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# *Tradition and Innovation in the Ancient Near East*

Proceedings of the 57th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale  
at Rome  
4–8 July 2011

*edited by*

ALFONSO ARCHI

in collaboration with Armando Bramanti



*Early Byzantine mosaic from the Hama Museum*

Winona Lake, Indiana

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## *Territorial Administration in Alalah during Level IV*

Alvise Matessi

PAVIA

### ***Introduction***

Since they were first catalogued by Wiseman (1953),<sup>1</sup> the two *corpora* of tablets unearthed at Alalah/Tell Açana, in the Amuq plain, one deriving from the 17th century B.C. (level VII) and the other from the 15th century (level IV), have proven to be among the richest in the 2nd millennium Near East in terms of economic, political, social and demographic information. The sequence of such remarkable archives in the same place, in two relatively close periods, offers a rare occasion to observe how different political formations, in different historical contexts, built their networks of interaction within approximately the same geographical space. The territorial organization of Alalah's domain in the context of level VII has been the subject of many studies, based on both epigraphic and archaeological evidence, while, for the period of level IV, this issue has been mainly addressed by focusing on the recent archaeological data acquired under the purview of the Amuq Valley Regional Project.<sup>2</sup> Starting from a coherent archival group, the present paper proposes a new interpretation of some documentary sources on the territorial organization of the kingdom of Alalah during the period of level IV, by providing evidence for an administrative subdivision of the state. These results will then be compared with the situation attested in level VII, viewed through the filter of previous scholarly work.

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*Author's note:* This paper has been drawn from my MA dissertation "Pratiche di gestione del territorio in un regno siriano del Tardo Bronzo: Geografia politica del regno di Alalah durante l'egemonia Mittanica", submitted at the University of Pavia in September 2009, under the supervision of professor Clelia Mora and Mauro Giorgieri: I am sincerely grateful with them for their guidance. I owe a special debt of gratitude also to Eva von Dassow, who kindly did me the favour to read and comment on a draft of this paper. Obviously, any mistakes in this work are my own.

1. Wiseman's catalogue entries are here abbreviated AT, while uncatalogued tablets are marked according to their museum numbers (ATT etc.). New, more complete, numberings of the Alalah tablets are now provided by Niedorf (2008: 31–121; 433–446), for levels VI–I, and Zeeb (2001: 27–66; 685–691), for level VII.

2. First excavations at Alalah/Tell Açana, carried out by Sir Leonard Woolley, straddled World War II between 1937 and 1949 (Woolley 1955). The Amuq valley was first surveyed in the 1930's by Braidwood (1937), who also started excavations in five sites (Braidwood–Braidwood 1960). The recent Amuq Valley Regional Project (AVRP) of the Oriental Institute of Chicago took place between 1995–2005, and as part of it both extensive surveys and excavations at various sites (among which Alalah) were carried out (see Yener 2005). Professor K.A. Yener and her team are now continuing archaeological work at Alalah (Yener 2010).

### *The Tablets AT 350, 343, and 341*

AT 350	AT 343	AT 341
obv.	l. 1.	l. 1.
1 List / total (?) of the grass-fed sheep	<b>Heading:</b>	<b>Heading:</b>
2 Total 115:	[ <i>tup-pí</i> LÚ.MEŠ <sup>uru</sup> <i>Mu-ki</i> ]- <i>iš</i> - <i>hē</i> <sup>ki</sup>	[ <i>tup</i> ]- <i>pí</i> LÚ.MEŠ <i>ša-na-an-ni</i>
3 Alalaḥ	<i>ša</i> UDU.ḪI.A <sup>ri</sup> <i>-din-nu</i>	“tablet of the archers ( <i>šannānu</i> )”
4 402 grass-fed sheep:	“[tablet of the men of Muk]iḥ who	
5 Mukiš ( <sup>uru</sup> <i>Mu-ki</i> -< <i>iš</i> >- <i>hē</i> )	gave sheep”	
6 250 grass-fed sheep:		
7 <i>hāpiru</i> -men (LÚ.MEŠ SA.GAZ)	ll. 2-45	ll. 2-18
8 268 grass-fed sheep:	<b>Numbers of sheep and goats</b>	<b>Numbers of sheep and goats</b>
9 <i>šannānu</i> -men	<b>associated to towns (38)</b>	<b>associated to towns (16)</b>
rev.		
10 Total: 1025	ll. 46-50	ll. 19-25
11 altogether	<b>Grand totals</b>	<b>Grand totals</b>
	200 ewes 22 rams	193 ewes 27 rams
	170 nanny goats	46 nanny goats
	[10] billy goats	2 billy goats
	[Tot]al: 402 grass-fed sheep	Total: 268 grass-fed sheep altogether
	altogether	

The coherent archival group formed by AT 350, 343 and 341 has been interpreted as evidence that, sometime during the 15th century BC, the kingdom of Alalaḥ was organized into four administrative “districts”.<sup>3</sup> The tablets record the levying of sheep and goats in various localities of the kingdom. No element helps us in providing them with an exact dating, insofar as they bear neither personal names nor seal impressions. Nonetheless, some characteristics, like their archival context and similarities with other groups of texts, have led to the conclusion that they were produced under Niqmepa, son of Idrimi and second king of Alalaḥ.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding the difficult reading of the heading, AT 350 is clearly a summation tablet, recording hundreds of sheep grouped under four captions, respectively referring to Alalaḥ, Mukiš, the *šannānū*-men and the *hāpirū*-men.<sup>5</sup> We can note that the total of 268 sheep attributed to the *šannānū* in ll. 8–9 matches the heading and grand total of AT 341. On the other hand, AT 341 has the same structure as AT 343, suggesting a relationship with it: lists of livestock attributed to towns are introduced by headings and closed by grand total sections differing from one another only in the numbers. In AT 350: 4 the total of 402 sheep recalls AT 343:

3. AT 350 and 341 are edited in full in Wiseman’s catalogue (1953: 96–98; copy of 350 in Pl. XXXV). The historical and philological interpretation adopted here has been proposed by von Dassow, who described the group of tablets in their archival context (2005: 44–45) and published AT 343 (2002: 902–906), with philological and historical comments. She later included her main conclusions in the larger context of her work on the social composition of the kingdom of Alalaḥ IV (2008: 216–221). Brief descriptions of AT 350, 341 and 343, moreover, are provided by Nidorf (2008: 101–102), where they are referred to with the respective new numbers 44.12, 44.8 and 44.10.

4. See von Dassow 2005: 44–45.

5. According to Wiseman’s copy (1953: Pl. XXXV) the first two signs of l. 1 are MU and BI, which the same author (1953: 98) reads *tup<sup>2</sup>-pí*, interpreting the former as a scribal mistake. Von Dassow (2008: 216, n. 148) emends MU with GAB, thence reading *gab<sup>1</sup>-bi*, “sum total”. Nidorf (2008: 102) retains the value of the first sign, reading MU.BI (literally: “his/their name”) and translating “Einträge (?)”.

49 and the caption in AT 350: 5, after emending <iš> (<sup>uru</sup>*Muk*<iš>*ḥe*), matches the fragmentary heading of AT 343.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, in the light of similar considerations, AT 341, 343 and 350 are considered as belonging to the same “dossier” (hereafter labelled “SG dossier”, from the initials of “sheep” and “goats”): AT 350 would be the summation tablet of data recorded in detail in AT 343 and 341. However, in AT 350 there are two more captions and totals, respectively referring to Alalaḥ (l. 3) and the *hapirū* (l. 7), whose related data were probably drawn from two tablets similar to AT 341 and 343, now missing:<sup>7</sup> we will return to this point later.

### *The Alalaḥ IV Districts according to the SG Dossier*

As stated, the labels Alalaḥ, Mukiš, *šannānu* and *hapiru* in the SG dossier likely reflected a subdivision of the kingdom in “districts”. In fact, it seems hard to otherwise explain the evidence contained in this archival group: if it can be maintained that in some capacity, the central administration distributed the work of collecting livestock, e.g. assigning functionaries to fictional compartments of the kingdom for the sake of logistical efficiency, the very mention of this subdivision by means of labels, at the very least suggests a convention which was diffused and consequently well understood within the administrative apparatus. However, definitively affirming from these bases that the division in districts evidenced in the SG dossier reflected factual and concrete differences between sectors of the kingdom is more difficult. Let us first have a closer look at the labels Alalaḥ, Mukiš, *šannānu* and *hapiru* as used in the SG dossier. Then, in the next sections we will explore other sources, searching for more elements which could help us to address this question.

The labels Alalaḥ and Mukiš are geographical terms and, for this reason, they cause no particular trouble to modern readers, as they are consistent with the common use of creating districts on the basis of geo-political criteria. The explicit mention of Alalaḥ in an operation involving many other parts of the kingdom is not strange: in terms of political organization, it sounds natural to distinguish the capital city from the rest of the realm. Then, also on account of the comparatively small

6. A place name *Muki*(*ḥe*) is otherwise unattested at Alalaḥ. On the other hand, besides *Mukiš*, only one place ending in *-iš* is known to me, *Paḥiliš*, but it never occurs with the Hurrian derivational suffix *-ḥe* (see Nidorf 1998, p. 534, s.v. *Mukiḥe*, and 537, s.v. *Paḥiliš*). For the reading *i -din-nu*, I follow Nidorf (2008: 101, n. 386), where AT 343 is referred to as 44.10. For an alternative reading, conveying the same meaning, see von Dassow (2002: 902): SUM<sup>r</sup>-*nu*.

7. See von Dassow 2002: 905–906. Another document, AT 352, is often linked with the SG dossier. Based on Wiseman’s hand copy (1953: Pl. XXXVI):

<sup>no. (1–4)</sup> 2 UDU UGU <sup>uru</sup>*Mu-ki-šu*<sup>ki</sup> / 1 UDU UGU <sup>uru</sup>*Ya-at-ḥa-ba*<sup>ki</sup> / 3 UDU UGU <sup>uru</sup>*Um-mu* / 2 UDU UGU <sup>uru</sup>*Za-ú-ti*<sup>ki</sup>  
<sup>vo. (5–7)</sup>ŠU.NIGIN 3 *me* 94 UDU<sup>hi.a</sup> / *ša* LÚ.MEŠ *ša-na-an-ni-e*<sup>mes</sup> / 6 *me* 19 UDU.Û.ĪIA KUR *Mu-ki-iš-ḥe*.

According to l. 6, at least one of the labels in the SG dossier, *šannānu*-men, is in use in this tablet, with some coherence: in fact, the towns of *Yathapa* and *Ummu* (ll. 2–3) appear right among the *šannānu* ones in AT 341. On the inclusion of a town called *Mukiš* among *šannānu*-towns, see below. It is uncertain, instead, whether the *Mukiš* of l. 7 designated the whole kingdom, as usual when preceded by *KUR*, or the same district of the SG dossier tablets AT 350 and 343. In the first case, the 394 sheep of l. 5, attributed to the *šannānu*-men, would be a subtotal, to be included in the grand total of 619, referred to *Mukiš* as kingdom. However, if so, one would expect at least another ŠU.NIGIN just preceding the supposed grand total, or final expressions like *kalima* or *gabba*, “altogether”: this, in fact, seems to be the normal usage in the lists of Alalaḥ IV (see, for example, Dietrich–Loretz 1969a, 81). The lack of any similar aggregative expressions in ll. 5–7 seems to put *šannānu* and *Mukiš* on the same level in the economy of the text, suggesting both were meant to be sectors of the kingdom.

number of livestock associated with it, we can tentatively assume that the caption Alalaḫ in AT 350 referred just to the city itself and its surrounding countryside. On the other hand, <sup>uru</sup>Mukiš in the SG dossier was a rubric for a number of towns, listed one-by-one in the extant parts of AT 343. When faced with the name Mukiš as used in the texts of Alalaḫ IV, we encounter some ambiguity. In fact, especially when preceded by the determinative KUR/*mātu*, the toponym Mukiš was used to denote by metonymy the whole kingdom. Indeed, in the treaty AT 2, Niqmepa employs both the title LUGAL <sup>kur</sup>Mukiš in the heading and LUGAL <sup>uru</sup>Alalaḫ on his seal.<sup>8</sup> Since there was also a town called Mukiš, this place name evidently had at least three values: the whole kingdom, a district within it and a single town.

The other two terms used in the SG dossier, *šannānu* and *ḥapiru*, are more difficult for the modern reader to understand as labels for administrative districts: indeed, they do not convey strictly geo-political meanings, but pertain to the military and social terminology. The akkadian word (LÚ) *šannānu* signified “archer”, and there is a coherent group in the Alalaḫ IV corpus recording recruitment of *šannānū* to the army (AT 179 and 145).<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the term (LÚ) *ḥapiru*, expressed with the ideogram SA.GAZ in AT 350 as in other texts, is a well-known social definition which had been widely used all over the Near East since the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>10</sup> Though a definitive meaning and its variations in different contexts are still under debate, there is a general agreement in considering the word *ḥapiru* as indicating “displaced” person, or even “marauder” in the most negative sense. In the historical context of Alalaḫ IV, the *ḥapirū* are first mentioned in the statue of Idrimi (ll. 27–28) as people who gave shelter to the future founder of the Alalaḫian dynasty before his attaining of kingship. Later, during the reign of Idrimi’s successor Niqmepa, the *ḥapirū* became both an “institutionalised” social group and an army corps, listed in another coherent archival group made up of the tablets AT 180–82, 154 and 161, and parallel to the aforementioned rosters of *šannānū*. Von Dassow (2008: Chapter 3), in her discussion on the *ḥapirū* and *šannānū* roster groups and their relations with other documents, including our SG dossier, reasonably draws the set of conclusions here summarized:

- A. Both *ḥapirū* and *šannānū* rosters are administrative steps in a general levying of an army, on occasion of a particular martial event, otherwise not explicitly documented in extant sources.<sup>11</sup>
- B. With a few exceptions, all towns involved in the *šannānū* rosters are listed among the *šannānū*-towns of AT 341 (SG dossier).<sup>12</sup> Thence, the recruitment of the *šannānū* was geographically limited to the *šannānū* district.

8. See the edition of the treaty by Dietrich–Loretz (1997).

9. On the meaning “archer” of the peripheral Akkadian *šannānu* and its etymological relationships with Ugaritic *ṭnn* and Egyptian *snny(w)* there is now general consensus. See Rainey 1998, 446–447; Hoch 1994, 261–263 and, now, Dietrich–Loretz 2009.

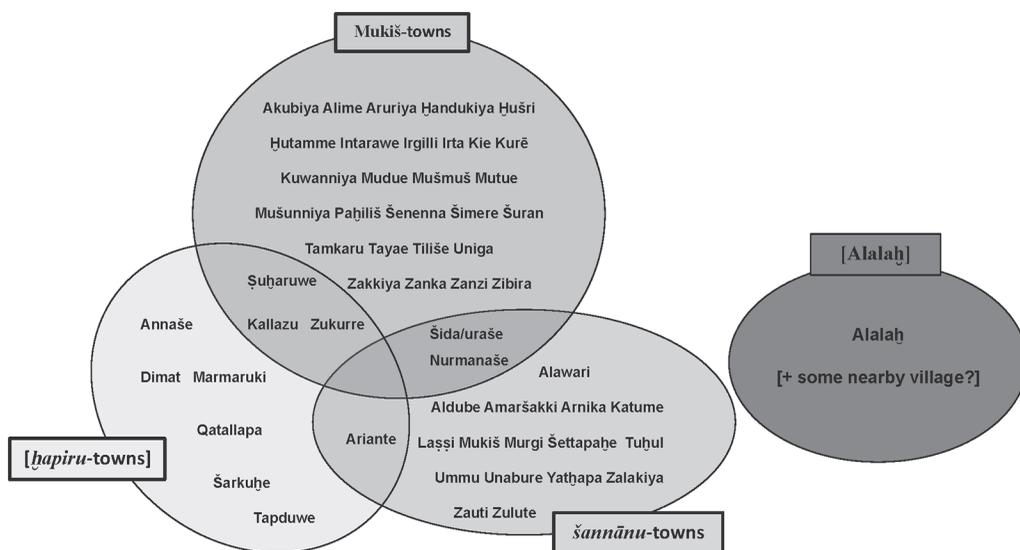
10. For up to date discussions on the *ḥapirū* at Alalaḫ and in the Ancient Near East, with reference to previous work, see von Dassow 2008, pp. 105–111 and Durand 2011, who also questions the equation with the ideogram SA.GAZ.

11. In the historical contextualization of the census lists, von Dassow (2008: 364–365) proposes that this event might have been a war between Alalaḫ and Tunip.

12. Exceptions are: Šettapaḫe, (a town) Mukiš and Zauti. Šettapaḫe is otherwise only attested in the *šannānū* rosters AT 179 (l. 22) and 145 (ll. 8–9). Curiously, according to AT 179 and 352 (see above), the town Mukiš did not pertain to the namesake district but to the *šannānū* one (see also von Dassow 2008: 218): it would be tempting to see here some case of homonymy. The town Zauti (AT 179: 29; 197:

- C. By analogy, the recruitment of *ḥapirū* is also likely to have taken place in the *ḥapirū* district referred to in AT 350, about which no town list similar to AT 341 is extant. Such an assumption allows at least the partial restoration of the town composition of the *ḥapirū* district.

If von Dassow is right, by adding the information provided by AT 343 to conclusions (b) and (c), along with some guesswork concerning the district of Alalaḥ in AT 350, which is not detailed in other extant records, we may represent the geographical scope of the SG dossier as follows:<sup>13</sup>



We can immediately note that the Mukiš, *šannānū* and (restored) *ḥapirū* districts shared some place names. Assuming that homonyms actually referred to the same place, the occurrence of towns pertaining to more than one district suggests that geo-political criteria played a major role only in distinguishing Mukiš from Alalaḥ, whereas different factors influenced the creation of the *šannānū* and *ḥapirū* districts. A key for the interpretation of methods and purposes of the territorial organization evidenced by the SG dossier rests precisely upon the understanding of the latter districts: why during the operation recorded in the SG dossier were the *šannānū* and *ḥapirū* districts kept apart from each other and from the territorial districts Alalaḥ and Mukiš? Was there any peculiarity, some intrinsic characteristic that caused them to be drawn as districts, or was this separation just a response to some contingent need of the administration? Many of the towns attributed by von Dassow to the *ḥapirū* district also pertain to the *šannānū* or Mukiš districts. Moreover, the *ḥapirū*-towns are treated as a separate group only in the *ḥapirū* rosters. Towns exclusively pertaining to the *ḥapirū* district, in fact, appear rather seldom in other Alalaḥ IV documents other than the *ḥapirū* rosters, mostly along with clusters

5,31) is involved in administrative operations recorded in AT 162, a list of personnel, and in AT 342, a list of livestock. It is also mentioned in the fragmentary list ATT 84/12. See Niedorf 1998, 534–535, 540, 548.

13. In the list of Mukiš-towns (AT 343), four place names at least are missing (see ll. 5, 15, 39–40) and one is poorly preserved (l. 38: <sup>uru</sup> Pa[-]).

of Mukiš- or *šannānū*-towns.<sup>14</sup> Thus, probably, the *ḥapirū*-towns were geographically scattered and intermingled with those of other districts. If one has to single out some peculiar, intrinsic feature of the *ḥapirū* district, this probably resides solely in the social composition of its towns: *ḥapirū*-towns were merely places where important “communities” of *ḥapirū* lived and were levied for military obligations.

The Mukiš and *šannānū* districts, on the other hand, share only two place names (Nurmanaše and Šidu/araše),<sup>15</sup> thus suggesting they had fairly different geographical settings. A kind of geographical separation seems confirmed by a survey on the rest of the Alalaḥ IV textual corpus, where there is very little involvement of Mukiš- and *šannānū*-towns together in the same administrative operations.<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, in the case of geographical proximity and intermingling, one would expect an equal intermingling in the documentation. Incidentally, by noting this fact, a positive answer to the aforementioned question is provided: *šannānū* and Mukiš districts likely possessed some intrinsic, specific features, as far as they were treated as separate units not only in the SG dossier, but, in general, in most of the written sources from Alalaḥ IV. Yet, such intrinsic features were not related to geographical position alone, because the term *šannānu* embodies a non-geographic definition: thus, the separation Mukiš-*šannānū* depended also on other, more subtle factors, which, fortunately, can be traced in extant documentation, in particular, in two well-known coherent groups of census lists.

14. See AT 185, involving two *ḥapirū*-towns, Marmaruki and Šarkuḥe, together with many Mukiš-towns, or AT 162, involving Marmaruki within a cluster of *šannānū*-towns. The only other text, except the rosters, where a *ḥapirū*-town appears (Marmaruki) is the unpublished tablet AT 163.

15. Niedorf (1998: 537) and Belmonte Marín (2001: 215) suppose the presence of two Nurmanaše, one GAL, “big” (AT 187: 13; 185: 27) and, perhaps, one TUR, “small” (AT 185: 28: [ʰuʷNu-ur-ma-n]a-še TUR): so it is plausible that AT 341: 8 and 343: 36 referred each to one of these two towns with the same name. We do not know if Šiduraše (Mukiš-town; AT 343: 6) and Šidaraše (*šannānū*-town; AT 341: 18) were actually different towns or just variant names for the very same place. A toponym Šidaraše is *hapax* in AT 341, while Šid/turaše is attested, beside AT 343, in AT 201 (ll. 14, 16) and 187 (l. 16).

16. Obviously, this statement is valid only considering towns pertaining to a single district. Textual occurrences of all Alalaḥ VII and IV toponyms have been collected by Niedorf (1998) and, among those of other Syrian contexts, Belmonte Marín (2001): my textual survey on the occurrences of relevant towns is based on these repertories. Mere lists of people where relevant towns appear only as attributes of individuals (e.g., as the place of origin), and therefore do not play a role by themselves as the set of a specific operation, have been excluded from counting. Individual texts and coherent archival groups independent from the SG dossier and dealing with clusters of more than two Mukiš-towns are: the census lists 187, 196, the lists of men 223, 224, the ration list 287, the military roster A 79/3, the group of list of horses formed by AT 329, 330, and 338+339 (see von Dassow 2008: 305–310), and a coherent group of census lists (see Dietrich–Loretz 1969a; von Dassow 2008, 135–148: “census A”; see discussion below). Significantly, in many of these instances, there is only one *šannānū*-town, Laṣṣi, invariably occurring together with Mukiš-towns. Apparently, just because of its regularity, such an exception does not constitute a real break. It rather seems to point to a kind of relationship between Laṣṣi and the district Mukiš we are not able to grasp. By contrast, texts independent from the SG dossier and dealing with clusters of more than two *šannānū*-towns, and without mention of any Mukiš-town, are: AT 162 and 284. As for the documents related to the recruitment of the *šannānū* in the army, which are not completely independent from SG dossier, see the discussion below. A sure instance where Mukiš- and *šannānū*-towns occur in the very same administrative operation is the tablet AT 342, a list of livestock and men, involving Uniga (Mukiš-town) together with Tuḥul and Zauti (*šannānū*-towns). According to Niedorf (1998: 537) and Belmonte Marín (2001: 215), both Nurmanaše GAL and TUR are involved in AT 185 (ll. 27–28; see above): if so, granted a third Nurmanaše did not exist in Alalaḥ’s domain, AT 185 would attest another sure involvement of a single *šannānū*-town together with a cluster of 6 towns pertaining exclusively to the Mukiš district.

### ***Mukiš and šannānū Districts in the Light of the Census Lists***

The archives of Alalaḥ IV yielded one of the most valuable corpora of census lists of the whole Ancient Near East: few are comparable in terms of quantity of texts, uniformity of structure and degree of detail. Especially after full publishing by Dietrich and Loretz (1969a; 1970), this corpus received great attention in numerous studies devoted to social and demographic issues. Among them, the recent work by von Dassow (2008) is particularly exhaustive and systematic. Here, the examination of the census lists constitutes part of an extensive investigation of Alalaḥ's society during the 15th century.<sup>17</sup> In this work, the author refined the classification of the census lists, already outlined by Dietrich and Loretz, clearly isolating two main sub-groups of censuses, respectively labelled A and B (hereafter, group A<sup>VD</sup> and B<sup>VD</sup>): the first one listed adult male individuals, while the latter recorded households according to their heads, always adult males. In both groups, each list focused on a single town, and recorded the totality of the population responding to the aforementioned criteria and ranking within a selected series of social categories or classes. Moreover, based on prosopography and generational count, group A<sup>VD</sup> has been dated late in the reign of Niqmepa and group B<sup>VD</sup> earlier in his reign. Finally, another result of von Dassow's analysis, which is very important for our purposes here, is that, despite the aforementioned differences in recording methods and chronological context, groups A<sup>VD</sup> and B<sup>VD</sup> contain comparable data about the social composition of the kingdom of Alalaḥ in the 15th century. Indeed, both series of censuses sort the enumerated people into four main classes: *ḥupše* (pl. *ḥupšena*; equivalent to the sum of *purre* and *unuššuhuli* in group B<sup>VD</sup>), *ḥaniaḥḥe* (pl. *ḥaniaḥḥena*), *eḥelle* (pl. *eḥellena*) and *mariyanni* (pl. *mariyannina*; called *ša narkabti*, "(those) of the chariot", in lists of group B<sup>VD</sup>). Although the meaning and composition of these classes are still under debate, evidence shows the *ḥupšena* and *ḥaniaḥḥena* constituted the bulk of the free rural population. On the other hand, the *eḥellena* were highly specialized craftsmen and the *mariyannina* comprised part of the "nobility".

What bearing do census lists and the information they provide have on the reconstruction of the territorial organization of the kingdom of Alalaḥ? Von Dassow proved that censuses of group B<sup>VD</sup> were designed for the aforementioned recruitment of the *šannānū* i.e. the "archers", and, for this very reason, they are limited to the *šannānū* district, insofar as they involve only towns listed in AT 341 (SG dossier). Interestingly, on the other hand, texts of group A<sup>VD</sup> list inhabitants of many of the Mukiš-towns recorded in AT 343 (SG dossier) and of other localities not assigned to particular districts in extant sources. However, with the exception of Lašši, *šannānū*-towns are not involved in censuses of group A<sup>VD</sup>. This distinct separation of the two sets of towns in censuses, which, in the case of group A<sup>VD</sup>, seem to be independent from the SG dossier, provides support for the interpretation of the Mukiš and *šannānū* districts as distinct units even beyond incidental needs of the administration. The case of the *šannānū*-town of Lašši does not constitute a real exception,

17. In particular, the results on the census lists summarized below are drawn from pp. 135–148, 152–171. Among previous studies, Serangeli 1978 is also important: here the main focus is on demography, but the author's conclusions are partially affected by wrongly assuming that census lists recorded the whole of the male population of censused towns. Other important works on the society of Alalaḥ IV and on particular aspects of the census lists are Liverani 1975, Gaál 1978 and 1988.



b) Had different chronological settings, because about a generation elapsed between them.

In particular, this last argument has been introduced by von Dassow, who explained the augmenting of *mariyannina* and *eħellena* as an effect of the transformation in the terminology of social class designations attested between the two groups of census lists, reflecting a systematization of procedures for classifying and conscripting people<sup>19</sup>. Nonetheless, the efficacy of both this argument and argument (a) is weakened by the data concerning the town Laṣṣi (second row in the table). Indeed, Laṣṣi is a *šannānū*-town, but, contrary to the other *šannānū*-towns, its census is preserved in a list of group A<sup>VD</sup> (AT 148): thus the data about Laṣṣi are consistent, in terms of both recording criteria and chronological setting, with those concerning the Mukiš-towns, censused in the lists of group A<sup>VD</sup> as well. Laṣṣi's recorded population amounts to 99 individuals, a high figure in census lists, to date exceeded only by Tuḫul, in group B<sup>VD</sup>, and Uniga, in group A<sup>VD</sup>.<sup>20</sup> Yet, compared with their counterparts in the Mukiš-towns, *mariyannina* and *eħellena* are still underrepresented in Laṣṣi, with proportions similar to those displayed by the other *šannānū*-towns, censused in the lists of group B<sup>VD</sup>. In short, however slender it is, extant evidence prompts us to believe in the overall comparisons outlined here, according to which the two groups Mukiš- and *šannānū*-towns differed from each other in terms of their social composition: the *mariyanni* and *eħelle* classes were, proportionally, much more represented in the former than in the latter.

How may we interpret such dissimilarities in the social composition? As already mentioned, the *mariyannina* enjoyed a high position in the state hierarchy, often very close to the royal court, and membership to this class was obtained only by inheritance or direct intervention of the king's authority. Most of the *eħellena*, on the other hand, were specialized professionals in service of royal officers or even the king himself.<sup>21</sup> Hypothetically, the nature of such positions means that members of these two classes had tight contacts with the royal administration or, as many known *mariyannina*, were even part of it.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the quantitative relevance of *eħellena* or *mariyanni* in a given place might be used as a kind of "thermometer", measuring the degree of integration of that place into the pattern of relationships and contacts between local communities and the central authority, which I may call here, in short, "network of centre-periphery interaction". In such terms, places where *mariyannina* and *eħellena* were underrepresented likely enjoyed a lesser degree of integration into the network of centre-periphery interaction. In conclusion, interpreting the evidence of the SG dossier, combined with the data derived from the census lists, I would suggest that centres falling within Alalah's domain were unevenly integrated into its network of centre-periphery interaction: those

19. See von Dassow 2008, 227 and 318–319, in which she also points out promotions from lower to upper classes are attested in the time elapsed between groups B<sup>VD</sup> and A<sup>VD</sup>.

20. See tablets AT 189 and 153 respectively. The latter is very fragmentary and the town name is not preserved (Dietrich–Loretz 1969a: 78), but von Dassow (2008: 144–145) restored it on the basis of many homonymies found with inhabitants of Uniga recorded in AT 220, a list of carpenters, and Dietrich–Loretz 1969b nr. 4, cadaster of Uniga.

21. See von Dassow's discussion on the *mariyanni* and *eħelle* classes at Alalah, with further reference to previous literature (2008: 268–334).

22. For the participation of *mariyannina* in the royal court and administration, see von Dassow 2008, pp. 283ff.

pertaining to the Mukiš district were more integrated, whereas those pertaining to the *šannānu* district less so.

### *Mukiš and šannānu Districts in the Light of Other Textual Sources*

The conjectural reconstruction proposed so far is difficult to prove with any certainty, but cross referencing this data with other textual sources provides ancillary evidence. A survey on the Alalaḥ IV corpus, addressed to other textual occurrences of the relevant place names, shows that clusters of more than two towns attributable to the *šannānu* district are not much involved in administrative operations other than the SG dossier, census lists of group B<sup>VD</sup> and *šannānu* rosters, which are all documents somehow linked with each other and parts of a more complex operation related to the military organization. Apart from that, in fact, one may quote only AT 162, a list of personnel, and AT 284, a ration list.<sup>23</sup> On the contrary, we find involvement of substantial clusters of towns attributable to the Mukiš district in many kinds of administrative operations, recorded in a wide variety of texts, from ration lists to cadastres, from records of revenues and dispatching of horses to lists of personnel and, finally, as we have seen, in census lists of group A<sup>VD</sup>.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, however isolated it is, a coherent group of texts (AT 300–301) shows the *ḥazannu* (“mayor”) of the Mukiš-town Uniga playing a pivotal role in a complex and somehow hierarchical system of collection and distribution of rations, involving many other towns, among which is Alalaḥ itself and another Mukiš-town, Irgilli.<sup>25</sup> In sum, both the number and quality of administrative texts involving clusters of towns attributable to the Mukiš district show them to be closely integrated within the Alalaḥ network of centre-periphery interaction, to a much higher degree than those of the *šannānu* district, whose town clusters are almost exclusively dealt with in documents related to the military and warfare.

There is also some textual evidence showing that Alalaḥ rulers might happen to have some difficulties in preserving their political control over towns of the *šannānu* district. I am referring to the juridical record AT 14. The tablet is broken in some parts, but extant passages allow us to fully understand its context. The translation provided below is drawn from the recent full edition by Niedorf (2008: 245–247):

Obv. 1–4 Before Sauštatar, the king. Niqmepa brought [a process] against Šunaššura because of the town Alawari<sup>5–9</sup> [and he won in the process], (so) the [t]own Alawari [retur]ned [to Niqmepa. . .]. [ . . . the place . . . ]x-awe [ . . . ].

Rev. (Seal caption:) Šuttarna, son of Kirta, king of Mittani.

As clearly stated, AT 14 records a lawsuit brought before the Mittanian king Sauštatar, overlord of Alalaḥ, whose disputants are the king of Alalaḥ, Niqmepa, and a Šunaššura, generally equated with the namesake king of Kizzuwatna.<sup>26</sup> The contended issue is the jurisdiction over a town, which, evidently, enjoyed an am-

23. For AT 162, see the edition by von Dassow (2002: 859–865). For AT 284, see Wiseman 1959, 50.

24. For textual references, see above, n. 16.

25. For these texts, see the edition by Wiseman (1959: 54–55).

26. This, in fact, would be the same Šunaššura, king of Kizzuwatna, who signed a well-known treaty with Tuḥaliya I of Hatti (CTH 41). See Beal 1986; Wilhelm 1988 and Klengel 1999, 106, 112–113. As was the custom in Alalaḥ IV documents somehow involving the superior authority of Mittani, the kings of Alalaḥ or other subordinate rulers do not bear royal titles, reserved only for the overlord (see, for example, AT 3, 13, 110, 111, 112). An exception is constituted by the aforementioned AT 2, the treaty

biguous position, close to the political boundary between the two states. Although finally attesting his success in asserting his own political control over the contended town, the lawsuit AT 14, by the fact itself that it was filed, well shows Niqmepa's potential weakness in the matter. Now, AT 14 incidentally provides direct support for our interpretation of the *šannānū* district as a sector less integrated within the network of centre-periphery interaction: in fact, the town here disputed by the two states, and, as such, likely to be moved from a jurisdiction to the other, is Alawari, which appears right among the *šannānū*-towns listed in the tablet AT 341 (l. 17).

Beside Alawari, there is another *šannānū*-town which might well have been close to the boundaries of the kingdom, at least in a more strictly geographical sense. However, hints of it seem to come from a document which dates to a century later than the Alalaḫ IV archives. Indeed, a town Gaduma, likely to be equated with the *šannānū*-town Katume, is mentioned in relation to the land of Mukiš in the Hittite text KUB 19.27,6'–7' (CTH 50), a section of an agreement between Šuppiluliuma I and his son Šarri-Kušuh of Karkemiš.<sup>27</sup> The text is poorly preserved, but its general context accounts for a description of the western borders of the kingdom of Karkemiš at the beginning of the Hittite imperial period. By the time KUB 19.27 was composed, the land of Mukiš referred to in l. 7' was a Hittite province, but we do not know to what extent it respected the former borders of the 15th century kingdom, conquered by Šuppiluliuma I.<sup>28</sup> In any case, whatever the dimensions of the Hittite province of Mukiš were, the balance of the geo-political system sponsored by the Hittites in Syria during the imperial period required the borders of Karkemiš to be kept well away from Aleppo, where another son of Šuppiluliuma I, Telipinu, was appointed as king. This means that the shared border between Mukiš and Karkemiš should be located further north, somewhere around the upper stream of modern 'Afrin river, an area rather distant from the core of the Alalaḫ realm during the 15th century.<sup>29</sup>

### ***The Territorial Organization of the Alalaḫ Realm During Level IV: A Final Balance***

Stemming from the discussion of sources proposed above, we may summarize with the following model the territorial organization of the kingdom of Alalaḫ IV. During Niqmepa's reign, centres falling within Alalaḫ's domain were unevenly

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where, even though the Mittanian overlord seems to be recalled in a fragmentary passage (ll. 72–74), both Niqmepa and his partner, Ir-Teššub of Tunip, display royal titles.

27. See Klengel 1999, 137 and Klengel 2001, 191; Singer 2001, 635. The town Gaduma is also mentioned twice in the Hittite fragmentary letter KBo 9.83 (Hagenbuchner 1989 nr. 34), sent to the king of Hatti by a Tutḫaliya who Niedorf (2002: 522–523) identifies with the namesake governor of Mukiš. Likely the same governor is the addressee of a letter from the Hittite king (ATT 35) and is depicted in an orthostat with anatolian hieroglyphic inscription (Woolley 1955: 241, Pl. XLVIII), both artifacts found in later levels (II-I) of Alalaḫ. For the attestations of Katume/Gatuma, see del Monte–Tischler 1978, s.v. "Katuma", and Belmonte Marín 2001, s.v. "Qad(u)mu".

28. Some modifications occurred, if one accepts the common equations of the towns Zazaḫaruwa and Bituḫulibe, quoted as Ugaritic cities in the border description of the treaty Muršili II–Niqmepa of Ugarit (RS 17.62+: ll. 3,7), with Şuḫaruwe and Bithiluwe, towns pertaining to Alalaḫ's domain in the 15th century (the former also attested among the Mukiš-towns!). However, such identifications have been recently questioned by van Soldt (2005: 51, 57, 149–152).

29. In this sense, the identification of Katume/Gaduma with modern Qāṭima/Qaṭmā, 9 km west of 'Azaz (Bunnens–Kuschke–Röllig 1990), is more likely than Astour's (1963: 237, n. 151) with Qādimiyah, 18 km south-east of Aleppo.

integrated into its network of centre-periphery interaction: there was the capital, Alalaḥ, seat of kingship and the royal administration, and a geo-political core, steadily integrated within the network. In a particular moment, as set out in the SG dossier, at least part of the geo-political core was reorganized and institutionalised as a territorial district, called Mukiš, which significantly was the very same name used in other contexts to indicate by metonymy the whole kingdom. Between the capital and the towns situated within the core, relationships were stable and relied upon a wide range of hierarchical interaction, able to satisfy any economic, political or military needs of the state. In addition to this political unit of the capital and core, however, there were localities which, despite being directly ruled by the state, were less integrated into the network of centre-periphery interaction and could prove more troublesome in the capital's exertion of control. The situation of these localities had direct effects on their social composition, insofar as social classes signalling tighter interaction with the central authority, *eḫelle* and *mariyanni*, were underrepresented in their population. Moreover, in some cases, lesser integration of some localities into the Alalaḥ network of centre-periphery interaction might have prompted neighbouring states to claim jurisdiction over them, forcing Alalaḥ kings to resort to international lawsuits. Apparently, less integrated towns were mostly involved in the types of interactions aimed primarily at satisfying military needs of the state. This implies, again, institutionalisation: some towns, in fact, were exploited as bases for recruiting troops of "archers", *šannānū* in the Akkadian of Alalaḥ, causing them to be grouped by the administration to form another district, that of the *šannānū*. From a politico-geographical point of view, the *šannānū* district was to some degree different from the other two, Alalaḥ (capital) and Mukiš (geo-political core), and there is some evidence, as we have seen with AT 14 and KUB 19.27, that some of its towns were situated near the boundaries of the kingdom or, at least, far away from its centre. Thus, I may conclude that the division in the Mukiš and *šannānū* districts generally reflected a territorial model of integrated core and dispersed periphery. Such a model finds support in the archaeological landscape of Alalaḥ/Tell Aḩana environs. Indeed, in the Amuq plain, where Alalaḥ/Tell Aḩana itself is located, there is a pattern of generally dense and apparently hierarchical 2nd millennium settlements, the number of which however, does not encompass all the towns attested in written sources which are supposed to pertain to Alalaḥ's domain during the 15th century: the Amuq plain would be the likely location of the Mukiš district and, obviously, the district of Alalaḥ, but not much more, except possibly other towns which are not explicitly assigned to one these districts in extant sources. On the contrary, more dispersed 2nd millennium occupation is found in more distant localities, like the Afrin valley, the Orontes delta and the highlands: assuming that these areas were under Alalaḥ control during the 15th century, it is there that we might likely place the *šannānū*-towns.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, boundaries between the Mukiš and *šannānū* districts were not clear-cut and a certain intermingling subsisted, as suggested by some overlapping displayed by the textual evidence.

30. The Amuq archaeological landscape in all phases is treated in Braidwood 1937 and, recently, Casana–Wilkinson 2005 and Casana 2007, with further bibliography. For a full discussion limited to the Amuq valley during the LBA, with references also to written sources from Alalaḥ IV, see Casana 2009, with further bibliography. Note that some of the latter's conclusions (pp. 25–26), which are less detailed concerning documentary evidence and starting from a different point of view, are similar to those drawn here.

Finally, sources discussed in this paper mention a fourth district, where another army corps, besides that of the *šannānū*, was recruited: the *ḥapirū* district. However, the characteristics of this district and its towns, restored indirectly on the basis of other documents, are not easily detectable due to the fragmentary status of the related documentation. On the basis of extant sources, a tentative proposal sees the *ḥapirū*-towns as geographically scattered and interspersed to a high degree with those of other districts.

### ***One Region, Two Kingdoms: The Emergence of a Different “Territoriality” in Alalaḥ Domain between Levels VII and IV***

The interpretation given so far leaves open issues concerning the diachronic dynamics, normally occurring in the formation, conservation and modification of geo-political interactions within a state and, possibly, its followers in the same territory. To address such issues effectively, it would be interesting to briefly compare the results hitherto obtained on the state of Alalaḥ during level IV, with the forms of territorial administration evidenced by the documents relating to a previous phase of this capital, which also yields considerable archives: that of level VII, corresponding to Yamḥad’s domination during the Old Babylonian period. There are several works devoted to the territorial organization of Alalaḥ domain during level VII, so, for further details, reference is made to them.<sup>31</sup> As we have seen, during level IV, centres falling within Alalaḥ’s domain were unevenly integrated into its network of centre-periphery interaction, and such unevenness was probably consistent with the kind of *political* relationships the subordinate centres and central authority had with each other. This situation is reflected in extant administrative practices by subdivisions in districts, census lists and troop rosters. Although a full evaluation of the context of level VII is complicated by frequent interventions of the kings of Yamḥad in Alalaḥ’s internal affairs, extant evidence shows that also in this case there was a degree of unevenness into the network of centre-periphery interaction, again depending on the kind of relationships subordinate centres and central authority had with each other. Apparently, however, such relationships were not really political, as in the case of Alalaḥ IV, rather they were determined by land ownership: in fact, many of the contracts from Alalaḥ VII record the kings themselves purchasing entire settlements (*ālū*) and their surrounding countryside (*eperu*), while a substantial group of administrative texts is constituted by rations (Zeeb’s “Getreidelief-erlisten”), mostly addressed to people working within the properties of the rulers.<sup>32</sup> Thus, it seems apparent that, while in level IV the efforts of the central authority were mostly aimed at a *political control over the population*, which was in fact also the ultimate goal of the census lists, in level VII, on the contrary, rulers were more interested in an *economic control over land*. This fact had direct consequences on the

31. See in particular: Magness–Gardiner 1994, Klengel 1979 and Gaál 1982–1984, where written sources concerning each of the Alalaḥ VII toponyms are examined. For an extensive evaluation of the texts relating to the economic system of Alalaḥ during level VII, see Zeeb 2001. A full study of the Alalaḥ VII archives in their archaeological context, with some consideration on the palatial economic system, is given by Lauinger 2007. All attestations of geographical names in texts of Alalaḥ VII are listed and indexed in Zeeb 1998.

32. See Zeeb 2001.

territoriality of the kingdom, insofar as settlements were purchased by the rulers of Alalakh VII apparently without regard for territorial continuity. This seems to have been so since the very foundation of Alalakh VII kingdom, as suggested by AT 456, a treaty where the domain assigned by Abban of Yamhad to Yarim-Lim is defined by a mere list of towns, besides Alalakh itself.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, not by chance, in texts of level VII a territorial definition meant to denote the whole kingdom of Alalakh did not exist. On the contrary, as we have seen, in Alalakh IV such territorial definition was well represented by *mātu Mukiš*. In other words, it could be said that, in the 15th century, during level IV, a stronger “awareness of territoriality” emerged at Alalakh, which did not yet exist in the 17th century, during level VII. Yet, such an “awareness” was still ideological and not completely translated into reality, in that, even during level IV, the state was far from being a Westphalian territorial unit, with clear-cut boundaries: as we have seen, in fact, even during the reign of Niqmepa, the very “king of Alalakh and Mukiš”, territorial disputes with other states did not concern *frontiers* but individual *towns*.

33. By contrast, one could compare AT 456 with some functionally similar texts, from a different context: the treaties with Tarḫuntassa of the Hittite Imperial period (KBo 4.10+: van den Hout 1995; Bronze Tablet: Otten 1988). In these cases, in fact, the territory of Tarḫuntassa, which was to Hatti nearly as Alalakh was to Yamhad, is explicitly defined first by linear boundaries (e.g. Bronze Tablet §§ 5–8) and only afterwards by individual localities within it (see Bronze Tablet § 9).

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