records of their business transactions, and the private libraries normally belonged to the professional classes, especially those connected to the temples or palace.

By far the largest and most important library recovered from the ancient world is that of King Assurbanipal of Assyria (669–c. 627). This collection from Tell Kuyunjik (the ancient citadel of Nineveh) is our primary source of both Assyrian and Babylonian literature. We owe its existence to Assurbanipal's literary obsessions, which inspired him to learn cuneiform and undertake the promethean task of collecting all known Mesopotamian literature into a single library. Although he did not succeed in acquiring all ancient literature, we are fortunate that he came as close as one reasonably could. This also means, however, that our understanding of Mesopotamian culture and tradition is somewhat skewed because we are overly dependent upon literature from a single location and time frame.

Most of the archives were relatively small (less than one hundred texts) and covered a period of no more than fifty years, that is, about one lifetime. Rarely were archives maintained for one hundred years or more, and rarely did they exceed one thousand documents. The administrative chanceries of temples and

other public buildings generated the largest archives, in one case about thirty thousand texts (Sippar's Neo-Babylonian temple of Šamaš). Although most of the major archives were unearthed in Mesopotamia, Egypt also produced large archives and libraries, but most of the Egyptian texts were inscribed on perishable materials. Telling examples come from several Egyptian temples—most notably the Horus temple at Edfu—where the empty library chambers are inscribed with lists of the books that they once contained (see Burkard; Wessetzky; Sauneron). The literary samples that survive from earlier in Egyptian history include the exceptional papyri from dry regions and tombs and the nonperishable texts, such as ostraca. Still, our corpus of Egyptian papyri is significant—especially from the later periods—and appears meager only when compared with the archives and libraries of the cuneiform cultures (for a good survey of the Egyptian papyrological sources, see *LÄ* 4:667–899).

Table 1.1

Important Archival and Library Finds from the Ancient Near East

Location/Date	Before 2000	2000–1500	1500–1000	1000–300
Mesopotamia	Uruk, Ur, Nippur, Puzrish-Dagan	Assur, Kish	Assur, Babylon, Nippur, Nuzi	Assur, Babylon, Kalḫu, Sippar, Nineveh, Uruk, Nippur
Syria-Palestine	Ebla	Mari, Alalakh	Emar, Alalakh	
Anatolia		Kaneš (Kültepe)	Ḫattuša	
Egypt	Abusir	Deir el-Medina, Saqqara	Akhetaton (Amarna)	Elephantine

Modern name in parentheses (); all dates B.C.E.

The summaries below cover some of the more important libraries and archives from the ancient Near East, but readers should note that there were scores of ancient archives and libraries containing many thousands of texts. The sketch of the archives presented here is therefore admittedly selective; studies listed in the general bibliography at the conclusion of this chapter provide a more complete introduction to the ancient Near Eastern archives. There are also many closely related entries elsewhere in this volume, especially the Israelite archives (from Samaria, Arad, and Lachish) treated in chapter 15. Before we turn to the entries on archives and libraries, several pertinent introductory issues need to be discussed: languages, writing, literacy, schools, and canonicity.

Language and Writing in the Ancient Near East

The texts discussed in this volume come from five major centers of ancient civilization: Mesopotamia, Syria-Palestine, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Greece. The

earliest written “texts” were small symbols inscribed on clay tokens and tablets from Mesopotamia. These inscribed tokens, dating to as early as about 4000 B.C.E., were generally used for economic purposes, such as inventories and transfers of goods (see Schmandt-Besserat; Nissen et al.). Sumerian, the earliest written language, seems to have developed from this ancient token system (Walker; Kaltner/McKenzie). Sumerian civilization emerged as a series of independent city-states in southern Mesopotamia during the second half of the fourth millennium and continued on until about 1900 B.C.E. Although the Sumerian people themselves are little understood, scholars have been reasonably successful in translating their literary texts, which first appeared in the third millennium B.C.E. The Sumerian language employed a system of signs that represented both concepts (ideograms) and syllabic values (syllabograms). For instance, the sign *PA* could represent the concept “twig” or the phoneme “pa.” The signs were composed by impressing a stylus upon clay tablets (or other media), thus producing a variety of wedge-shaped patterns that scholars call *cuneiform* (from the Latin for “wedge-shaped”). Although Sumerian texts were composed during the Classical Sumerian period (ca. 2500 B.C.E.) and the so-called Sumerian Renaissance (Ur III, ca. 2000–1900 B.C.E.), most of our copies come from the Old Babylonian period (ca. 1800–1600 B.C.E.), when Akkadian speakers studied Sumerian as a foreign language (for more on Sumerian, see Diakonoff; Edzard).

During the last half of the second millennium, a new culture, the Semites, began to exert influence in Mesopotamia. The Semites continued to study and copy Sumerian texts (see Hallo), but they also adapted its cuneiform script to their own language, which modern scholars call Akkadian (see Huehnergard). Alongside the old Sumerian ideograms, which now took on Akkadian meanings (e.g., the Sumerian *LUGAL* = the Akkadian *šarru* = “king”), the Semites created an elaborate system of syllabic signs by which words could be phonetically represented (e.g., the Akkadian *šarrum* = *šar* + *rum*). This system was more flexible than the Sumerian ideograms and somewhat easier to learn and employ. Its phonetic nature allowed other cultures in the region—for example, those of the Hittites, Hurrians, Elamites, and Urartians—to adapt the script to their own languages. But this script was not as efficient as the alphabetic writing systems that would develop in Syria-Palestine. Akkadian was widely used by the Assyrian and Babylonian civilizations, but the writing and copying of Akkadian texts outlasted the heyday of both, with the latest Akkadian text dating to the first century of our era (see Sachs).

Between 2000 and 1000 B.C.E. a number of Semitic tongues related to Akkadian developed in Syria and Palestine. Scholars describe these languages as West Semitic, in contrast to the East Semitic dialects of Akkadian. The West Semitic tongues included Amorite, Ugaritic, Canaanite, Aramaic, Phoenician, Ammonite, Moabite, Edomite, and Hebrew, among others. The earliest substantial literary texts from this language family come from Ugarit (fourteenth–thirteenth century B.C.E.), a city-state located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (modern Syria). Although Ugaritic scribes knew Akkadian well, they also adapted its cuneiform medium to produce their own thirty-character alphabetic system.

This system, which they used to write texts in their native tongue, was an obvious improvement over the several hundred syllabic signs needed to write Akkadian. But a cuneiform alphabet was still quite cumbersome and eventually gave way to the more cursive alphabetic scripts that began to develop in the region (Naveh; Whitt). The Hebrew Bible, together with various Phoenician, Ammonite, Moabite, and Aramaic texts, was composed in such an alphabetic script. Hebrew itself appears to have emerged between the twelfth and tenth centuries B.C.E., although the Bible generally reflects somewhat later dialects from the first millennium B.C.E. (Sáenz-Badillos). Modern Arabic and Modern Hebrew, still spoken in the Near East, are also Semitic languages and share many similarities with the ancient Hebrew tongue. Modern dialects of Aramaic are also spoken in some quarters, although these are quickly disappearing.

The Egyptian language is a distant relative of these Semitic tongues, but this relationship is only visible to scholars with expertise in historical linguistics (for an overview, see Loprieno). Egyptian texts first appeared at about the same time that Sumerian was appearing in Mesopotamia (ca. 3000 B.C.E.). The earliest texts were composed in a pictographic script that scholars call hieroglyphics, which, like Sumerian, combined phonetic and logographic features in what was essentially a consonantal script. Hieroglyphs were developed primarily for lapidary purposes (writing on stone) and so were especially suited for monumental texts, the last example dating to 394 C.E. (James, 82). Although pictographic hieroglyphs were also used in some canonical texts (most notably in funerary literature), canonical and archival texts were more commonly written in cursive scripts known as *hieratic* and *demotic*. Hieratic, essentially a direct cursive rendering of the hieroglyphs, appeared about 2600 B.C.E. and was used until the third century B.C.E. It gradually gave way to the other cursive form, demotic, a shorthand rendition of the hieroglyphs, used from the seventh century B.C.E. until the fifth century C.E. Modern Coptic, a language preserved in the Christian communities of Egypt, is the direct but distant successor of these ancient Egyptian dialects (see Behlmer).

Hittite was the administrative language of Hatti, the Hittite empire that flourished in ancient Anatolia (modern Turkey) during the second half of the second millennium B.C.E. (see Melchert). The language differs from both the Semitic and the Egyptian tongues because of its Indo-European origins, a heritage that it shares with modern Western European languages (such as English and German) and with some modern Asiatic languages (e.g., Farsi and Hindi). During the second millennium B.C.E., the Hittites adopted the Mesopotamian cuneiform system, in which most of our Hittite texts were written. The vast majority of these clay tablets were discovered in the ancient Hittite capital of Ḫattuša, near what is now the modern city of Boğazköy in central Turkey. The dialects of these texts include Old Hittite (ca. 1550–1450 B.C.E.), Middle Hittite (ca. 1450–1400 B.C.E.), and Neo-Hittite (ca. 1400–1220 B.C.E.). Several other languages appear in the Hittite corpus, mostly in the ritual texts and in royal inscriptions (see Gragg; Melchert). One of these, called Hattic, was the language of the region before the Indo-European Hittites arrived. Other languages from the Hittite theater include

those closely related to Hittite (Palaic and Luwian), as well as Hurrian, the less-understood language of Mitanni, an empire centered around the upper basins of the Tigris and Habur Rivers. Hurrian was written in cuneiform and appears especially in Hittite rituals and ceremonies that originated in Kizzuwanta (southeastern Anatolia). Palaic was written using cuneiform, and Luwian was composed in both cuneiform (on tablets) and hieroglyphic (in royal inscriptions) scripts.

Ancient Greek dialects share their Indo-European origins with the Hittite language. The Greeks, however, like the West Semites, wrote their texts in alphabetic scripts that they seem to have borrowed and adapted from the Semitic-speaking Phoenicians. Greek texts will be cited sparingly in this volume, but they are particularly important in our comparative discussions of ancient historiography and law.

Ancient texts can leave misleading impressions about the languages spoken in antiquity because the oral and literary worlds sometimes used different languages. Sumerian was written long after the spoken tongue had disappeared, and Amorite (a West Semitic tongue) was widely spoken during the Old Babylonian period even as scribes copied and composed Sumerian and Akkadian texts. Somewhat later, the foreign Kassite dynasties that ruled Babylon (ca. 1600–1200 B.C.E.) spoke their native language even as they were meticulously editing older Sumerian and Akkadian texts and writing new Akkadian texts. A similar pattern appears during the Neo-Babylonian period (seventh–sixth century B.C.E.), when the Chaldean rulers of Babylon spoke Aramaic but wrote texts in Akkadian. Indeed, during the first millennium B.C.E., Aramaic gradually became the lingua franca of the Near East, used in diplomacy from Persia in the East to Egypt in the West (Kaufman). This aramaization began full-force with the Neo-Assyrians, who in the ninth century initiated policies of assimilation and integration that included the imposition of the Aramaic language and script (see Tadmor; Zadok). By the end of the seventh century, Aramaic was spoken all over Mesopotamia. Unfortunately, Aramaic documents were usually written on perishable materials such as papyrus and leather, so few texts have survived from this early period. The emergence of Aramaic during the first millennium accounts for the language's prominence in Jewish history and tradition, and this circumstance may also explain another phenomenon. It is commonly recognized that the authors of the Hebrew Bible were familiar with many Mesopotamian traditions. Although it is possible that some Israelite scribes read Akkadian, it is more sensible to imagine that the Mesopotamian traditions were mediated to Israel through oral or written Aramaic, especially during the exile and afterwards (cf. 2 Kgs 18:26).

Scribes, Scholars, Literacy, and Canonicity

Scribal education was particularly arduous in the ancient world because most of the ancient writing systems were very complex. Although many people in

the upper levels of society perhaps had some facility with the languages, years of professional training were required for any real mastery of them (Parpola 1997). For this reason, true literacy was not widespread in the major cultural centers of Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia. In most cases, perhaps 2 percent or less of the population was fully literate (Young). Scribes were trained through apprenticeships, in private schools, and in palace or temple schools. During the Sumerian and Old Babylonian periods, Mesopotamian education was centered in various academies known as “tablet houses” (É.DUB.BA), but scribal education was gradually disseminated into a variety of additional private and public institutions after about 1600 B.C.E. (Landsberger). In Egypt education was provided in the temple-sponsored “House of Life” as well as in court schools (Olivier; Gardiner).

There are important similarities between all of these ancient schools, but the scribes that they produced varied in expertise and filled many different roles. Some scribes were primarily “functional scribes,” whose role was to copy, read, and write texts for the institutions in which they served. Ancient administrative centers in temples and palaces were probably well stocked with these scribes. Other scribes, sometimes called “professional scribes,” were trained to serve specialized roles as priests, diviners, exorcists, doctors, pharmacists, and so forth. These scribes were, naturally, well versed in their own lore, but there is good evidence that they studied a broad range of other texts and traditions (Parpola 1983). Closely related to the professional scribes were the “scholastic scribes,” who represented the ancient equivalent of our modern intellectual tradition. These sages generally worked within the sphere of the palace or temple, for it was here that their expertise was tapped to aid in the administration of political, social, and religious order. Scribal sages were particularly active in creating, compiling, preserving, and transmitting ancient canonical tradition. Functional and professional scribes, however, also played key roles in this canonical process; this suggests that the role distinctions highlighted here can easily be pressed too far. Role differentiation was not as pronounced in the ancient world as in modern, complex societies (Visicato).

Smaller states such as Israel could not support extensive scribal and scholastic infrastructures like those in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Indeed, some recent scholarship has suggested that for most of Israel’s history its political and economic apparatus was too small to support a class of scribes and formal scribal schools (P. R. Davies; Jamieson-Drake; Lemche). Given that the earliest reference to formal Jewish schools comes from the second century B.C.E. (Ben Sira’s school in Sir 51:23), is it reasonable to assume that schools existed earlier, during the preexilic period? A comparison of Israelite literature with the literature from another Levantine city, Ugarit, is instructive here. Ugarit, a city of eight thousand, ruled a kingdom of thirty-three thousand inhabitants (see Yon). The city appears to have had schools of some sort (Mack-Fisher), and its scholars were familiar with foreign literature (see Richardson) and produced an important corpus of local literary texts. By comparison, preexilic Jerusalem reached populations as high as twenty-five thousand, ruling over a territory and population much larger than Ugarit (see King); thus, on a comparative basis, Judean society was of an

adequate size to support schools and scholarship on some scale. Granted, Ugarit was an important trade center and was certainly a more cosmopolitan city than Jerusalem, but the large corpus of Hebrew literature produced in ancient Israel supports the conclusion—perhaps even demands it—that instructional institutions such as schools existed in ancient Israel (Lemaire; Crenshaw; G. I. Davies). Furthermore, if we may judge from the Ugaritic literature, Israelite scribes not only were versed in their native literature but also were familiar with some of the canonical literature from Egypt and Mesopotamia. The caveat here is that Israelite schools would have been relatively small institutions located only in the most important political and cultural centers of the north and south, especially Samaria and Jerusalem. Present evidence makes it unlikely that there was a complex educational system throughout monarchic Judah, as Lemaire would have us believe.

I have pointed out that Israelite and Ugaritic scribes were familiar with the Near Eastern canonical traditions. What were these canonical traditions? Each center of Near Eastern culture possessed its own body of scientific, literary, religious, and historical traditions that was produced and formally perpetuated by its scribal scholars. Centuries of copying and revising these texts often produced very long documents. The Egyptians solved this problem by using long papyrus scrolls, an option not available to those using clay tablets. The usual Mesopotamian solution was to connect a series of related tablets using numbers and “catch lines,” in which the last line of one tablet was repeated on the first line of the next tablet to mark the proper order of the series. The development of writing boards connected by hinges also solved this problem. By the Neo-Assyrian period, it appears that Mesopotamian scholars described their traditions using three native terms: *iškaru* (the official canonical series), *aḥū* (external to the official series but authoritative and important), and *ša pī ummānī* (the oral tradition of the sages) (on these three categories, see Lieberman; Rochberg-Halton; Parpola 1993; Farber). We should remember, however, that descriptions such as this should not be pressed too far because Mesopotamia’s canonical traditions changed from period to period, constantly altered by shifts of political power and by the various migrations that disrupted Mesopotamian culture from time to time. The situation was quite different in Egypt, where libraries reflect three and a half millennia of almost uninterrupted canonical tradition (Redford).

Our use of canonical terminology to describe Egyptian and Mesopotamian literature must be qualified, for it does not imply a closed corpus of sacred literature such as we have in the Hebrew canon. Rather, in the hands of modern scholars, canon terminology is put to two related usages. *Canonical* sometimes describes texts that were commonly transmitted by scribes and preserved in ancient libraries. In this sense, *canonical* refers to texts that were traditional. The other common use of the word *canon* refers more specifically to standard editions of the ancient texts. By *standard edition*, we mean that at certain points—especially during the first millennium—Mesopotamian texts that had previously been edited and revised for many centuries were finally given a fixed form. From that point forward, scribes who copied these texts did so with the goal of preserving

the readings found in their *Vorlage* (source text). Although these notions of canon do not correspond precisely to the concept of Hebrew canonical literature, there is a significant overlap between the two; the Hebrew texts became religiously authoritative precisely because they were preserved as a part of the Israelite scribal tradition, and Near Eastern texts were preserved because they were deemed valuable and, in some sense, authoritative (Leiman). If we can judge from the literature of Israel's Near Eastern counterparts, we may presume that many pieces of Hebrew literature underwent a lengthy process of growth and revision before finally reaching their fixed canonical shape.

Although Israelite society could not match the size and complexity of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultural centers, its use of an alphabetic script was a potentially decisive advantage in matters of literacy. Competent use of hieroglyphics or cuneiform required many years of study, but reading and writing with a twenty-two-letter Hebrew alphabet was theoretically within the reach of most every Israelite commoner (Millard 1972; 1985). For some time, largely on the basis of the supposedly widespread literacy in Athenian Greece, it has been commonly assumed that literacy was quite high in Israel in comparison with its Near Eastern neighbors. Recent studies of literacy in ancient Greece have concluded, however, that literacy there was quite limited (Harris; Thomas). Consequently, it is now commonly supposed that in Israel, as elsewhere in the ancient world, the mostly illiterate population was dependent upon the services of a rather small corps of professional scribes when it came to reading and writing texts (Haran).

Our overview of the archival and library materials begins with regions close to Israel (Syria-Palestine) and then goes on to consider the finds from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, and Persia.

1.1. Syria-Palestine

Alalakh (Tell Açana). More than five hundred texts from the eighteenth–seventeenth and fifteenth centuries B.C.E. were discovered at this site. Taken together, the sources give us a fairly good picture of society and economic life at these two junctures in the city's history. Most exemplars were administrative records, but a few treaty texts were discovered, as were several literary texts (hymns, omens, and incantations). Perhaps the best known of these texts is the statue inscription of King Idrimi, which is discussed in 9.1.3. Nearly all of the texts are in Akkadian, but the dialect reflects influences from Hurrian and West Semitic tongues. Texts from Alalakh are designated with an "AT" prefix (e.g., AT 457).

Texts and translations: D. J. WISEMAN, *The Alalakh Tablets* (OPBIAA 2; London: British Institute of Archaeology, 1953); IDEM, "Supplementary Copies of the Alalakh Tablets," *JCS* 8 (1954): 1–30. **Bibliography:** ALANE 33–37; E. GAAL, *Alalah VII: Social Structure and Economic Life in the 18–17th Centuries B.C.* (Budapest: ELTE, 1972); E. L. GREENSTEIN, "Alalakh Texts," *OEANE* 1:59–61; R. S. HESS, "The Bible and Alalakh," in *Mesopotamia and the Bible* (ed. Chavalas and Younger), 209–21; IDEM, "A Preliminary List of the Published

Alalakh Texts,” *UF* 20 (1988): 69–87; D. L. STEIN, “Alalakh,” *OEANE* 1:55–59; L. WOOLLEY, *Alalakh: An Account of the Excavations at Tell Atchana in the Hatay, 1937–1949* (Oxford: Society of Antiquaries, 1955).

Ebla (Tell Mardikh). This ancient city was located in Northern Syria, about 100 km east of the Mediterranean Sea and 60 km south of Aleppo. There is an ongoing debate about whether its Eblaite language should be viewed as essentially East Semitic (like the later Akkadian of Mesopotamia) or West Semitic (like the tongues spoken in Syria/Palestine). Most scholars favor the former view. Ebla’s central palace archive dates to the 24th century B.C.E. and has yielded about 3,000 documents (from 15,000 tablets and fragments) covering a period of some 40 to 50 years. Most of the texts are administrative, but several lexical lists, ritual texts, hymns, letters, royal decrees and treaties were also unearthed. Texts from Ebla are designated with a “TM” (Tell Mardikh) prefix, followed by the year, find location, and text number for that year (e.g., TM 74.G.120).

Texts and translations: See the following series: *Archivi reali di Ebla: Testi* (Rome: Missione Archeologica Italiana in Siria, 1981–); *Materiali epigrafici di Ebla* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979–) (see esp. G. PETTINATO, *Catalogo dei testi cuneiformi di Tell Mardikh-Ebla* [Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979]). **Bibliography:** A. ARCHI, “The Archives of Ebla,” in *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries* (ed. Veenhof), 72–86; IDEM, “Ebla Texts,” *OEANE* 2:184–86; S. G. BELD, W. W. HALLO, and P. MICHALOWSKI, *The Tablets of Ebla: Concordance and Bibliography* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1984); C. H. GORDON, G. A. RENDSBURG, and N. H. WINTER, *Eblaïtica: Essays on the Ebla Archives and Eblaite Language* (4 vols.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987–2002); P. MATTHIAE, “The Archives of the Royal Palace G of Ebla: Distribution and Arrangement of the Tablets according to the Archaeological Evidence,” in *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries* (ed. Veenhof), 53–71; IDEM, “Ebla,” *OEANE* 2:180–82; G. PETTINATO, *The Archives of Ebla: An Empire Inscribed in Clay* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981).

Emar (Meskene). Large portions of this ancient site are now submerged under the el-Assad lake, created when the Tabqa dam was built on the Euphrates in Syria. Excavations at the site before the dam’s completion yielded more than eight hundred texts dating to between the late fourteenth and early twelfth centuries B.C.E. Archival texts, mainly economic texts and contracts, made up about half of the find, but the remainder included lexical texts, literary texts, and a large corpus of ritual tablets and fragments that attest to previously unknown rites and festivals observed in the city. The vast majority of the texts were written in Akkadian, but Hittite, Hurrian, and Sumerian exemplars are included as well. Students of the Hebrew Bible will be particularly interested in the ritual texts discovered in the library of the city’s chief diviner, which reflect some similarities with Hebrew ritual (see 5.4; 5.5; 5.6). Because Emar was under Hittite authority during this period, the materials provide us with helpful images of life in the Hittite provinces. Texts from Emar are designated with an “Msk” (Meskene) prefix (e.g., Msk 731035), although they are also commonly referenced from Arnaud’s standard collection (e.g., *Emar* 446).

Text and translation: D. ARNAUD, *Recherches au pays d'Aštata* (4 vols; *Emar* 6; Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985–1987). **Bibliography:** M. W. CHAVALAS, ed., *Emar: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age* (Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 1996); P. Y. HOSIKISSON, "Emar as an Empirical Model of the Transmission of Canon," in *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective* (ed. K. L. Younger Jr., W. W. Hallo, and B. F. Batto; Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1991), 21–32; J. HUEHNERGARD, "Emar Texts," *OEANE* 2:239–40; J.-C. MARGUERON and M. SIGRIST, "Emar," *OEANE* 2:236–39.

Mari (Tell Hariri). Excavations at Tell Hariri in Syria began in 1934. More than twenty thousand documents have been unearthed, and modest numbers of texts continue to appear. With a few exceptions, these texts date to the reigns of the last kings of Mari, Yasmaḥ-Addu and Zimri-Lim (eighteenth century B.C.E.). Archival and administrative texts constitute nearly the entire collection, and although the absence of canonical texts has been a disappointment for scholars, the archives nevertheless provide important sources for reconstructing the city's history and for enlightening our perspectives on the Hebrew Bible. The most important comparative sources include the prophetic letters, vital for the study of Hebrew prophecy (see ch. 6), and the many sources that reflect tribal life within Mari and on its immediate periphery. Many scholars believe that the mix of tribal and urban life at Mari sheds comparative light on the emergence of urban Israel from its tribal origins. The only true literary text from Mari is the unpublished Epic of Zimri-Lim (see 9.1.3). Texts from Mari are designated in a somewhat arbitrary fashion, being prefixed with "A" from A.1 to A.4700 and then largely with "M," although there are also some "B" and "TH" prefixes. An explanation for the development of these sigla is found in ARMT 23, iii–iv.

Texts and translations: See the the series Archives royales de Mari (Paris: various publishers, 1950–); Florilegium marianum (Paris: SEPOA, 1992–); *Mari: Annales de recherche interdisciplinaires* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1982–). See also the annotated translation of Mari letters in J.-M. DURAND, *Les documents épistolaires du palais de Mari* (3 vols.; Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient 16–18; Paris: Cerf, 1997). **Translation:** W. HEIMPEL, *Letters to the King of Mari: A New Translation, with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary* (MC 12; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003). **Bibliography:** D. CHARPIN, "La fin des archives dans le palais de Mari," *RA* 89 (1995): 29–40; J. M. DURAND, "Réalités amorrites et traditions bibliques," *RA* 92 (1998): 3–39; D. E. FLEMING, "Mari and the Possibilities of Biblical Memory," *RA* 92 (1998): 41–78; M.-H. GATES, "The Palace of Zimri-Lim at Mari," *BA* 47 (1984): 70–87; M. GUICHARD, "Mari Texts," *OEANE* 3:419–21; J.-G. HEINTZ et al., *Bibliographie de Mari: Archéologie et textes* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990); A. LEMAIRE, "Mari, the Bible, and the Northwest Semitic World," *BA* 47 (1984): 101–8; A. MALAMAT, *Mari and the Bible: A Collection of Studies* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1975); IDEM, *Mari and the Early Israelite Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); J.-C. MARGUERON, "Mari," *OEANE* 3:413–16; V. H. MATTHEWS, "Syria to the Early Second Millennium," in *Mesopotamia and the Bible* (ed. Chavalas and Younger), 168–90; D. PARDEE and J. T. GLASS, "The Mari Archives: Literary Sources for the History Of Palestine and Syria," *BA* 47 (1984): 88–99; J. M. SASSON, "About 'Mari and the Bible,'" *RA* 92 (1998): 97–123; IDEM, "Some Comments on

Archive Keeping at Mari,” *Iraq* 34 (1972): 55–57; G. D. YOUNG, *Mari in Retrospect: Fifty Years of Mari and Mari Studies* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1992).

Shubat-Enlil (Tell Leilan). Also known in antiquity as Shekna, Shubat-Enlil is located in the eastern half of the upper Habur plain, where it was the capital of the land Apum. Apart from some older seals and seal impressions, the primary textual evidence comes from several Old Babylonian archives belonging mainly to the last three kings of Leilan, who reigned just before the city was destroyed by Samsuiluna of Babylon in 1728 B.C.E. Over 800 administrative texts and letters have been found at the site, as well as a treaty text (see ch. 14) and a copy of the Sumerian King List (see 11.1). A complete edition of the letters and treaties by J. Eidem is in an advanced state of preparation.

Texts and translations: J. EIDEM, “Tell Leilan Archives 1987,” *RA* 85 (1991): 109–35; C. VINCENTE, *The 1987 Tell Leilan Tablets Dated by the Limmu of Habil-kinu* (PhD diss., Yale University, 1991). **Bibliography:** J. EIDEM, “Les archives paléo-babyloniennes de Tell Leilan,” *Les Dossiers d’Archéologie* 155 (1990): 50–53; IDEM, “Tell Leilan Tablets 1987: A Preliminary Report,” *Annals archéologiques arabes syriennes* 38–39 (1989): 20–40; H. WEISS, “Leilan, Tell,” *OEANE* 3:341–47; R. M. WHITING, “The Tell Leilan Tablets: A Preliminary Report,” *AJA* 94 (1990): 568–79.

Ugarit (Ras Shamra). This city was the capital of an ancient kingdom on the Mediterranean coast of what is now Syria, where it was entombed in the mound of Ras Shamra until excavations began in 1929. Since that time, archaeologists digging at Ras Shamra and nearby Ras Ibn Hani have unearthed nearly fifteen hundred texts, most of them in Ugaritic or Akkadian, although Sumerian, Hittite, and Hurrian exemplars are known as well. The find locations included several palace archives, private archives, private libraries, and especially the library of the high priest on the acropolis, from which most of the important Ugaritic literary texts have come (see van Soldt). According to figures from 1994, these texts fall into the following generic categories: (1) lists and business documents, 767; (2) unclassified, 217; (3) literary and religious texts, 161; (4) letters, 72; (5) labels, 63; (6) unreadable texts, 30; (7) school texts and abecedaries, 22; (8) treaties, 9. Ugaritic texts have greatly illumined our perspective on Hebrew language and poetry and on various dimensions of Israelite myth, ritual, and culture.

Ugaritic scholars refer to Ras Shamra texts using either a publication number in *KTU* and *CTU* (the new edition of *KTU*) or a realia number that takes the form “RS NN.nn,” where “RS” stands for Ras Shamra, “NN” for the number of the archaeological season, and “nn” for the individual find number (texts from the nearby site of Ras Ibn Hani are designated with an “RIH” prefix). Season numbers began with RS 1 in 1929—the first season at Ugarit—and continued to follow this convention until 1975, when the RS number was changed to the actual year of the season (e.g., all 1975 texts are referred to with “RS 1975.nn”). Because tablets are often fragmentary, a single text such as *KTU* 1.4 may be represented by more than one RS realia number (in this case, RS 2.008, 3.341, and 3.347).

Text and translation: M. DIETRICH, O. LORETZ, and J. SANMARTIN, *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places* (Münster: Ugarit, 1995) (transliterated texts only). **Translation:** COS 3.45: 89–114. **Bibliography:** P. BORDREUIL, *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville* (Ras Shamra-Ougarit VIII; Paris: Éditions Recherche sur le Civilisations, 1991); A. BOUNNI and J. LAGARCE, “Ras Ibn Hani,” *OEANE* 4:411–13; J.-L. CUNCHILLOS, *Bibliographie*, vol. 2 of *La trouvaille épigraphique de l’Ougarit* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1990); P. L. DAY, “Ugaritic,” in *Beyond Babel* (ed. Kaltner and McKenzie), 223–41; L. R. FISHER, ed., *Ras Shamra Parallels: The Texts from Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible* (2 vols.; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1972–1975); A. L. KRISTENSEN, “Ugaritic Epistolary Formulas: A Comparative Study of the Ugaritic Epistolary Formulas in the Context of the Contemporary Akkadian Formulas in the Letters from Ugarit and Amarna,” *UF* 9 (1977): 143–58; S. LACKENBACHER, “La correspondance internationale dans les archives d’Ugarit,” *RA* 89 (1995): 67–76; D. PARDEE, “Ugaritic,” *OEANE* 5:262–64; IDEM, “Ugaritic Inscriptions,” *OEANE* 5:264–66; W. T. PITARD, “Voices from the Dust: The Tablets from Ugarit and the Bible,” in *Mesopotamia and the Bible* (ed. Chavalas and Younger), 251–75; RICHARDSON, “The Less Inspired Scriptures”; W. VAN SOLDT, “The Written Sources,” in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies* (ed. Watson and Wyatt), 28–75; W. G. E. WATSON and N. WYATT, eds., *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); YON, “Ugarit,” 255–62.

1.2. Mesopotamia

Abu Salabikh. The ancient name of this site is not known, but its date (fourth and third millennia) and location in southern Iraq, between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, favor identification with Eresh. About five hundred Sumerian texts were unearthed from the site, among them copies of the Kesh Temple Hymn (see 3.1.1), the Instructions of Shuruppak (see 2.1.1), and the early Sumerian proverbs (see 2.1.1).

Texts and translations: B. ALSTER, “Early Dynastic Proverbs and Other Contributions to the Study of Literary Texts from Abū Šalābīkh,” *AfO* 38–39 (1991–1992): 1–51; R. D. BIGGS, *Inscriptions from Tell Abū Šalābīkh* (OIP 99; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). **Bibliography:** M. KREBERNIK, “Die Texte aus Fāra und Abū Šābaliḫ,” in J. Bauer, R. K. Englund, and M. Krebernik, *Mesopotamien: Späturuk-Zeit und Frühdynastische Zeit* (OBO 160/1; Freiburg, Switz.: Universitätsverlag, 1998), 237–427; J. N. POSTGATE, “Abu Salabikh,” *OEANE* 1:9–10.

Assur. This city lay on the west bank of the Tigris River in what is now northern Iraq. From the beginning of the second millennium B.C.E. until early in the first millennium, it was the religious and administrative capital of Assyria. When the Neo-Assyrian Empire emerged, the capital was moved several times, first to Kalḫu/Nimrud (by Aššurnāṣirpal II, 883–859 B.C.E.), then to Dur Sharrukin/Khorsabad (by Sargon II, 721–705 B.C.E.), and finally to Nineveh/Kuyunjik (by Sennacherib, 704–681 B.C.E.). Meanwhile Assur continued to be an important city. Fifty-three archives and libraries have been unearthed in Assur, fourteen dating to the Middle Assyrian period and the remainder to the Neo-Assyrian period.

These finds have yielded more than four thousand texts, most in stashes of less than fifty documents, although two large libraries were discovered (of three hundred and eight hundred texts, respectively). Also discovered at Assur is our only Aramaic letter from the Neo-Assyrian period, in which an Assyrian officer stationed in Babylon reports that rebellion is brewing in the south (Lindenberg). The best source of texts and studies is the State Archives of Assyria series, published by the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki, Finland.

Bibliography: ALANE 81–88, 132–43; W. ANDRAE, *Das wiedererstandene Assur* (ed. B. Hrouda; 2d ed.; Munich: Beck, 1977); R. W. LAMPRICHS, “Aššur,” *OEANE* 1:225–28; J. M. LINDENBERGER, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters* (2d ed.; SBLWAW 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), 17–23; O. PEDERSÉN, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur* (2 vols.; Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 1985–1986); IDEM, “The Libraries in the City of Assur,” in *Keilschriftliche Literaturen: Ausgewählte Vorträge der XXXII. Rencontre assyriologique internationale* (ed. K. Hecker and W. Sommerfeld; BBVO 6; Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1986), 143–47.

Babylon. This famous site lies on the Euphrates River about fifty-five miles southwest of modern Baghdad, Iraq. Babylon, the on-again, off-again capital of independent Babylon, was an important cultural and religious center through most of ancient history. Scholars have unearthed thousands of Sumerian and Akkadian texts there, distributed among numerous archives and libraries that date from the Old Babylonian period (see Pedersén 2005) down to the Parthian era. Groundwater has prevented extensive digging in the older layers of the city, so we are more informed about the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods of the city’s history. Nevertheless, fragmentary remains of private archives and libraries were discovered in Old Babylonian levels of the city, as were several smaller private libraries and archives from the Middle Babylonian period. German excavations in the Neo-Babylonian and Persian levels, conducted in 1899–1917, unearthed small private libraries containing literary texts as well as much larger archives in private, palace, and temple contexts. The largest find from this late period was an archive of three thousand to four thousand tablets belonging to the influential Egibi family, its contents dating to 602–482 B.C.E. The documents were found still sealed in their storage jars. The next largest find included fifteen hundred school tablets that were used as fill in the construction of the temple of Nabu, god of scribal arts. These texts were leftovers from scribal training, which apparently took place in the temple of the scribes’ patron deity. A third large find, the Kasr archive, included about 950 Persian-era legal and business documents. These are particularly interesting because they bear Aramaic summary notations alongside the cuneiform text. Tablets discovered during the extensive German excavations bear the prefix “Bab” followed by the text number, but many texts from Babylon were acquired in uncontrolled conditions. These texts are generally known by their museum number designations, of which there are many.

Texts and translations: H. D. BAKER, *The Archive of the Nappahu Family* (AfO Beiheft 30; Vienna: Institut für Orientalistik, 2004); A. CAVIGNEAUX, *Textes scolaires du temple de*

Nabû ša harê (Texts from Babylon 1; Baghdad: Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Culture and Information, State Organization of Antiquities and Heritage, 1981); the series Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, vols. 1, 2, 4, 15, 32, 47, 48, 54, 55, 59, 62; H. KLENGEL, *Altbabylonische Texte aus Babylon* (Vorderasiatische Schriftedemkmäler der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, N.F. 6; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1983; IDEM, “Spät-altbabylonische Briefe aus Babylon (VS 22, 83–92),” *AoF* 10 (1983): 42–63; IDEM, “Altbabylonische Texte aus Babylon: Eine Nachlese zu VS 22,” *AoF* 11 (1984): 92–109. **Bibliography:** K. ABRAHAM, *Business and Politics under the Persian Empire: The Financial Dealings of Marduk-našir-apli of the House of Egibi (521–487 B.C.E.)* (Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 2004); ALANE 107–12, 183–91; E. KLENGEL-BRANDT, “Babylon,” *OEANE* 1:251–56; R. KOLDEWEY, *Das wieder erstehende Babylon* (ed. B. Hrouda; 5th ed. rev. and enlarged; Munich: Beck, 1990); O. PEDERSEN, *Archive und Bibliotheken in Babylon: Die Tontafeln der Grabung Robert Koldewey 1899–1917* (ADOG 25; Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 2005); M. W. STOLPER, “The Kasr Archive,” in *Centre and Periphery: Proceedings of the Groningen 1986 Achaemenid History Workshop* (ed. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt; Achaemenid History 4; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1990), 195–205.

Ešnunna (Tell Asmar), Ischcali and the Lower Diyala Region. The sites treated in this entry were located in the Diyala river basin near the river’s confluence with the Tigris, not far from modern Baghdad. From an archival perspective, the most important of the cities in this region was Ešnunna, but texts were also found at Ischcali (ancient Neribtum), Khafajeh (ancient Tutub), Tell Harmal (ancient Šaduppum), and in the Hamrin district, where archaeological salvage operations were done before the Hamrin Dam project covered the sites with water (note especially Tell Haddad). Over 1500 texts were discovered at Ešnunna, about 300 from the Ur III period and the remainder from the Old Babylonian era (Whiting). There is archival continuity between the Ur III and Old Babylonian periods. Letters, cylinder seals, and administrative texts make up the bulk of the collection. Somewhat less than 700 texts were found in Ischcali, and a few more at Khafajeh (see Greengus). The Ischcali texts include letters, legal documents, school texts, and many administrative records, as well as our oldest Akkadian treaty text. Most of the texts from Khafajeh are muster rolls for military conscription. Tell Harmal has yielded, among other things, copies of the Laws of Ešnunna (see 13.2) and an interesting fragment of the Gilgamesh Epic (see 9.1.1). An additional copy of the Laws of Ešnunna was discovered in the Hamrin Dam area at Tell Haddad.

Texts and translations: H. FRANKFORT, S. LLOYD and Th. JACOBSEN, *The Gimilsin Temple and the Palace of the Rulers at Tell Asmar* (OIP 43; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940); S. GREENGUS, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Ischali and Vicinity* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1979); R. HARRIS, “The Archive of the Sin Temple in Khafajah (Tutub),” *JCS* 9 (1955): 31–88, 91–120; R. M. WHITING, *Old Babylonian Letters from Tell Asmar* (AS 22; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1987). **Bibliography:** E. AUERBACH, “Eshnunna,” *OEANE* 2.261–65; D. P. HANSEN, “Khafajeh,” *OEANE* 3:288–90; M. ROAF, “Hamrin Dam Salvage Project,” *OEANE* 2:471–74; I. THUESEN, “Diyala,” *OEANE* 2:163–66.

Girsu (Telloh) and Lagaš (al-Hiba). Girsu, the capital of the Sumerian city-state of Lagaš, was a twin city with the nearby town of Lagaš. Forty thousand texts and fragments were found there, dating to the time of the Akkad dynasty and the Ur III period. Nearly all of these texts were administrative documents from the temple archives. Numerous royal inscriptions were also found in the area.

Bibliography: J. BAUER and D. P. HANSEN, "Lagaš," *RIA* 6:419–30; A. FALKENSTEIN and R. OPIFIUS, "Girsu," *RIA* 3:385–401; R. J. MATTHEWS, "Girsu and Lagash," *OEANE* 2:406–9.

Huzirina (Sultantepe). This site in southern Turkey has yielded a small but important library containing four hundred tablets that belonged to a family of *šangu*-priests. The collection is surprisingly comprehensive from a generic point of view, including incantations, rituals, omens, medical texts, prayers, hymns, lexical texts, god lists, epics, myths, wisdom literature, astrological texts, and even a letter that was fictionally attributed to the epic hero Gilgamesh, king of Uruk (see Gurney 1957; Kraus). The texts are Neo-Assyrian, dating to the late eighth and seventh centuries B.C.E.

Texts and translations: O. R. GURNEY, "The Sultantepe Tablets," *AnSt* 2 (1952): 25–35; 3 (1953): 15–27; 4 (1954): 65–100; 5 (1955): 93–114; 6 (1956): 145–64; 7 (1957): 127–36; 10 (1960): 105–31; O. R. GURNEY and J. J. FINKELSTEIN, *The Sultantepe Tablets* (2 vols.; OPBIAA 3, 7; London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1957–1964); W. G. LAMBERT, "The Sultantepe Tablets, VIII: Shalmaneser in Ararat," *AnSt* 11 (1961): 143–58. **Bibliography:** ALANE 178–79; F. R. KRAUS, "Der Brief des Gilgameš," *AnSt* 30 (1980): 109–21; W. G. LAMBERT, "The Sultantepe Tablets," *RA* 53 (1959): 119–138; S. LLOYD, "Sultantepe (Part II)," *AnSt* 4 (1954): 101–10; S. LLOYD and N. GÖKÇE, "Sultantepe," *AnSt* 3 (1953): 27–51.

Kalḫu (Nimrud). Aššurnāṣirpal II (883–859 B.C.E.) moved the Neo-Assyrian capital from Assur to this site during the ninth century B.C.E. More than one thousand documents have been recovered at Nimrud, mostly archival texts but also a few literary texts. These texts date considerably later than Aššurnāṣirpal, many of them coming from the period just before Sargon II moved the Assyrian capital to Dur-Šarrukin, or from later periods. A large palace in the city's southeast quarter is called Fort Shalmaneser because it was constructed by Shalmaneser III as a location for reviewing his troops. The biblical writers not only knew the city's ancient name (Calah; see Gen 10:11–12) but also provided the basis for its modern name, Nimrud (see Gen 10:8–9).

Bibliography: ALANE 143–54; J. CURTIS, "Nimrud," *OEANE* 4:141–44; W. W. HALLO, "The Rise and Fall of Kalah," *JAOS* 88 (1968): 772–75; M. E. L. MALLOWAN, *Nimrud and Its Remains* (2 vols.; New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1966).

Nineveh. This city lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris River, in what is now the city of Mosul in Northern Iraq. It was made the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire by Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.E.), but Nineveh owes its special literary promi-

nence to Assurbanipal, who assembled a large library at Tell Kuyunjik, the ancient palace mound of Nineveh. Approximately thirty thousand tablets or fragments of tablets have been unearthed at the site, with these yielding an estimated five thousand literary texts and many more archival documents. The literary exemplars include omens, incantations, medical texts, lexical texts, epics, prayers, hymns, myths, historical texts, and wisdom texts; the archival sources include letters, reports, and queries from the royal archives. It is noteworthy that archaeologists discovered 450 clay bullae in one room of Assurbanipal's palace. Scholars surmise that these were probably used to seal papyrus documents written in Aramaic, which reminds us that many Mesopotamian documents have not been preserved and that Aramaic was emerging as the lingua franca during the first millennium B.C.E. The texts from Kuyunjik are housed in the British Museum in London and bear the prefix siglum "K" (e.g., K 622). The best source of texts, translations, and studies is the State Archives of Assyria series, published by the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki, Finland.

Bibliography: ALANE 158–65; L. ARKSEY, "The Library of Assurbanipal, King of the World," *Wilson Library Bulletin* (June 1977): 833–40; S. J. LIEBERMAN, "Canonical and Official Cuneiform Texts"; PARPOLA, "Assyrian Library Records"; D. STRONACH and K. CODELLA, "Nineveh," *OANE* 4:144–48.

Nippur. This site lies about 110 miles southwest of Babylon in the center of the floodplain between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Occupation began as early as the sixth millennium B.C.E. and continued, with a few breaks, until 800 C.E. During the Old Babylonian period, the southeastern portion of the city, known to modern scholars as Tablet Hill, served as a scribal quarter. Thousands of tablets were discovered there, including almost all the important Sumerian literary texts known to modern scholars. Archaeologists have also unearthed a large archive from the Kassite period and smaller archives from the Neo-Babylonian period. One of Nippur's best-known archives is a 730-tablet Persian-era collection belonging to the Murašû family, merchant bankers with vast commercial and agricultural interests during the Achaemenid period. The texts refer to Jews who owned houses and land, suggesting that a large concentration of Jews in the city were living in relative prosperity. These sources provide good evidence for the assimilation of Jews to Mesopotamian culture following the Babylonian exile. Texts discovered at Nippur are identified by scholars with the siglum "Ni."

Bibliography: ALANE 112–16, 198–201; L. B. BREGSTEIN and T. J. SCHNEIDER, "Nippur Bibliography," in *Nippur at the Centennial: Papers Read at the 35e Rencontre assyriologique internationale* (ed. M. deJ. Ellis; OPSNKF 14; Philadelphia: University Museum, 1992), 337–57 (bibliography of primary publications of Nippur texts); M. D. COOGAN, "Life in the Diaspora: Jews at Nippur in the Fifth Century B.C.," *BA* 37 (1974): 6–12; V. DONBAZ and M. W. STOLPER, *Istanbul Murašû Texts* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1997); J. A. FRANKE, "Nippur," *ABD* 4:1119–1122; S. N. KRAMER, *Sumerische literarische Texte aus Nippur* (2 vols; Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1961–67); M. W. STOLPER, *Entrepreneurs and Empire: The Murašû Archive, the Murašû Firm, and Persian Rule in Babylonia* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul,

1985); IDEM, "Fifth Century Nippur: Texts of the Murašûs and from Their Surroundings," *JCS* 53 (2001): 83–132; IDEM, "Murashu, Archive of," *ABD* 4:927–28; R. ZADOK, *The Jews in Babylonia in the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods in the Light of the Babylonian Sources* (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1979); R. L. ZETTLER, "Nippur," *OEANE* 4:148–52.

Nuzi. About 3,500 fifteenth- and fourteenth-century archival texts have been unearthed at this site in northeastern Iraq, in antiquity a provincial administrative center in the land of Arraphe. Among the finds are a number of family archives, composed of letters, loans, deeds, adoptions, contracts, and other legal and economic documentation. Social customs reflected in the family archives were initially interpreted as parallels to the patriarchal narratives and were cited as evidence for the antiquity and historicity of the patriarchal traditions. The studies of Thompson and Van Seters, however, eventually demonstrated that the parallels were often imaginary and that the patriarchal customs fit just as easily—perhaps better—in the first-millennium context. Although the Nuzi texts were written in Akkadian, their dialect reflects Hurrian influences and identifies the city as a Hurrian-speaking site. Many of the pertinent texts and studies are published in the series *Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* and in the series *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians*. Other important sources are cited in the bibliography.

Texts and translations: See below Harvard Semitic Museum, *Excavations at Nuzi: Conducted by the Semitic Museum and the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, with the Cooperation of the American School of Oriental Research at Bagdad* (HSS 5, 9, 10, 13–16, 19; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929–1962); *Joint Expedition [of the American School of Oriental Research in Bagdad] with the Iraq Museum at Nuzi* (6 vols.; Paris: P. Guenther, 1927–1931 [vols. 1–3]; Philadelphia: For the American Schools of Oriental Research by the University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934 [vols. 4–5]; New Haven: American School of Oriental Research, 1939 [vol. 6]). **Bibliography:** ALANE 15–28; M. DIETRICH, O. LORETZ, and W. MAYER, *Nuzi-Bibliographie* (AOAT Sonderreihe 11; Kevelaer, Germany: Butzon & Bercker, 1972); B. L. EICHLER, "Another Look at the Nuzi Sistership Contracts," in *Essays on the Ancient Near East in Memory of J. J. Finkelstein* (ed. M. deJ. Ellis; Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977), 45–59; IDEM, "Nuzi and the Bible: A Retrospective," in *DUMUE2–DUB–BA–A: Studies in Honor of Åke W. Sjöberg* (ed. H. Behrens, D. T. Loding, and M. Roth; OPSNKF 11; Philadelphia: University Museum, 1989), 117–19; J. FINCKE, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der Nuzi-Texte* (Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes 10; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993); C. H. GORDON, "Biblical Customs and the Nuzi Tablets," *BA* 3 (1940) 1–12; S. GREENGUS, "Sisterhood Adoption at Nuzi and the 'Wife-Sister' in Genesis," *HUCA* 46 (1975): 5–31; K. GROSZ, *The Archive of the Wullu Family* (CNI Publications 5; Copenhagen: Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, University of Copenhagen, Museum Tusulanum Press, 1988); B. LION, "La fin de site de Nuzi et la distribution chronologique des archives," *RA* 89 (1995): 77–88; B. LION and D. STEIN, *The Pula-ğali Family Archives* (SCCNH 11; Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 2001); M. A. MORRISON, "Nuzi," *ABD* 4:1156–62; C. F. MYER JR., "Sample Interpretation from Extra-biblical Sources: The Nuzi Material and the Patriarchal Narratives," in *Biblical Interpretation* (ed. F. F. Kearley et al.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 168–80; P. NEGRI-SCAFA, "Scribes locaux et scribes itinérants dans le royaume d'Arrapha," in *La circulation des*

biens, des personnes, et des idées dans le Proche-Orient ancien: *Actes de la XXXVIIIe Rencontre assyriologique internationale* (ed. D. Charpin and F. Joannès; Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1992), 235–40; D. I. OWEN and G. WILHELM, eds., *Nuzi at Seventy-Five* (SCCNH 10; Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 1999); D. L. STEIN, “Nuzi,” *OEANE* 4:171–75; IDEM, *Das Archiv des Šilwa-Teššup* (2 vols.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993); A. TAGGAR-COHEN, “Law and Family in the Book of Numbers: The Levites and the Tidennutu Documents from Nuzi,” *VT* 48 (1998): 74–94; T. L. THOMPSON, *Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham* (BZAW 133; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974); K. VAN DER TOORN, “Gods and Ancestors in Emar and Nuzi,” *ZA* 84 (1994): 38–59; J. VAN SETERS, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

Puzrish-Dagan (Drehem). A huge administrative archive dating to the Ur III period (2100–2000 B.C.E.) was discovered at this site in the floodplain between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Its thirty thousand texts are indispensable primary sources for the study of the socioeconomic, political, and religious history of the Ur III period.

Texts and translations: M. HILGERT, *Drehem Administrative Documents from the Reign of Šulgi* (OIP 115; CTUPOI 1; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1998); IDEM, *Drehem Administrative Documents from the Reign of Amar-Suena* (OIP 121; CTUPOI 2; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2003); S. T. KANG, *Sumerian Economic Texts from the Drehem Archive* (Sumerian and Akkadian Cuneiform Texts in the Collection of the World Heritage Museum of the University of Illinois 1; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972); M. SIGRIST, *The Administration at Drehem: Neo-Sumerian Texts from the Royal Ontario Museum* (Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 1995); F. YILDIZ, *Die Puzriš-Dagan-Texte der Istanbul archäologischer Museen* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1988). **Bibliography:** M. SIGRIST, *Drehem* (Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 1992).

Rimah (Tell al-Rimah). This site in northern Iraq lies between the Tigris and Habur Rivers. Occupation of the site goes back to prehistoric times, but our cache of textual materials dates to the Old Babylonian period. More than 300 texts were unearthed at al-Rimah, mostly letters and economic texts, but also a few seal inscriptions. Identification of the site with an ancient city is not yet certain, but it appears to be either Karana or Qaṭṭara.

Text and translation: S. DALLEY, C. B. F. WALKER, and J. D. HAWKINS, *The Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell al Rimah* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1976). **Bibliography:** S. DALLEY, “Rimah, Tell er-,” *OEANE* 4:428–30.

Sippar (Abu Habbah). Located on the Euphrates River between modern Baghdad and ancient Babylon, Sippar’s long history ran from the fourth millennium B.C.E. until the Parthian period (ca. 100 C.E.). The city was religiously significant for the Mesopotamians because it was the home of the god Šamaš, who was housed at his temple, Ebabbar. Some evidence of the temple archives and libraries from the Old Babylonian period were unearthed at Sippar (see Weitemeyer 1955), but the most impressive finds were from the Neo-Babylonian era. These

included more than thirty thousand tablets from the archive in the temple of Šamaš and eight hundred texts in a library associated with the temple of Šamaš's consort, Aya. The library was discovered intact, still stacked in the niches of the library wall. Most of the library texts are yet to be published, but it is reported that many of the classical Akkadian and bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian works are represented in the corpus. Textual realia from Sippar are designated using the prefix "Si."

Text catalogues: British Museum, Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities, *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1961–), vols. 6–8. **Bibliography:** ALANE 193–97; W. AL-JADIR and Z. R. ABDULLAH, "Preliminary Reports on the Baghdad University Excavations at Sippar (Abu Habba), 1978–1983," *Sumer* 39 (1983): 97–122; A. C. V. M. BONGENAAR, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple at Sippar: Its Administration and Its Prosopography* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1997); G. COLBOW, "Samsu'iluna-zeitliche Abrollungen aus nordbabylonischen Archiven ausserhalb Sippars," *RA* 89 (1995): 149–89; H. GASCHE and C. JANSSEN, "Sippar," *OEANE* 5:47–49; R. HARRIS, *Ancient Sippar: A Demographic Study of an Old-Babylonian City (1894–1595 B.C.)* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1975); M. JURSA, *Die Landwirtschaft in Sippar in neubabylonischer Zeit* (AfOB 25; Vienna: Eigentümer & Verleger, Institut für Orientalistik der Universität Wien, 1995); J. MACGINNIS, *Letter Orders from Sippar and the Administration of the Ebabbara in the Late-Babylonian Period* (Poznan: Bonami, 1995).

Šuruppak (Tell Fara). This site is located about halfway between modern Baghdad and the Persian Gulf on a former riverbed of the Euphrates. About eight hundred Sumerian texts were unearthed there, mainly school texts and economic documents. The exemplars date to the third millennium B.C.E.

Texts and translations: A. DEIMEL, *Die Inschriften von Fara* (3 vols.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922–1925); S. N. KRAMER, "New Tablets from Fara," *JAOS* 52 (1932): 110–32. **Bibliography:** M. KREBERNIK, "Die Texte aus Fāra und Abū Šābaliḥ," in *Mesopotamien: Späturuk-Zeit und Frühdynastische Zeit* (ed. J. Bauer, R. K. Englund, and M. Krebernik; OBO 160/1; Freiburg, Switz.: Universitätsverlag, 1998), 237–427; H. P. MARTIN, "Fara," *OEANE* 2:301–3.

Ur (Tell el-Muqayyar). Archaeologists have determined that Ur was inhabited from as early as the fifth millennium to as late as the middle of the first millennium B.C.E.; the city reached its zenith between 2100 and 2000 B.C.E., when it served as the capital of the Ur III Empire in lower Mesopotamia. Private and public archives were discovered there, nested in levels associated with the Ur III period, the Middle Babylonian period, and the Neo-Babylonian era. Libraries dating to the Isin-Larsa and Neo-Babylonian periods were also found. The site is perhaps best known for its archaic cemetery, which contained two thousand graves and sixteen royal tombs, in which deceased Sumerian kings were apparently buried with an entourage of sacrificed people (i.e., human sacrifice). Texts from Ur are usually designated with the siglum "U," e.g., U 7745.

The biblical account of Abraham's purchase at Machpelah in Gen 23 is strikingly similar to Neo-Babylonian dialogue contracts unearthed at Ur and

Uruk, contracts that were used around 700–500 B.C.E. for transferring property and other possessions. The Babylonian contract pattern is reflected in Ephron's quoted offer (v. 15), in the third-person description of Abraham's acceptance (v. 16), in the payment clause (v. 16), and in the transfer clause, which includes a description of the property (v. 17–18).

Texts and translations: The series *Ur Excavations* and the series *Ur Excavation Texts* (19 vols.; Philadelphia: Published for the trustees of the two museums [the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania], 1927–1976). **Bibliography:** ALANE 116–18, 201–4; J. A. BRINKMAN, “Ur: ‘The Kassite Period and the Period of Assyrian Kings,’” *Or* 38 (1969): 310–48; S. POLLOCK, “Ur,” *OEANE* 5:288–91; G. ROUX, “The Great Enigma of the Cemetery at Ur,” in J. BOTTÉRO, *Everyday Life in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 24–40; G. M. TUCKER, “The Legal Background to Genesis 23,” *JBL* 85 (1966): 77–84.

Uruk (Warka). This site in southern Iraq is the source of our oldest cuneiform texts, which were composed in a primitive pictographic script during the late fourth and early third millennia (Uruk levels IV and III, c. 3300–2900 B.C.E.). About 85 percent of these early texts were economic, and the remaining exemplars were lexical lists containing the correct signs for various officials, commodities, and animals. Similar texts dating to about the same period were found at Jemdet Nasr. From the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian periods, Uruk has provided us with archives and libraries connected with Ištar's temples, containing more than ten thousand texts, including at least 250 standard literary texts. Early Hellenistic and Seleucid-era archives and libraries from the temple of Anu were also discovered, yielding some literary texts as well as bullae that once sealed Greek or Aramaic papyri. A small but significant find was the private library of a Babylonian exorcist, a few hundred texts from the early Greek period that included exorcistic rituals, incantations, medical texts, lexical lists, omens, astronomical and astrological texts, myths, and hymns. The biblical sources remember Uruk by the name of Erech (Gen 10:10; Ezra 4:9), reflecting a familiarity with the large city that Uruk became during the first millennium B.C.E.

Texts and translations: The series *Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1936–); *Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka, Endberichte* (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1987–). **Bibliography:** ALANE 204–13; R. M. BOEHMER, “Uruk-Warka,” *OEANE* 5:294–98; WALKER, *Cuneiform*, 7–15.

1.3. Egypt

Because the Egyptians often wrote on perishable papyri, most of the texts once housed in their archives and libraries have vanished from history. We are fortunate that the Egyptians also inscribed texts on more durable materials, the most prominent examples being the many tomb, palace, and stela inscriptions they left for us. Remnants from libraries, archives, and schools have also been

found, not only on ostraca, stone, and clay tablets but also in the occasional stashes of papyri that have survived because they were stored in protected areas that were not subject to moisture from the Nile and its inundations. Our primary sources of Egyptian texts have been the two major necropolis areas around Thebes and Memphis, where royal tombs and temples were built to service the needs of the deceased. The key site in the Theban area is Deir el-Medina, and the primary sites in the Memphis area are Abusir and Saqqara. Important text collections have also been found at Akhetaton (Amarna) and Elephantine, but the key finds at these two sites were not Egyptian texts but, rather, Akkadian and Aramaic texts, respectively. Good surveys of the Egyptian archives and texts are found in Quirke and Tait. Another volume, *Textes et langages de l'Égypte pharaonique* (see under title in general bibliography), not only provides an excellent overview of Egyptian literature but also valuable descriptions of the most important Egyptian museum collections at Berlin, Boston, Brooklyn, Brussels, Cairo, Leiden, London, Moscow, New York, Paris, St. Petersburg (Leningrad), Turin, Vienna, and several other museums in Italy.

Abusir. Named for a nearby modern Egyptian village, this site was part of the large Memphite necropolis in lower Egypt. It has yielded two small but important archives. The first stash of three hundred papyrus fragments was discovered in the funerary temple of Pharaoh Neferirkare (2446–2426 B.C.E.). Although it was discovered at the beginning of the twentieth century, the texts were not published until 1976 (see Posener-Kriéger). A Czechoslovak team, which made further valuable finds at Abusir, discovered papyrus fragments of varied length in the unfinished pyramid of King Raneferef (2419–2416 B.C.E.). Both archives preserve texts dealing with the administration of the respective mortuary temples and their cults.

Text and translation: P. POSENER-KRIÉGER, *Les archives du temple funéraire de Néferirkarê-Kakaï (les papyrus d'Abousir): Traduction et commentaire* (BdE 65; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1976). **Bibliography:** M. BARTA and J. KREJCI, *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2000* (Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Oriental Institute, 2000); P. POSENER-KRIÉGER, *État d'avancement de la publication des archives d'Abu-Sir* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965); M. VERNER, *The Excavations of the Czechoslovak Institute of Egyptology at Abusir* (Prague: Charles University Press, 1977–).

Akhetaton (El-Amarna). Tell el-Amarna is located on the Nile about 185 miles south of Cairo. There we find the ruins of an ancient city founded by Amenophis IV (Akhenaten), a pharaoh best known for his “heretical” doctrine that Egyptians should worship only Aton, the sun disk. An archive of 380 tablets was discovered at the site, most of them Akkadian letters addressed to Amenophis III (1391–1353) or to his son Akhenaten (1353–1335). Some of the letters were from powerful kings in the region—from Babylon, Assyria, Hatti, and Mitanni—but the vast majority of the texts were from Egypt’s vassals in Canaan and in the wider Levant. Because the Canaanite dialects of the writers influenced the Akkadian in these texts, the Amarna letters are an important source for reconstructing

the history of Canaanite languages. At the same time, the texts also provide a valuable window into the fourteenth-century world of Syria-Palestine, just a few centuries before Israel would emerge in the region. The texts mention the city of Jerusalem, and some scholars have taken a particular interest in the *ḥapiru*, a class of social outlaws who were wreaking havoc in Syro-Palestine at the time. It is supposed that there may be some connection between these *ḥapiru* and the biblical Hebrews. In addition to the letters, a small corpus of Akkadian literary texts was also discovered at the site (see Izre'el). Amarna sources are identified with the siglum “EA” followed by the text number, but one must be careful to distinguish another common use of this code, in which “EA” refers to “Egyptian Antiquities” in the British Museum.

Texts and translations: S. IZRE'EL, *The Amarna Scholarly Tablets* (CM 9; Groningen, Neth.: Styx, 1997); J. A. KNUDTZON, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln* (2 vols.; Vorderasiatische Bibliothek 1–2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907–1915); A. F. RAINEY, *El Amarna tablets 359–379* (2d ed. rev.; AOAT 8; Kevelaer, Germany: Butzon & Bercker, 1978). **Translations:** ANET 483–90; COS 3.92: 237–42; W. L. MORAN, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). **Bibliography:** E. F. CAMPBELL, *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964); R. COHEN and R. WESTBROOK, “Introduction: The Amarna System,” in *Amarna Diplomacy* (ed. R. Cohen and R. Westbrook; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 1–12; Y. GOREN, I. FINKELSTEIN, and N. NA'AMAN, eds., *Inscribed in Clay: Provenance Study of the Amarna Tablets and Other Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology; Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology 23; Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2004); R. S. HESS, *Amarna Personal Names* (Dissertation Series, American Schools of Oriental Research 9; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1993); M. LIVERANI, “A Seasonal Pattern for the Amarna Letters,” in *Lingering over Words: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Literature in Honor of William L. Moran* (ed. Tz. Abusch, J. Huehnergard, and P. Steinkeller; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 337–48; W. L. MORAN, *Amarna Studies: Collected Writings* (ed. J. Huehnergard and S. Izre'el; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003); IDEM, “The Syrian Scribe of the Jerusalem Amarna Letters,” in *Unity and Diversity: Essays in the History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (ed. H. Goedicke and J. J. M. Roberts; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 146–66; D. B. REDFORD, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 192–213.

Deir el-Medina. This site was home to a community of supervisors, foremen, and workmen (and their families), whose task was to build the great tombs of the Egyptian pharaohs in a necropolis near Thebes in Upper Egypt. More than ten thousand texts have already been found at the site, and scholars are certain that many more remain. The texts generally date to the New Kingdom, but later texts were found as well. Some exemplars are on papyrus, but most were inscribed on ostraca or on flakes of limestone. Many of the texts are of the archival sort, inscribed with letters, notes, records, and other kinds of evidence that inform us about life in the community and about administrative aspects of pyramid construction. Scribes and scribal students at Deir el-Medina also left behind a corpus of literary texts, including numerous wisdom texts, tales, and myths. The most frequently copied work appears to have been the Satire on the Trades (see 2.2.1), a

text that was commonly used in the Egyptian scribal curriculum. Portions of a private library belonging to a fellow named Qenherkhepshef have also been found; these yielded numerous important papyri, including myths, tales, love songs, a book for interpreting dreams, hymns, several incantation texts, wisdom texts, an offering ritual for Amenhotep I, and even a list of aphrodisiacs. Most of these papyri come from one of nineteen Chester Beatty papyri found at Deir el-Medina (see Gardiner 1935; Koenig; Pestman). A Late Ramesside letter from Elephantine refers to such a collection of papyri purportedly stored in a tomb at Deir el-Medina. It is possible that the letter refers precisely to these Chester Beatty papyri.

Readers should also note the Ramesseum papyri, discovered in the nearby mortuary temple of Rameses II (see Helck; Gardiner 1955). This important collection of papyri was resting in a wooden box in a Middle Kingdom tomb shaft over which the Ramesseum was built. The collection includes magical, medical, and literary texts that date to the time of Amenophis III (1391–1353 B.C.E.).

Texts, translations, and catalogues: J. CERNÝ, *Ostraca hiératiques* (2 vols.; Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, nos. 25501–25832; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1930–1935); J. CERNÝ and A. H. GARDINER, *Hieratic Ostraca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957–); J. CERNÝ, G. POSENER, and Y. KOENIG, *Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Médineh* (2 vols.; DFIFAO 8, 22; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1978–1986); J. CERNÝ, S. SAUNERON, and P. GRANDDET, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques non littéraires de Deir el-Médineh* (DFIFAO 3–7, 13, 14, 39, 41; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1935–); A. H. GARDINER, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, Third Series: Chester Beatty Gift* (2 vols.; London: British Museum, 1935); IDEM, *The Ramesseum Papyri* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955); G. POSENER and A. GASSE, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh* (DFIFAO 1, 18, 20, 25; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1938–). **Translation:** WENTE, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 132–70 (letters only). **Bibliography:** J. CERNÝ, *A Community of Workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside Period* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1973); R. J. DEMARÉE and A. EGBERTS, eds., *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millennium AD: A Tribute to Jac. J. Janssen* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2000); R. J. DEMARÉE and JAC. J. JANSSEN, *Gleanings from Deir El-Medina* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1982); M. GUTGESELL, *Die Datierung der Ostraka und Papyri aus Deir el-Medineh und ihre ökonomische Interpretation* (2 vols.; Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1983–2002); W. HELCK, “Papyri Ramesseum I,” *LÄ* 4:726–27; Y. KOENIG, “Notes sur la découverte des Papyrus Chester Beatty,” *BIFAO* 81 (1982): 41–43; P. W. PESTMAN, “Who Were the Owners, in the ‘Community of Workmen,’ of the Chester Beatty Papyri,” in *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millennium AD: A Tribute to Jac. J. Janssen* (ed. R. J. Demarée and A. Egberts; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2000), 155–72; R. VENTURA, *Living in a City of the Dead: A Selection of Topographical and Administrative Terms in the Documents of the Theban Necropolis* (OBO 69; Freiburg, Switz.: Universitätsverlag, 1986); S. WIMMER, *Hieratische Paläographie der nicht-literarischen Ostraka der 19. und 20. Dynastie* (2 vols.; AAT 28; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995).

The Elephantine Archive and Related Texts. This ancient town was located on an island in the Nile River opposite modern Aswan, in the extreme south of Egypt near the first cataract of the Nile. Elephantine was the town's Greek name. Textual

finds at the site included Egyptian, Aramaic, and Greek papyri. Thousands of Late period Egyptian papyrus fragments were discovered at Elephantine (see Quirke), but it is the Aramaic material that is of direct interest for biblical scholarship and Jewish history. Several Aramaic Jewish archives were found at Elephantine, belonging to members of a Jewish military colony stationed there by the Persians (although the colony itself may date back to the Assyrian period). One of the archives was communal and the other two belonged to individual families. The small family archives spanned two to three generations and included legal documents as well as business and family contracts. The communal archive was associated with Jedaniah, who was a priest—probably high priest—of the Elephantine Jewish community. In addition to contracts, legal documents, and administrative texts, this communal archive included a corpus of very interesting letters bearing dates between 419 and 407 B.C.E. (see Lindenberg, 61–79). One of these came from Hananyah, a Jewish Persian administrator who may have been the brother of Nehemiah (cf. Neh 1:2; 7:2). His letter, written in the authority of King Darius, instructed the Jewish community at Elephantine to follow Passover regulations approved by the Jerusalem temple. Some of these regulations were found in the Hebrew scriptures, but others appear to reflect oral law. Also in the archive was a series of letters that trace the deteriorating relationship between Jews and local Egyptian priests of the god Khnum, who had a temple nearby. This conflict came to a head when Arshama, the Persian satrap of Egypt, took an extended leave in the East. In his absence, the Egyptians bribed the sitting Persian governor and destroyed the Jewish temple at Elephantine. Three further letters record the community's request to rebuild the temple, as well as the Persian response from Arshama: the temple could be rebuilt, but only meal and incense offerings could be made there. This policy was in keeping with traditional Jewish law, which forbade flesh offerings at all sites but the Jerusalem temple. Consequently, this stipulation reveals the profound influence that the Jerusalem temple exerted on Persia's Jewish policies in Egypt and perhaps elsewhere. Also included in Jedaniah's community archive was a copy of one literary text, *The Story and Proverbs of Ahiqar* (see 2.3), and a papyrus copy of Darius I's Bisitun inscription (see Greenfield and Porten and 12.4). Several older letters written on ostraca were also discovered at Elephantine, dating to ca. 475 B.C.E. (Lindberger, 41–59). One of the letters refers to Sabbath observance in Egypt, another mentions the obscure *marzeah* institution (see Amos 6:7; Jer 16:5), and in another a friend requests, "Let me know when you will be celebrating the Passover." This may suggest that the Passover date was not yet fixed in Jewish tradition, but it is perhaps more likely that religious observance at Elephantine was idiosyncratic.

Three collections of Aramaic documents are closely related to the Jewish texts from Elephantine. The first is a parcel of twelve letters belonging to Arshama, the Persian satrap of Egypt mentioned in the previous paragraph (Lindberger, 81–106). Most of these letters have to do with Arshama's business dealings in his far-flung network of private estates, scattered about the empire from Egypt to Mesopotamia. Arshama's letters were acquired on the antiquities market, so, apart from their fifth-century date, little is known of their provenance.

The second relevant Aramaic collection is a stash of sixth-century private letters discovered at Hermopolis, a site about midway between the Nile Delta and Elephantine (Lindberger, 25–36). These letters concerning family commercial activities were destined for recipients in the Elephantine area; the fact that they were found at Hermopolis, still tied together and sealed, suggests that the courier never delivered this mail. A third set of letters, in the Civic Museum of Padua, Italy, address the business concerns of Jewish families living in Elephantine (Lindberger, 36–38). Although the provenance of these fifth-century texts is unknown, Elephantine would obviously be the most likely location.

Texts and translations: J. C. GREENFIELD and B. PORTEN, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great: Aramaic Version* (Corpus inscriptionum iranicarum, Part I: Inscriptions of Ancient Iran; London: Lund Humphries, 1982); J. M. LINDENBERGER, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters* (2d ed.; SBLWAW 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), 25–106 (partial); E. LÜDDECKENS, *Ägyptische Handschriften* (4 vols.; Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland 19; Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1971–1994), vol. 2 (demotic Egyptian papyri); B. PORTEN and A. YARDENI, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (4 vols.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1986–1999) (Aramaic papyri); O. RUBENSOHN, *Elephantine-Papyri* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1907) (Greek papyri). **Translations:** ANET 491–92; COS 3.46–54: 116–34, 3.59–81: 141–98; 3.87: 207–17. **Bibliography:** ALANE 204–13; F. M. FALES, “Aramaic Letters and Neo-Assyrian Letters: Philological and Methodological Notes,” *JAOS* 107 (1987): 451–69; J. A. FITZMYER, “Some Notes on Aramaic Epistolography,” *JBL* 93 (1974): 201–25; W. KAISER, “Elephantine,” *OEANE* 2:234–36; B. PORTEN, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); IDEM, “The Elephantine Papyri,” *ABD* 2:445–55.

Saqqara. This site on the southern end of the Nile Delta, just west of Memphis, was the largest and most important necropolis in ancient Egypt. Numerous school texts dating to the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties were either discovered there or probably came from there, including model letters, hymns, codes of behavior, and other genres. These exemplars constitute a majority of the school texts that Egyptologists call the Late Egyptian Miscellanies (see Gardiner; Caminos). There is a body of important literary manuscripts linked by the contents and by names of the copyists to each other and to the Saqqara necropolis. It is not known whether these manuscripts came from a single burial or from some other context, but the texts date to about 1200 C.E. Exemplars in the collection include a copy of the Satirical Instruction Letter (P.Anastasi 1), didactic excerpts and hymns (P.Anastasi 3–6), a copy of the hymn to the Nile inundation (P.Anastasi 7), two formal letters (P.Anastasi 8–9), our only copy of the Tale of Two Brothers (P.D’Orbiney) together with the Instructions of Amenemhet and the Tale of the Quarrel of Seqenenra Taa and Apepi (P.Sallier 1), the Instructions of Amenemhet, the Instructions of Khety, and the hymn to the Nile inundation (P.Sallier 2), a copy of the Battle of Qadesh (P.Sallier 3), and a copy of the so-called Calendar of Lucky and Unlucky Days, with additional school miscellanies on the reverse (P.Sallier 4). Many demotic papyri from much later periods were also found at Saqqara (see Depauw).

Texts and translations: R. A. CAMINOS, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954); A. H. GARDINER, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (BAeg 1; Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1937). **Translations:** ANET 258–59; COS 3.2–5: 9–17; WENTE, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*. **Bibliography:** M. DEPAUW, *A Companion to Demotic Studies* (Papyrologica bruxellensia 28; Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1997), 85–121; Z. HAWASS, “Saqqara,” *OEANE* 4:478–81.

1.4. Anatolia

Ḫattuša (Boğazköy) and Other Hittite Sites. Located about ninety miles east of Ankara in northeastern Turkey, Ḫattuša was the capital of the Hittite Empire during most of the second millennium (ca. 1750–1200 B.C.E.). Archives and libraries at the site have yielded more than thirty thousand texts, the vast majority written in Hittite. Other languages represented in the corpus include Akkadian, Sumerian, Luwian, Palaic, Hattic, and Hurrian. All of the major Near Eastern generic categories are represented in the finds, including historical texts, administrative texts, laws, myths, prayers, rituals, festivals, omens, and lexical texts. Two other sites have yielded significant numbers of Hittite texts. Preliminary reports confirm that about three thousand tablets and fragments have been discovered at Šapinuwa (Ortaköy), a city located about thirty-five miles northeast of Ḫattuša (see Süel). These texts have not yet been published. Several hundred tablets were also discovered at Tapigga (Masat Höyük), about 70 miles east of Ḫattuša (see ALANE). The Tapigga texts include mainly archival records and letters. Hittite texts have been published in a number of different texts and series, including especially *Texte der Hethiter*; *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*; *Studien zu der Boğazköy-Texten*; and *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*. Research in the Hittite corpus has profited especially from Laroche’s exhaustive catalogue of the Hittite texts, which is now being updated in a Web-based edition (see the “Hittite Home Page,” <http://www.asor.org/HITTITE/HittiteHP.html>).

Text and translation: E. LAROCHE, *Catalogue des textes hittites* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1971; updated on-line ed., “Catalog of Hittite Texts (CTH),” <http://www.asor.org/HITTITE/CTHHP.html>). **Translations** COS 3.13–40: 43–72. **Bibliography:** ALANE 44–57; *Ancient Libraries in Anatolia: The 24th Annual Conference Libraries and Education in the Networked Information Environment (June 2–5 2003, Ankara)* (Ankara: METU, 2003); G. BECKMAN, “Mesopotamian and Mesopotamian Learning at Hattusha,” *JCS* 35 (1983): 91–114; H. G. GÜTERBOCK, “Boğazköy,” *OEANE* 1:333–35; A. SÜEL, “Ortaköy: Eine hethitische Stadt mit hethitischen und hurritischen Tontafelentdeckungen,” in *Hittite and Other Anatolian and Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Sedat Alp* (ed. H. Otten et al.; Ankara: Türk tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), 487–92.

Kaneš (Kültepe). More than fifteen thousand Akkadian tablets and tablet fragments have been discovered at this site in modern Turkey, in ancient Cappadocia. Although a few texts were found in the city’s citadel, the vast majority of the tablets were recovered from the city’s commercial quarter (*kārum*). Between 2000

and 1800 B.C.E., an Old Assyrian trading colony dominated the *kārum* of Kaneš, and it is to these Assyrian merchants that we owe the archives. Nearly all of the recovered documents related to economic trade, but several literary texts were also discovered.

Texts and translations: E. BILGIÇ, ed., *Ankara Kültepe Tabletleri* (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari 6/33; Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1990–); K. R. VEENHOF and E. KLENGEL-BRANDT, *Altassyrische Tontafeln aus Kültepe: Texte und Siegelabrollungen* (Berlin: G. Mann, 1992). **Bibliography:** M. T. LARSEN, *Old Assyrian Caravan Procedures* (UNHAI 22; Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut in het Nabije Oosten, 1967); IDEM, *The Old Assyrian City-State and Its Colonies* (Mesopotamia 4; Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1976); T. ÖZGÜÇ, “Kaneš,” *OEANE* 3:266–68; IDEM, *Kültepe-Kaniş: New Researches at the Center of the Assyrian Trade Colonies* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1959); IDEM, *Kültepe-Kaniş II: New Researches at the Trading Center of the Ancient Near East* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983); K. R. VEENHOF, “Kaneš: An Assyrian Colony in Anatolia,” *CANE* 2:859–71; IDEM, “Kültepe Texts,” *OEANE* 3:308–10.

1.5. Persia

Persepolis. Thousands of Elamite tablets dating to the late sixth and early fifth centuries B.C.E. have been unearthed in an archive at this site, one of three Achaemenid-era Persian capitals (along with Susa and Ecbatana). These tablets are administrative records of food and commodity transfers. A smaller find in the area of the royal treasury yielded more than two hundred tablets and evidence that Aramaic texts on papyri, skins, and other perishable materials were once stored there.

Texts and translations: R. A. BOWMAN, *Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis* (OIP 91; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); G. G. CAMERON, *Persepolis Treasury Texts* (OIP 65; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); R. T. HALLOCK, *Persepolis Fortification Texts* (OIP 92; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). **Bibliography:** ALANE 216–19; D. STRONACH and K. CODELLA, “Persepolis,” *OEANE* 4:273–77.

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M. W. CHAVALAS and K. L. YOUNGER JR., eds. *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002); M. CIVIL, "From the Epistolary of the Edubba," in *Wisdom, Gods, and Literature: Studies in Assyriology in Honour of W. G. Lambert* (ed. A. R. George and I. L. Finkel; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 105–18; IDEM, "Lexicography," in *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen on His Seventieth Birthday* (AS 20; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 123–57; J. L. CRENSHAW, *Education in Ancient Israel: Across the Deadening Silence* (New York: Doubleday, 1998); G. I. DAVIES, "Were There Schools in Ancient Israel?" in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton* (ed. J. Day, R. P. Gordon, and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 199–211; P. R. DAVIES, *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 74–88; I. M. DIAKONOFF, "Ancient Writing and Ancient Written Language: Pitfalls and Peculiarities in the Study of Sumerian," in *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen on His Seventieth Birthday* (AS 20; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 99–121; D. O. EDZARD, "The Sumerian Language," *CANE* 4:2107–16; R. S. ELLIS, *A Bibliography of Mesopotamian Archaeological Sites* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1972); X. FAIVRE, "Le recyclage des tablettes cuneiforms," *RA* 89 (1995): 57–66; W. FARBER, "'Forerunners' and 'Standard Versions': A Few Thoughts about Terminology," in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo* (ed. M. E. Cohen, D. C. Snell, and D. B. Weisberg; Bethesda, Md.: CDL Press, 1993), 95–97; A. H. GARDINER, "The House of Life," *JEA* 24 (1938): 157–79; G. B. GRAGG, "Less-Understood Languages of Ancient Western Asia," *CANE* 4:2161–79; H. G. GÜTERBOCK, "Resurrecting the Hittites," *CANE* 4:2765–77; W. W. HALLO, "Bilingualism and the Beginnings of Translation," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran* (ed. M. V. Fox et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 345–57; M. HARAN, "On the Diffusion of Literacy and Schools in Ancient Israel," in *Congress Volume: Jerusalem, 1986* (VTSup 40; New York: Brill, 1988), 81–95; W. V. HARRIS, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); J. HUEHNERGARD, "Semitic Languages," *CANE* 4:2117–34; T. G. H. JAMES, *Introduction to Ancient Egypt* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979); D. W. JAMIESON-DRAKE, *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-archaeological Approach* (JSOTSup 109; Sheffield, England: Almond, 1991); F. JOANNÈS, "L'extinction des archives cuneiforms dans la seconde partie de l'époque perse," *RA* 89 (1995): 139–47; J. KALTNER and S. L. MCKENZIE, *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2002); S. KAUFMAN, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); P. J. KING, "Jerusalem," *ABD* 3:747–66; B. LAFONT, "La chute des rois d'Ur et la fin des archives dans les grands centres administratifs de leur empire," *RA* 89 (1995): 2–13; B. LANDSBERGER, "Scribal Concepts of Education," in *City Invincible: A Symposium on Urbanization and Cultural Development in the Ancient Near East* (ed. C. H. Kraeling and R. M. Adams; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 94–123; S. Z. LEIMAN, *The Canonization of the Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence* (2d ed.; New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991); A. LEMAIRE,

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