

# **The Other Face of the Battle**

The Impact of War on Civilians  
in the Ancient Near East

Edited by  
Davide Nadali and Jordi Vidal

# Alter Orient und Altes Testament

Veröffentlichungen zur Kultur und Geschichte des Alten Orients  
und des Alten Testaments

Band 413

Herausgeber

Manfried Dietrich • Oswald Loretz • Hans Neumann

Lektorat

Kai A. Metzler • Ellen Rehm

Beratergremium

Rainer Albertz • Joachim Bretschneider  
Stefan Maul • Udo Rüterswörden • Walther Sallaberger  
Gebhard Selz • Michael P. Streck • Wolfgang Zwickel



# **The Other Face of the Battle**

The Impact of War on Civilians  
in the Ancient Near East

Edited by  
Davide Nadali and Jordi Vidal

2014  
Ugarit-Verlag  
Münster

Davide Nadali and Jordi Vidal (eds.):

The Other Face of the Battle.

The Impact of War on Civilians in the Ancient Near East

Alter Orient und Altes Testament, Band 413

© 2014 Ugarit-Verlag – Buch- und Medienhandel GmbH, Münster

[www.ugarit-verlag.com](http://www.ugarit-verlag.com)

Alle Rechte vorbehalten

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photo-copying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Herstellung: Hubert & Co, Göttingen

Printed in Germany

ISBN 978-3-86835-102-6

Printed on acid-free paper

## Contents

Davide Nadali / Jordi Vidal Introduction .....	1
Agnès Garcia-Ventura Ur III Biopolitics. Reflections on the Relationship between War and Work Force Management .....	7
Leticia Rovira “Share Them Out ...” On the Mass Deportation of People according to the Texts of Mari (18th Century BC) .....	25
Jürgen Lorenz / Ingo Schrakamp “Our Master! Do not destroy us!” The Fate and Role of Non-Combatants in the Wars of the Hittites .....	37
Jordi Vidal Violence against Non-Combatant Population in the Levant in the Late Bronze Age .....	65
Jeffrey R. Zorn War and Its Effects on Civilians In Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors .....	79
Davide Nadali The Impact of War on Civilians in the Neo-Assyrian Period .....	101
John MacGinnis Minions to the Rule of Erra. The Impact of War on the Civilian Population of Babylonia in the First Millennium BC .....	113
Indices .....	127

# “Share Them Out ...”

On the Mass Deportation of People according to the Texts of Mari  
(18th Century BC)\*

Leticia Rovira

## 1. General Background

The forced deportation of persons existed in the Old Babylonian period (2002–1595 BC<sup>1</sup>), although not as intensely as in subsequent periods.<sup>2</sup> It was used as a major form of social and political coercion in the Syrian-Mesopotamian region during this period. In the Kingdom of Mari during the 18<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Lîm dynasty and the dynasty of Upper Mesopotamian both practiced individual and mass deportations.

Deportation could affect either groups or individuals. Individual deportations could consist of capturing fugitives<sup>3</sup> or individuals who had migrated without the proper state authorisation.<sup>4</sup> If these individuals did not find a place to take them in at their destination, they could be captured by the state authorities and thus become deportees<sup>5</sup> (*nasîhu*<sup>6</sup>).

In contrast, mass deportations were generally associated with war. They stemmed from a clash between kingdoms or regions in conflict, which led to the capture of individuals who were prisoners of war, plunder (*šallatu*)<sup>7</sup> and became deportees. They were then displaced and relocated depending on the victor’s needs and purposes.

The intention of mass deportations after the battles was to launch a territorial expansion strategy which would reconfigure the dominated space both politically and socially.<sup>8</sup> It also served as a punishment for certain groups, often for their resistance to the besieger’s attacks. What is more, forced displacements aimed to dilute

---

\* I would like to thank Jordi Vidal and Davide Nadali for their invitation to publish this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth all the dates are BC unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup> The most important example is from the Neo-Assyrian Empire; see Oded 1979.

<sup>3</sup> See two important cases of fugitive deportees in: ARMT II 4 = LAPO 16 no. 11; ARMT V 35 = LAPO 16 no. 629.

<sup>4</sup> An illustration of this can be found in ARMT XXVII 26, when Zakira-Hammû, the governor of the district of Qaṭṭunân, asked Zimrî-Lîm for orders on what should be done with the men who left their territory to find grain, since all the grain had been devoured by an invasion of locusts.

<sup>5</sup> Two examples: ARMT IV 63 = LAPO 18 no. 1034 = ARMT XXVI/1 269.

<sup>6</sup> *Nasîhu*: person transferred for work, deportee (CAD N/2, p. 26 *contra* Durand 1989, 85 and 1992, 104). See too *Nasâhu* (CAD N/2, p. 1 and forward). It is important to note that even though Durand 1989 and 1992 prefers to accept the translation of “displaced persons”, he also uses “deportees” in his translations. One example of this can be found in ARMT IV 86 = LAPO 17 no. 772.

<sup>7</sup> *Šallatu*: plunder, booty, captives, prisoners of war (CAD Š/1, p. 248).

<sup>8</sup> Bahrani 2008, 178–179.

potential groups which would be capable of spurring both rebellions and minor uprisings. Deportation often broke family bonds, both objectively, by dismembering the family in a society where kinship was one of the key factors in subsistence, and subjectively, by fracturing the bond that joined the kin group through ancestor worship (*kispum*).<sup>9</sup> This was achieved when the place of residence was razed,<sup>10</sup> since the *kispum* ceremony was performed in the homes and conveyed a message of remembrance and of the genealogical order, of the memory of life in a given place inhabited by the deceased, all of which created a bond between past and present.

Forced movement, which implied the deportation of people, reveals the violent mechanism practised by the state apparatus. In addition to seizing and/or dominating different territories through functionaries imposed by the king, they made away with human resources, which were chronically scarce, and usually used them to boost the workforce wherever they were needed.

Mass deportations were accompanied by a variety of calamities, such as epidemics, famines, disturbances in living conditions, dismemberment of native and deported clans and families,<sup>11</sup> land redistribution and more. These mass deportations could also trigger clashes that escalated into real violence. Yet, on the other hand, the arrival of deportees supplied certain sites with manpower. From the standpoint of the division of labour, this may have been viewed by the natives or by the servants—depending on whether the deportees were assigned to a village/city or to one of the palaces—as beneficial, since it meant more hands at work and a new division of responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> In turn, all the new contacts and coexistence close quarters would lead to a “mixture” of identities. In this way, ties could be forged between the

---

<sup>9</sup> Guichard 1999, 44–45. *Kispum* was not only a royal ritual but was also practised by the population at large (Jacquet 2004, 45; Lion 2009, 469–470). Through *kispum*, the worshippers strove to confirm the family continuity between the deceased and their direct descendants and thus perpetuate the kinship line in successive generations (López / Sanmartín 1993, 481–487; Durand / Guichard 1997, 63–71). The ritual consisted of a banquet, usually held in the house inhabited by the participants. Water and food were offered to the ancestor and “the name (of the dead) was uttered” (Bayliss 1973; Durand 1995, 280; Durand / Guichard 1997, 63; Lion 2009, 468; Bachelot 2009, 478–479). This meant that the deceased was “remembered”, and this remembrance was important in that it restored their name. It was believed that a name was part of the very existence of what it designated; naming something meant bringing it into existence (Charpin 2002, 545). Thus, this name formed an identity, the individual identity of the deceased, yet also a family member, from which a broader group could extend that stretched beyond the boundaries of direct kinship and instead referred to a shared family lineage.

<sup>10</sup> Two examples of the destruction of native habitats, one from the reign of Upper Mesopotamia and the other from the Zimrî-Lîm period (1775–1762):

Tell Yasmah-Addu: thus speaks Samsî-Addu, your father. (...)... Destroy ... Set the citadel on fire. Make the inhabitants leave the city; expel them towards here, the interior of the Country; destroy that city with fire (...) (ARM I 39 = LAPO 17 no. 471).

Tell my lord (Zimrî-Lîm), thus (speaks) your servant Yarim-Addu. (...) and his troops triumphed over the country of Mutiabab. They [deported] the entire population, destroyed their [houses] and set fire (ARM XXVI/2 365 bis).

<sup>11</sup> Bonnetterre 1997, 550; Charpin 2004a, 292.

<sup>12</sup> De Bernardi 2001, 199. Regarding the integration of the descendants of the deportees, see for example Babylonia under the successors of Hammurabi in Charpin 1992.

deportees and the natives, which may have generated a kind of “relief” from adversity yet which ironically also served the state to defuse possible conflicts.

## 2. The Most Prized Plunder

Even though there is not a large number of sources from the reign of Yahdun-Lîm (ca. 1810–1794), we do know that two of its military campaigns<sup>13</sup> left human plunder in their wake and that these people were deported to Mari.<sup>14</sup> This workforce was regarded as one of the most prized benefits that could be secured for the kingdom, yet deporting people also left no doubts as to who had won the conflict. For this reason, the royal inscriptions fixed on a variety of objects often refer to not only combat but also deportation. These stories could serve as indoctrination, “propaganda” and praise. All three of these actions are intertwined, but each could exert a more direct impact on certain sectors, even if this impact was not exclusive. The indoctrination mainly operated inwards, towards the elite and the subjugated kinglets. The “propaganda” acted primarily outward, if the object, which was often monumental, was located in a site that could be seen by the common people, who were struck by the iconography as well as the writing engraved on it.<sup>15</sup> Finally, praise was primarily offered “towards the heavens” and “towards the future”, when god and the monarch were exalted in written pieces that were produced to remain hidden. The latter could only be seen by the deity to whom they were addressed, but sometimes by future kings as well when they undertook the restoration of the building where these laudatory texts were located.<sup>16</sup> One example of this are foundation’s bricks, as occurred with Yahdun-Lîm, when he told the tale of his journeys and his adventures on the bricks in the foundation of the temple of Šamaš.<sup>17</sup> There he tells how he took away the people of a defeated city:

(...) The city of Haman, of the tribe of Haneans, which all the leaders of Hana had built, he destroyed and made into mounds of rubble. Now, he defeated their king, Kašuri-Īāla. Having taken away their population he controlled the banks of the Euphrates (...) (M.2802)<sup>18</sup>

A vast number of sources that attest to mass deportations come from the reign of Upper Mesopotamia. This may be due to the kind of government of the kingdom created by Samsî-Addu (ca. 1792–1775). This monarch had a jurisdictional vision of

<sup>13</sup> One in Nagar, vying against Samsî-Addu, and another successive campaign in Pahudar (Charpin / Ziegler 2003: 38–39).

<sup>14</sup> Charpin / Ziegler 2003, 38–39.

<sup>15</sup> “(...) The writing clearly has a fundamental target which is the literate elite itself or the elite that is the beneficiaries of the specialisation of the scribes, a tiny minority in a sea of illiterates; however, for these illiterates, the presence of the signs on the tablets or on the stele must have had a meaning as magical objects that transported the word. On the other hand, it is not outlandish to think that oral transmission would serve as a bridge between those who had read the words and those who could only hear them, and that their echoes would reach the hiddenmost corners of a kingdom. (...)” (De Bernardi 2002, 422).

<sup>16</sup> Kupper 1976, 300.

<sup>17</sup> Parrot found nine square bricks containing written texts measuring 41 cm on each side and 7 cm thick inside and under the walls of what used to be the Temple of Šamaš (Dossin 1954 and 1955).

<sup>18</sup> RIME 4, 605–608 no. 2. Also in Dossin 1955, 12–17, among others.

the realm he ruled in which he defended his borders based on geographic dominance<sup>19</sup> and sustained an expansive territorial policy.<sup>20</sup> He appointed his sons, Išme-Dagan and Yasmah-Addu (1787–1775), the kings of Ekállatum and Mari, respectively. Many letters between the sons and their father expressed a variety of situations related to the forced displacement of people undertaken after a conflict. The defeated kingdom was often annexed, but the new territories could not always be dominated, although this did not prove to be an obstacle to stripping them of their people.

One example of this can be found in the year 1780, eponymous of Aššur-malik. Some Turukkean's cities at the foothills of the Zagros Mountains embarked upon an uprising against the kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia. This uprising was spurred by the nascent diplomatic relationship between Samsî-Addu and the Gutians, the diehard enemies of the Turukkeans.<sup>21</sup> Finally, Išme-Dagan managed to achieve victory over different "countries" in the region, but he determined that he could not govern or administer them as effectively as he needed to. Thus, the people of Šušarra were deported and relocated in Arrapha and Qabrâ,<sup>22</sup> two other cities that were seized by the kings of Upper Mesopotamia between the end of 1781 and early 1780, eponymous of Asqudum and Aššur-malik, respectively.

Tell Yasmah-Addu: thus speaks Išme-Dagan, your brother.

With regard to the country of Šušarrâ, the subject of your letter, Izar-Lîm will tell you that country is in confusion and we are unable to administer it. Lidâya the Turukku and the Turukkeans who are with him, those who have moved into the country, began the hostilities and annihilated two cities. I went to help them, and they penetrated the mountains.

We have deliberated on this. Since it is impossible to administer this country, I have deported its inhabitants and moved them, servers and maids alike, to the country to Arrapha and the country of Qabrâ. The troops will withdraw to the inland regions of the country. I am fine. May your heart not be uneasy. (ARMT IV 25)<sup>23</sup>

Another letter, dated in the same year of Addu-bani, 1777,<sup>24</sup> reveals several factors to be borne in mind with regard to deportations. It says:

Tell Išme-Dagan: Thus speaks Yasmah-Addu, your brother.

Regarding a letter from the King, I sent it to Lâ'um. He reached the King and the latter told him: 'Yasmah-Addu asked me to send him the *umšarhû*<sup>25</sup> and the troops. I neither gave them nor assigned them. Instead of the *umšarhû*, you only have to strengthen and equip the deported persons.

<sup>19</sup> This is clear in one of his titles, as it appears in the royal inscription: A.889 = RIMA 1, 59 no. 7 and in Charpin 1984, 47–48.

<sup>20</sup> See Lafont 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Charpin / Ziegler 2003, 106–107. This relationship between the Gutians and the kings of Upper Mesopotamia, through the figure of Išme-Dagan, remained in place until the times of Zimrî-Lîm, as seen by letter A.649 = LAPO 17 no. 592.

<sup>22</sup> Charpin / Ziegler 2003, 107.

<sup>23</sup> LAPO 17 no. 531.

<sup>24</sup> Yuhong 1989, 287.

<sup>25</sup> According to Durand (LAPO 17, 563–564 n. b), *umšarhûm* is a title or name of a function, *contra* Deller 1990, 63, which defines this as "einheimische" (native/local). The CAD U/W, p. 156–157 suggests: *umzarhu* (*unzarhu*, *unzarhû*, *unzarhû*, *umšarhu*) "native, homebred (slave), homebred (animal)", but when it cites the examples of how this word was used for Mari, it states that in its sources the meaning is uncertain.

The people who should be deported to Išme-Dagan, Immer-dannu and Zikrî-Estar, according to the old tablets, shall be reviewed to see how many have died and how many survive. They will go to control you and will have full powers. As soon as the list of attributions on the deportations has been made, I want those people to live in Mari to make up for the losses.

(Incomplete text.)

Share them out ... You will find fields for them to cultivate. All of those who are not equipped and cannot (therefore) farm shall join the auxiliary troops. These are the ones (on the other hand) who shall truly be auxiliary troops: they must regularly receive rations of grain, oil and clothing from the palace. Therefore, (their former affluence) shall have been restored (to them) so that here they will not again consider destroying their assets and so that we do not have to exercise an act of authority or take their fields and homes from them.<sup>7</sup>

This is what the King gave as instructions in Lâ’ûm. What I do not cease to write you and what I have told you without cease regarding the deportees, without exaggeration, the King has just arranged once and for all. He gives strict orders that the deportees be watched over wherever they are without attachment in the country (...) (ARMT IV 86)<sup>26</sup>

In the first excerpt of the letter, Yasmah-Addu was denied the *umšarhû*, but in exchange Lâ’um was asked to equip the deportees. Some of them would be moved to Ekállatum, since they were being sent to Išme-Dagan, while others were to live in Mari. Thus, we can understand that the purpose of these *umšarhû* may have been related to the urban centres and their surroundings, since they were replaced by the deportees. In the cities, there were both palaces and temples, along with homes and artisan workshops. In Mari, several different *bâbtum* could be distinguished. They did not have the sense of “neighbourhood” as they did in Babylonia; rather they were working units and their members were workers who lived in the neighbouring villages.<sup>27</sup> With this scene in mind, it would not be strange if the deportees who remained “for” the cities worked in these workshops and had their plot of land nearby.

Yet, in turn, according to the letter not all the deportees would work/live in the cities. Even though a gap in the text prevents us from ascertaining the content of the sentence, “Share them out” remains as the action that must be taken, which was combined with instructions to set up some deportees in the countryside while others were destined for the army. Those who would be set up as farmers had to be deported with their tools,<sup>28</sup> and for this reason they were chosen to farm. This contrasts

---

<sup>26</sup> LAPO 17 no. 772.

<sup>27</sup> LAPO 17, 520.

Tell my lord (Yasmah-Addu): thus speaks Lâ’ûm, your servant. (...) I have given the deportees 50 arpents of land in the villages (*ša ka-ap-ru*) (...) (ARMT V 85 = LAPO 17 no. 765).

<sup>28</sup> Sometimes they were deported with their large and small livestock. One example from the kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia is the excerpt from the source M.5659 (Charpin 2004b, 166), which states that the inhabitants of Utûm had to be deported with their oxen and their goats and moved to Arrapha and Qabrâ. From the period of Zimrî-Lîm

(...) he (Hammu-rabi of Kurdâ) has deported the people of Harbû with their furniture and all their belongings and has made them enter in Kurdâ, returning only the bare land to Atamrum. (...) (ARMT XXVI/2 410), and: (...) The enemy has pillaged [NL<sup>?</sup>], has taken

with the other uprooted people, “those who are not equipped”, who came to be part of the troops and were maintained by the state via rations.<sup>29</sup>

The three destinations determined by the state for the deportees (as tradesmen in the cities (?), as farmers or as part of the army) had two goals: to deactivate any potential rebellion that could germinate through their rejection of forced displacement, and to achieve material benefits for the kingdom by using the new artisanal (?), agricultural and military workforce.

The same holds true of the watch kept over the deportees (“so that the deportees are watched over”). We can assume that the scattering of the deportees did not always end in a settlement where they could lay down roots (“wherever they are without attachment in the country”). Even though they were given the means of subsistence, the identity that arose from being “deportees” who were uprooted from their homes could have prompted hostilities and rebellions that had to be kept at bay. This prevention of attacks comes into clear focus in the following letter, whose precise date we do not know.

Tell Yasmah-Addu: thus speaks Samsi-Addu, your father.

This is what you wrote me: ‘My Lord must send to me [the people who fell in the] raid conducted in Hiwilat, which he told me about, so that they could live in Nilibšinnum with [the people who fell in the] raid conducted in Ekallatum.’ This is what you have written to me.

These people should not be in Nilibšinnum. We must take care that they do not take this city while the grain there is plentiful! They should reside in the countryside. Send to them a troop of 100 men chosen from those under your orders. Today, 300 men must camp across from them. Hide the grain of the city! (ARMT I 33)<sup>30</sup>

As mentioned above, the displaced persons were an asset as an available workforce, specialized or not, and for this reason they were moved to particular zones or areas which needed manpower.<sup>31</sup> This is clear in the following source:

Tell my lord Yasmah-Addu: thus speaks Tarim-Šakim, your servant.

The 1,030 people in the plunder that the King has given to offset the shortages (of personnel) in the different palaces on the Banks-of-the-Euphrates currently live in Kahat. I will go personally to retrieve the plunder in Saggaratum. I will receive it there and then distribute it to the different palaces.

One other thing: he (Išme-Dagan) has deported from Mari the people deported from Šenânum who remained after the King’s departure, saying: ‘Send to Kurdâ the deportees

---

forty people, one hundred heads of cattle and two thousand sheep (...) (ARMT XXVI/2 515).

<sup>29</sup> For the period of Zimri-Lîm, Villard (ARM XXIII, 493–494) suggests that some deportees, after being liberated in year 5 [4’], the “Year of the throne of Šamaš”, joined the army while others were sent to the rural domains.

<sup>30</sup> LAPO 17 no. 624.

<sup>31</sup> During year 3 [2’] of Zimri-Lîm, some women who had been part of the plunder of Raqqum and Mišlan, and who had been placed in the palace in the textile sector were redistributed to several specialised artisans (*mâr-ummênî*); see ARMT XXII 63+. According to Villard (ARMT XXIII, 487–490), we can assume that they were assigned there not as domestics but to work in the artisan workshops.

who are located in Mari to replace the personnel; I have gathered them in Ṭahmun and in Tarīm-Hanat’ (...) (ARMT V 27)<sup>32</sup>

As noted above, the individuals were part of the war “plunder”, but that was not all that was impounded by the king. The plunder would have been made up of people and/or goods and had to be divided among the senior officials and the troops. However, if the state was facing a shortage of personnel, as noted in the source above, the army’s share was withdrawn. During year 11 [10’] of Zimrī-Lîm, this was the situation in the palace of Mari:

Tell my Lord (Zimrī-Lîm), thus speaks Yasîm-El, your servant (...) With my share of prisoners, I received 10 [+x jugs] of the herb *amuzinnu*; I divided them [the jugs] among the army. [Regarding] the prisoners, [I called] the section chiefs, the lieutenants and the [men] of the troops and took the floor to tell them: ‘You know (well) that personnel is lacking in the palace of my Lord. Now, I shall lead these prisoners to my Lord.’ This is what I told them; calling on the reason of my Lord’s army, I removed those prisoners from the men of the troops without protest. (...) (ARMT XXVI/2 408)

The securing people as plunder during the last year of the reign of Zimrī-Lîm is attested to in the seizure of Ašlakkâ, the fall of Eluhut and the conquest of Hurmiš. These clashes and victories resulted in a large mass of people, especially women, who were deported to the royal palaces to be instructed in the discipline of music<sup>33</sup> and to join the royal harem<sup>34</sup> or the textile workshops,<sup>35</sup> as noted in the following source:

Tell my Lord: thus speaks Mukannišum, your servant.

(...) Another thing: regarding the plunder that has entered Dêr<sup>36</sup> (that is): 13 men, X women, 2<sup>2</sup> young women, 16 young men, X wet nurses, 5 weavers, 39 women, 13 young women, 10 young men, 7 wet nurses, is the group that I made leave.

66 young women are for the textile workshop.

10 women, 2 young men, 2 girls belonging to the houses of Asqur-Addu and Ilî-Samuh have been placed in the textile workshops. (ARMT XIII 21)<sup>37</sup>

The deportations did not take the people by surprise. They were aware of them and experienced them just as they were: as a horrible form of forced exile and as a loss of their movable goods and real estate, of their family ties, of their “freedom”.<sup>38</sup> Two excerpts show us concern for these actions:

<sup>32</sup> LAPO 17 no. 627.

<sup>33</sup> With regard to the musical of women in Zimrī-Lîm’s harem, see Ziegler 1999, 69–82 and 116–118. With regard to musicians as war plunder, see Ziegler 2007, 42–43.

<sup>34</sup> Ziegler 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Ziegler 2007 and Oliver 2008.

<sup>36</sup> According to Durand (LAPO 18, 356) that plunder was meant for the goddess Dêritum.

<sup>37</sup> LAPO 18 no. 1171. In LAPO 18 there is an editing error that cites this source as ARMT XVIII 21.

<sup>38</sup> According to Bloch 1990, 134: “(...) the notion of freedom is one that each epoch tinkers with as it will (...)”. In the area of Syria-Mesopotamia, during the period in question, freedom in all forms was restricted. The people in general, but especially the common folk, were limited by the social and economic pressures of the powers-that-be at any given time, which supervised them and circumscribed their movements and required tributes paid as work, goods and military levies. At that time, freedom may have consisted of having access to one’s own

To my Lord (Zimrî-Lîm) say (this): thus (speaks) Zimri-Addu, your servant (...) Yamût-Bâl and its entire region have their eyes wholly trained on my Lord; they say: ‘Before seeing that the Elamite and Ešnunakean deport us, (it would be better if) our lord Zimrî-Lîm’ (...) (ARMT XXVII 132)

Tell my Lord (Zimrî-Lîm): [thus speaks Ya]šîm-El, your servant. (...) The day that we were heading to the city of Šuḫpad, the third day, Atamrum intentionally made peace with this city and set up Mannum-balu-Ištar as his agent. And the day when the people of Šuḫpad left, he made Atamrum take the following oath: ‘You will not set a trap for us, you will not murder us and you will not deport us to another country’ (...) (ARMT XXVI/2 409)

In turn, the “mixing” of people was the correlate of the individual or mass deportations, just like all the other forms of private or group mobility. This “mixture” came hand in hand with the possibility of new communications and relations<sup>39</sup> which connected different regions, as revealed in the following source, written in year 3 [2<sup>7</sup>] of Zimrî-Lîm:

To my lord (Zimrî-Lîm) tell him (this): thus (speaks) Ilušu-našîr, your servant. (...) The city of Qaṭṭunân is not full of camps: if my Lord pleases, among the deportees from Suhûm whom my Lord forced to leave, may my Lord transport (here) an entire city, so that from now on this city shall become full of camps. (ARMT XXVII 7)

This “mixture” helped the state to weaken both the local peculiarities and the unique features of the newcomer.

One source from the kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia, whose date is unclear, literally shows the “mixing” of native peoples with the deportees:

The inhabitants of Alatrû whom you have deported, make them enter the suburbs of Nihriya and mix them<sup>40</sup> with its inhabitants (A.4513)<sup>41</sup>

According to Durand,<sup>42</sup> the deliberate “mixture” of natives and deportees was a characteristic policy of the kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia, but not during the period of Zimrî-Lîm. However, even though there is no explicit source on this strategy, it is believed that the deportees did not end up in “empty land”. Regardless of where they were relocated (villages, cities, palaces, etc.), a “mix” took place. One example comes from year 1 of Zimrî-Lîm, when the monarch went to Upper Habur to establish his authority over the zone. On this raid, he took the city of Kahat, where he found Samsî-Addu’s harem.<sup>43</sup> Thirty-two women were deported to Mari, 26 of

---

means of production as means of labour and work supplies (Marx / Engels 2004, 168), which in this case would mean water, land, livestock and family-owned or communal tools (Diakonoff 1975; Bonnetterre 2007), but not being used as a slave and becoming one by being seized as a prisoner of war or deported or for being an insolvent debtor.

<sup>39</sup> Liverani 2006.

<sup>40</sup> *bu-lu-ul-šu-nu-ti. Balālu*: “to mix” (CAD B, p. 39) According to Durand (Durand 1992, 105 and ARMT XXVI/1, 309 n. d.) *balālum*: it was used in Mari to indicate a mix of peoples.

<sup>41</sup> In: LAPO 17, 312. Also in Durand 1992, 105 and ARMT XXVI/1, 309 n. d.

<sup>42</sup> LAPO 17, 312.

<sup>43</sup> Westenholz 1990 suggests that oftentimes, in the attempt to organise the information that we have, we tend to apply categories that are familiar to us, but we should bear in mind that the specific terms of one culture taken out of context should not be used in another. To prove

whom were placed in Zimrî-Lîm’s harem.<sup>44</sup> As the harems were made up of women from many different places, their mobilisation in turn implied the circulation of particular practices related to their places of origin, thus fertilising the cultural mixture, which was not distinguished by gender or age.<sup>45</sup> Everyone could become part of the “plunder”<sup>46</sup> and be deported, and every person could be moved. Based on this, a diverse group of people with different tangible and intangible socio-cultural features interacted with each other. In this sense, deportations, marriages between royal houses,<sup>47</sup> migrations and all displacements of individuals or groups gave rise to a cultural “mixture”.

### 3. Concluding Remarks

In the Syrian-Mesopotamian zone, the fluid movement of people through land or river routes, and also between city and countryside, was sometimes forced. This situation may have been brought about by actors such as prisoners of war, deportees, immigrants and fugitives. In this study, we have attempted to inquire into some of the aspects of what forced displacement meant through the acts of mass deportation conducted by the state of Mari during almost half a century of its history. Deportation was an action which enables us to see that the communities, and especially the state, perceived themselves as limited by their finite though elastic borders, and could be associated with particular physical spaces. This “finiteness” can also be seen in the identity of their settlers, who perceived themselves as part of a family

---

this, he cites the example of the category *harem*. This word comes from Arabic and refers to places inside the home where access is forbidden, and especially to women’s quarters. For this reason, he says that the existence of the harem as the women’s place must be proven more than assumed, thus opposing the assertions of Durand / Margueron 1980, and Durand 1985, when they suggest the harem as a place where all the women except the queens were secluded during the Old Babylonian period. This position is also worth examining: Glassner 1988. Even though we do not concur with viewing the harem as a place where the women were isolated, we can find no alternative term that is as explicit and explanatory of the purposes of what we are trying to name, which is in effect a group of women who belonged to the king (Ziegler 1999, 8). For this reason, we believe that it is useful to call this group of wives and concubines of the king a harem, along with all the women associated with working and caring for this harem. In the event of an armed conflict between kings and states, the majority of these women were retained and deported by the winner. However, we do not believe that the term refers directly to a physical place which entails their enclosure. Even though harem can be used to refer to a specific place without the connotation of seclusion, it must also be understood to refer to a group of women.

<sup>44</sup> Charpin / Ziegler 2003, 186; Ziegler 1999, 10.

<sup>45</sup> Regarding the deportation of children during Zimrî-Lîm, see Lion 1997.

<sup>46</sup> Specifically on the seizure of women as war plunder, who were then displaced and used as a workforce, for the reign of Zimrî-Lîm see Oliver 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Some examples can be found through the marriages of Šibtu and Hazala. The former, one of the queens of Zimrî-Lîm, the daughter of Yarîm-Lîm of Yamhad, used divinatory practices from her native land that are not attested to as being local to Mari (Durand 1982; Catagnoli 1992, 27–28). The latter, one of the daughters of the ‘mariote’, introduced “the gods of her father” into the kingdom of her husband, the king of Šudâ:

Tell Zimri-Lim: thus (speaks) Sibkuna-Addu. You have supplied the young wife of this House and now, she has brought in your gods. (...) (ARMT XXVIII 27).

and/or political entity. In this sense, the forced movement of people was a mechanism wielded by the state to express its extreme violence in the fulfilment of its goals: to expand and dominate. In turn, the deportations were the breeding ground of the cultural “mixture” in which the subjugated actors were forced to become involved. Thus, we can understand that the perspective in the social dynamic, based on inquiring into the relationships among the affected actors and the action of the state, helps us to gain further understanding of the context in which the deportations took place and their social and political consequences.

### Bibliography

- Bachelot, L., 2009: Le matériel funéraire lié à l'alimentation (des morts ?). *Cahier des thèmes transversaux ArScAn IX*: 475–483.
- Bahrani, Z., 2008: *Ritual of war. The body and violence in Mesopotamia*. Brooklyn.
- Bayliss, M., 1973: The cult of dead kin in Assyria and Babylonia. *Iraq* 35: 115–125.
- Bloch, M., 1990 [1949]: *Introducción a la historia*. Buenos Aires.
- Bonnetterre, D., 1997: Surveiller, punir et se venger: La violence d'état à Mari. *MARI* 8: 537–552.
- Catagnoti, A., 1992: Le royaume de Tubâ et ses cultes. In J. M. Durand (ed.): *Recueil d'études en l'honneur de Michel Fleury (FM I)*. Paris. Pp. 23–28.
- Charpin, D., 1984: Inscriptions votives d'époque assyrienne. *MARI* 3: 41–81.
- 1992: Inmigrés, refugies et déportés en Babylonie sous Hammu-rabi et ses sucesores. In D. Charpin / F. Joannès (eds.): *La circulation des biens, des personnes et des idées dans le Proche Orient Ancien. Actes de la XXXVIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*. Paris. Pp. 207–218.
- 2002: La politique hydraulique des rois paléo-babyloniens. *Annales, Histoire, Sciences sociales* 57(3): 545–559.
- 2004a : Histoire politique du Proche-Orient amorrite (2002–1595). In D. Charpin / D. O. Edzard / M. Stol: *Mesopotamien. Die altbabylonische Zeit*. Fribourg. Pp. 25–480.
- 2004b: Chroniques bibliographiques. 3. Données nouvelles sur la région du Petit Zab au XVIIIe siècle av. J.C. *RA* 98(1): 151–178.
- Charpin, D. / Ziegler, N., 2003: *Mari et le Proche-Orient à l'époque amorrite. Essai d'histoire politique (FM V)*. Paris.
- De Bernardi, C., 2001: *Victimización, tolerancia, segregación. Las relaciones humanas en la Mesopotamia Antigua*. *Claroescuro* 1: 181–206.
- 2002: La dimensión emocional de los procesos colectivos en las fuentes textuales de la Mesopotamia Antigua. Posibilidad de un rescate historiográfico. *Estudios de Asia y África* 37(3): 419–438.
- Deller, K. H., 1990: aB umšarḫum, mA umzarḫum, nA unzarḫum/ unzarḫum, nB unzarah. *NABU* 1990/85: 63.
- Diakonoff, I., 1975: The Rural Community in the Ancient Near East. *JESHO* 18(2): 121–133.
- Dossin, G., 1954: *Inscription de fondation de Iahdun-Lim, roi de Mari. Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 98(1): 48–50.
- 1955: L'inscription de fondation de Iahdun-Lim, roi de Mari. *Syria* 31(1): 1–28.
- Durand, J.-M., 1982: In vino veritas. *RA* 76: 43–50.

- 1985: Les Dames du palais de Mari à l'époque du royaume de haute-Mésopotamie. *MARI* 4: 385–436.
- 1989: Minima emariota II. *NABU* 1989/111: 83–85.
- 1992: Unité et diversités au Proche-Orient à l'époque amorrite. In D. Charpin / F. Joannès (eds.): *La circulation des biens, des personnes et des idées dans le Proche Orient Ancien. Actes de la XXXVIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*. Paris. Pp. 97–128.
- 1995: La religión en Siria durante la época de los reinos amorreos según la documentación de Mari. In P. Mander / J.-M. Durand: *Mitología y religión del Oriente Antiguo, Semitas Occidentales, II/1*. Barcelona. Pp.125–568.
- Durand, J.-M / Guichard, M., 1997: Les rituels de Mari. In D. Charpin / J.-M. Durand (eds.): *Recueil d'études à la mémoire de Marie-Thérèse Barrelet (FM III)*. Paris. Pp. 79–82.
- Durand, J.-M. / Margueron, J.-C., 1980: La question du Harem Royal dans le palais de Mari. *Journal des Savants* 4: 253–280.
- Glassner, J.-J., 1988: De Sumer a Babilonia: familias para administrar, familias para reinar. In A. Burguière / C. Kalpish-Zuber / C. Segale / F. Sonaben (coords.): *Historia de la familia. Mundos lejanos, mundos antiguos, T. I*. Madrid. Pp. 103–138.
- Guichard, M., 1999: Les aspects religieux de la guerre à Mari. *RA* 93(1): 27–48.
- Jacquet, A., 2004: Rituels royaux à l'époque amorrite d'après les archives de Mari. *Hypothèses* 1: 35–47.
- Kupper, J.-R., 1976: L'inscription du “disque” de Yahdun-Lim. In B. Eichler (ed.): *Kramer anniversary volume: cuneiform studies in honor of Samuel Noah Kramer*. Kevelaer. Pp. 299–303.
- Lafont, B., 2000: Le Proche-Orient à l'époque des rois de Mari: un monde sans frontières?. In L. Milano / S. De Martino / F. M. Fales / G. B. Lanfranchi (eds.): *Landscapes. Territories, frontiers and horizons in the Ancient Near East, Part. II*. Padua. Pp. 49–55.
- Lion, B., 1997: Les enfants des familles déportées de Mésopotamie du nord à Mari en ZL 11'. *Ktèma* 22: 109–118.
- 2004: Les familles royales et les artisans déportés à Mari en ZL 12'. In C. Nicolle (ed.): *Nomades et Sédentaires dans le Proche-Orient Ancien. Compte rendu de la XLVIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Amurru 3)*. Paris. Pp. 217–224.
- 2009: Nourrir les morts, d'après la documentation épigraphique. *Cahier des thèmes transversaux ArScAn IX*: 465–473.
- Liverani, M., 2006 [1979]: Mensajes, mujeres y hospitalidad: comunicación intertribal en Jueces 19–21. In M. Liverani: *Mito y política en la historiografía del Próximo Oriente antiguo*. Barcelona. Pp. 193–228.
- 2010: ‘Untruthful Steles’: Propaganda and Reliability in Ancient Mesopotamia. In S. C. Melville / A. L. Slotsky (eds.): *Opening the Tablet Box. Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster*. Leiden / Boston. Pp. 229–244.
- López, J. / Sanmartín, J., 1993: *Mitología y religión del Oriente Antiguo. Egipto y Mesopotamia, Vol. I*. Barcelona.
- Marx, K. / Engels, F., 2004 [1885]: *El Capital. Libro Segundo. El proceso de circulación del capital, T. II, V. 4*. Buenos Aires.
- Oded, B., 1979: *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*. Wiesbaden.

- Oliver, M. R., 2008: Entre lechos, alianzas y alta política: las mujeres como botín de guerra durante el reinado de Zimrí-Lîm de Mari. *Claruscuro* 7: 11–34.
- Westenholz, J. G., 1990: Towards a new conceptualization of the female role in Mesopotamia society. *JAOS* 110(3): 510–521.
- Yuhong, W., 1994: *A Political History of Eshnunna, Mari and Assyria*. Changchun.
- Ziegler, N., 1999: *Le harem de Zimri-Lîm (FM IV)*. Paris.
- 2000: Aspects économiques des guerres de Samsî-Addu. In J. Andreau / P. Briant / R. Descat: *Économie antique: La guerre dans les économies Antique*. Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges. Pp. 13–33.
- 2007: *Les musiciens et la musique d'après les archives de Mari (FM IX)*. Paris.