

C. L. CROUCH
JEREMY M. HUTTON

Translating Empire

*Forschungen
zum Alten Testament
135*

Mohr Siebeck

Forschungen zum Alten Testament

Herausgegeben von

Konrad Schmid (Zürich) · Mark S. Smith (Princeton)
Hermann Spieckermann (Göttingen) · Andrew Teeter (Harvard)

135



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Jeremy M. Hutton

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Tell Fekheriyeh, Deuteronomy, and the Akkadian
Treaty Tradition

Mohr Siebeck

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*for our teachers
with gratitude*

Preface

This monograph was unexpected. Though in its production we have treated it with as much deliberation as we would have given any other piece, we hardly intended to write a full study of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription when we began. The project began when C. L. Crouch was finishing up *Israel and the Assyrians* in spring 2013. She sent the manuscript to Jeremy Hutton, who had begun reading in Descriptive Translation Studies and was teaching a graduate seminar in the subject that semester at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Hutton had also begun reading in Optimality Theory, a theoretical linguistic approach to phonology that achieved a huge following among phonologists in the 1990s. Although its use for explaining phonological developments is now widely critiqued, its teleological element has enabled its effective use in translation studies.

The opportunity for collaboration came with an invitation to edit a special volume for *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*. Hutton chose the theme “Epigraphy and the Bible” and invited Crouch to co-author an article on the translation technique of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription. The article, we thought, might be a bit long – 15,000 words or so – with a deadline of December 2016. By November 2017, we had written nearly 40,000 words on just the first half of the inscription (Fekh. A) and found ourselves apologizing to the editors for the delay. Konrad Schmid kindly proposed that we produce an abbreviated version of the article for the journal, then develop a slightly longer version for the FAT series. A year later, we were still wrestling with how to defend dealing with Fekh. B as an instance of *translation* (as opposed to *bilingual composition*). More work on bilingualism and cognitive theory – along with several video conference-style writing sessions – brought us to the solution proposed in Chapter 4. The overall result is less the “short monograph” that Konrad Schmid commissioned than it is a full-size monograph, and we are grateful to the other editors of the series (Mark S. Smith, Hermann Spieckermann, and Andrew Tee-ter) for their amenability to this much larger volume.

As is typical for study of the inscription, work continues apace. An article by Jana Mynářová and Jan Dušek (“Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription and the Western Assyrian Border in the Late Ninth Century B.C.E.,” in *Aramaean Borders: Defining Aramaean Territories in the 10th–8th Centuries B.C.E.* [ed. J. Dušek

and J. Mynářová; CHANE 101; Leiden: Brill, 2019]) appeared after our work on this manuscript had been completed and the manuscript had been submitted.

Several institutions and organizations have supported our work. Much of Hutton's reading and preliminary research was supported by summer funding from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's WARF fund. Particular gratitude is due for funding provided by the Vilas Associates Fellowship, which Hutton held during the academic years 2015–2017. This support allowed Hutton to float ideas on optimality in translation at the SBL Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Ga. (2015), the triennial meeting of the International Organization for Targum Studies in Stellenbosch, South Africa (2016), the SBL Annual Meeting in Boston, Mass. (2017), and in several classes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Much of Hutton's work on Chapter 5 was completed during a teaching sabbatical in spring 2018, while hiding out in a "secret office" graciously provided by the Center for Religious Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In particular, Jordan Rosenblum is to be thanked for the Center's hospitality and protection from the encroachment of extracurricular administrative duties.

Much of Crouch's direct work on the project was undertaken during a year's residence in Cambridge as the S. A. Cook Bye-Fellow at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge (2018), whose generous support enabled access to key collections at the Cambridge University Library. Initial research in this area was early supported by a Research Fellowship at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge (2009–2011). Research leave from the University of Nottingham (2018) and support for ongoing research at Fuller Theological Seminary (2019) have also been critical to the completion of the project.

We are also beholden to a number of individuals for their engagement with the project at a number of stages: Yitzhaq Feder, James Aitken, David Shepherd, Eric Raimy, and Joe Salmons have asked insightful questions during presentations and conversations. Bernard Levinson has commented generously; although our thesis has moved in a somewhat different direction than his own arguments, we are grateful for the engagement and trust that his influence is apparent. Lawson Younger provided bibliography and guidance at several points, as did Alice Mandell. Wayne Pitard graciously offered photographs of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription in order to check readings occasionally. Chip Dobbs-Allsopp and Christopher B. Hays made thoughtful and valuable responses to our earliest written drafts, encouraging us especially in our exploration of the implications of our work for the interpretation of the Sefire inscriptions. We have benefitted greatly from the editorial attentions of Makenzi Crouch, who undertook the copy-editing, and the research assistance of Amy Pahlen, at Fuller Seminary, who assisted in compiling the indices. The staff at Mohr Siebeck have shown an exacting attention to detail and limitless patience: Tobias Stähler for catching several copy-editing problems, and – especially – Ilse König for her assistance with the layout and production.

We dedicate this book to our teachers in Akkadian and the many expressions of Northwest Semitic, especially Hebrew and Aramaic, which we have employed so frequently and so fruitfully in this volume. Crouch's Hebrew training at the University of Oxford began under the tutelage of Madhavi Nevader, followed by Akkadian with Stephanie Dalley, Frances Reynolds, and Marc Van De Mieroop and Syriac with David Taylor. Kevin Cathcart, in particular, has been linguist, mentor, examiner, and friend; Crouch dedicates the work to him on his eightieth birthday. Hutton's Hebrew career began at the University of Notre Dame under Monica Brady and was picked up at Harvard University under Jo Ann Hackett, John Huehnergard, Paul-Alain Beaulieu, and Peter Machinist. We have benefitted immeasurably from the wisdom of these scholars and hope that our use of these languages is up to the high standards with which they blessed (and sometimes afflicted) us.

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Contents

Preface	VII
Abbreviations.....	XV
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Translating Empire	1
1.2. Discovery and Historical Context of the Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription	3
1.3. The Object and Its Inscription	6
1.3.1. The Text of the Inscription(s)	6
1.3.2. The Physical History of the Statue and Its Inscription	7
1.3.3. “Double-Bilingualism” or Multiple Moments of Translation?.....	14
1.4. Prospectus	23
2. “Optimal Translation”: A Theoretical Précis.....	25
2.1. Optimality Derives from Norms	26
2.2. Descriptive Translation Studies and Optimality Theory: A Comparison	29
2.2.1. Range of Possible Alternatives	29
2.2.2. Assumption of Optimality (~ Equivalence).....	31
2.2.3. Assumption of Universal Constraints	32
2.2.4. Limited and Hierarchical Constraint Sets.....	33
2.2.5. Universal vs. Language- and Culture-Specific Constraints	35
2.3. Optimality Theoretic Constraints on Translation	36
3. Building the Optimal Grammar of Translation in Fekheriyeh A.....	41
3.1. High-Level Norms: Pairwise Comparison of IDENTITY Constraints	43
3.1.1. TRPROPNS >> CHLINGSYS.....	43
3.1.2. IDENT:SEM >> IDENT:LEX.....	45
3.1.3. IDENT:PRAG.LEX >> IDENT:SEM.....	52
3.1.4. Summary	55
3.2. Mid- and Low-Level Norms: Comparison of MAX, DEP, and LINEAR Constraints	55

3.2.1. EXPLIC-COORD >> DEP:MORPH.....	56
3.2.2. FAVOR-NWS_CONV >> MAX:MORPH	59
3.2.3. EXPLIC-PRO >> DEP:MORPH	64
3.2.4. EXPLIC-QUANT >> DEP:MORPH.....	66
3.2.5. DEIXISCONS >> IDENT:MORPH	70
3.2.6. SYNCONS, NWS-SYN >> LINEAR:LEX	73
3.2.7. Summary	75
3.3. Comparison of Multiple Constraints.....	76
3.3.1. FAVOR-LOC.TTL >> IDENT:SEM	76
3.3.2. *NEWLOAN >> IDENT:SEM	81
3.3.3. Difficult Assessments and the Use of Multiple Constraints to Evaluate Longer Strings	85
3.3.4. Optimality Theory, Translation, and Philological Reasoning.....	89
3.3.5. Summary	100
3.4. Summary and Further Implications	100
4. Reevaluating the Relationship between Fekheriyeh A and B	103
4.1. The Composition of Aramaic A and B: Plausible Scenarios	103
4.1.1. Scenario One	105
4.1.2. Scenario Two	106
4.1.3. Scenario Three.....	107
4.1.4. Scenario Four	108
4.2. Bilingualism and Translation: Theory and Methodology	109
4.2.1. Bilingualism and Translation in Recent Study	109
4.2.2. Bilingualism, Translation, and Cognition	119
4.2.3. Consideration of Fekheriyeh B as a Translation.....	128
4.3. Translational (Non-)Identity?	132
5. Building the Optimal Grammar of Translation in Fekheriyeh B.....	137
5.1. Constraint Pairings Shared with Fekheriyeh A	139
5.1.1. TRPROPNS >> CHLINGSYS.....	141
5.1.2. The Importance of IDENT:LEX.....	143
5.1.3. The Importance of IDENT:SYN	147
5.1.4. IDENT:SEM >> IDENT:LEX.....	149
5.1.5. IDENT:SEM >> IDENT:MORPH.....	151
5.1.6. IDENT:PRAG.LEX >> IDENT:SEM.....	152
5.1.7. FAVOR-NWS_CONV >> DEP:SYN as a Cause of IDENT:PRAG.LEX >> IDENT:SEM.....	159
5.1.8. EXPLIC-COORD >> DEP:MORPH.....	172
5.1.9. EXPLIC-PRO, EXPLIC-PREP >> DEP:MORPH.....	175

5.1.10. SYNCONS, NWS-SYN >> LINEAR:LEX	180
5.1.11. Summary	184
5.2. Constraint Pairings Not Shared with Fekheriyeh A	186
5.2.1. *LEXREP >> IDENT:LEX	187
5.2.2. EXPLIC-SEM >> DEP:SYN, DEP:MORPH.....	190
5.2.3. NWS-SYN >> MAX:MORPH.....	193
5.2.4. EXPLIC-FRAME >> DEP:MORPH.....	194
5.2.5. Uncertain Cases.....	198
5.2.6. FAVOR-GEN-ʾṯ >> DEP:MORPH.....	201
5.2.7. Extending the Model: Translation Segmentation	203
5.2.8. Summary	218
5.3. Summary and Further Implications	222
6. Evaluating Other Purported Instances of Akkadian-Northwest Semitic Translation	229
6.1. Deut 28 as Translation.....	231
6.1.1. Deut 28:22 and the Multiplication of Translation Replacements	237
6.1.2. Deut 28:30 and the Transformation of Futility Curses	239
6.1.3. Deut 28:31–32 and the Addition of Clarifying Materials	243
6.1.4. Deut 28:23–24 as a Translation of VTE §§63–64	251
6.1.5. Summary	255
6.2. The Sefire Treaties as Translations.....	255
6.2.1. The Sefire Treaties	256
6.2.2. Relationships among Sefire I, II, and III	258
6.2.3. The Treaty between Aššur-nerari V and Mati' ilu.....	263
6.2.4. The Treaty between Aššur-nerari V and Mati' ilu and the Sefire Treaties.....	264
6.2.4.1. Structure of the Treaties.....	267
6.2.4.2. Specific Correspondences	272
6.2.4.3. The God Lists: Syntactic Structure.....	276
6.2.4.4. The God Lists: Named Deities	284
6.2.5. Other Correspondences between Sefire I and the Aššur-nerari Treaty.....	287
6.2.6. TRPROPNS and the Identification of Bar-Ga'yah	291
6.2.7. Summary	295
7. Conclusions	297
7.1. The Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription	297
7.2. Implications for Other Proposed Translations from the Iron Age II	300
7.3. Conclusion	301

Appendix 1: Fekheriyeh A: Akkadian and Aramaic	303
Appendix 2: Fekheriyeh B: Akkadian and Aramaic	305
Bibliography	307
Ancient Texts Index	323
Modern Authors Index	331
Subject Index	335
Constraint Index.....	341

Abbreviations

The work employs the standard abbreviations listed in the *SBL Handbook of Style* (2nd edn), in addition to the following:

BTL	Benjamins Translation Library
CDA	<i>A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian</i> . Edited by J. Black, A. George, and N. Postgate. 2nd (corrected) printing. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
IPT	<i>Iscrizioni puniche della Tripolitania</i>
IRT	<i>Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
KA	S. Aḥituv, E. Eshel, and Z. Meshel, “The Inscriptions,” in <i>Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (Ḥorvat Teman)</i> (ed. Z. Meshel; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 73–142
KUSATU	<i>Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt</i>
PLAL	Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages
RUCCS-TR	Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science Technical Report
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
TAD	<i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt</i> . Edited by B. Porten and A. Yardeni. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1986–1999
TWPL	<i>Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics</i>
VOK	Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Translating Empire

In 2 Kgs 18, the officials of Judah plead with the representatives of the Neo-Assyrian Empire to speak with them in Aramaic, so that the population of the city of Jerusalem will not understand the threats they are making against the king. The officials refuse, declaring their challenge to Hezekiah in the local language of Judah in order to ensure that the whole population is able to hear and understand the dominating claims of Assyrian imperial power.

The episode is telling: the power of the empire is conveyed not merely by the presence of its representatives, but by the very act of translation. The necessity of translating Akkadian into Aramaic and other more widely understood languages, as part of the *modus operandi* of the Neo-Assyrian imperial machine, is further attested within the empire itself. The dual depiction of Akkadian and Aramaic scribes on the Assyrian royal reliefs signals an acknowledgment of the practical use of Aramaic alongside Akkadian in the imperial bureaucracy, while a handful of surviving bilingual inscriptions indicate the use of translation for monumental purposes, at least occasionally.¹

Our object in this study is to clarify how this process of translation actually worked in the Iron Age, especially with regard to translation of an officially produced text from Akkadian into one of the Northwest Semitic languages. Our primary text for comparison will be the Akkadian-Aramaic bilingual inscription from Tell Fekheriyeh. This text is one of very few preserved instances of

¹ H. Tadmor, "On the Role of Aramaic in the Assyrian Empire," in *Near Eastern Studies Dedicated to H. I. H. Prince Takahito Mikasa on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (ed. M. Mori, H. Ogawa, and M. Yoshikawa; Bulletin of the Middle Eastern Culture Centre in Japan 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 419–426; P. Garelli, "Importance et rôle des Araméens dans l'administration de l'empire assyrien," in *Mesopotamien und seine Nachbarn: Politische und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen im alten Vorderasien vom 4. bis 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (ed. H. J. Nissen and U. Renger; BBVO 1; Berlin: Reimer, 1982), 437–447; Z. Stefanovic, "Why the Aramaic Script Was Called 'Assyrian' in Hebrew, Greek, and Demotic," *Or* 62 (1993): 80–82; P. A. Beaulieu, "Official and Vernacular Languages: The Shifting Sands of Imperial and Cultural Identities in First Millennium B.C. Mesopotamia," in *Margins of Writing, Origins of Cultures: New Approaches to Writing and Reading in the Ancient Near East* (ed. S. L. Sanders; Chicago, Ill.: Oriental Institute, 2006), 187–216; cf. SAA XVI 63 12–20; 99 8–11; SAA XVII 2 13–21. On the trilingual inscriptions, see note 2.

Akkadian-Aramaic bilingualism and translation from the Iron Age II: only a few other monumental inscriptions display paired (i.e., spatially proximate and semantically similar) Akkadian-Aramaic texts, namely, the Arslan Tash trilingual and the Incirli trilingual.² Unfortunately, both these inscriptions are fragmentary and currently remain too insufficiently understood to serve as useful source material for the study at hand. The following discussion therefore relies on the text(s) of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription as evidence for Iron Age translation practices.

² For the Arslan Tash trilingual, see W. Röllig, “Aramäer und Assyrer: Die Schriftzeugnisse bis zum Ende des Assyrischen Reiches,” in *Essays on Syria in the Iron Age* (ed. G. Bunnens; ANESSup 7; Louvain: Peeters, 2000), 177–186, esp. 182–183; idem, “Die Inschriften des Ninurta-bēlu-ušur, Statthalters von Kār-Salmānu-ašarēd. Teil I,” in *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola* (ed. M. Luukko, S. Svård, and R. Mattila; StOr 106; Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2009), 265–278; H. D. Galter, “Militärgrenze und Euphrathandel: Der sozio-ökonomische Hintergrund der Trilinguen von Arslan Tash,” in *Commerce and Monetary Systems in the Ancient World: Means of Transmission and Cultural Interaction* (ed. R. Rollinger and C. Ulf; Melammu Symposia 5; Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004), 444–460; idem, “Der Himmel über Hadattu: Das religiöse Umfeld der Inschriften von Arslan Tash,” in *Offizielle Religion, lokale Kulte und individuelle Religiosität: Akten des religionsgeschichtlichen Symposiums “Kleinasien und angrenzende Gebiete vom Beginn des 2. bis zur Mitte des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.”* (Bonn, 20.–22. Februar 2003) (ed. M. Hutter and S. Hutter-Braunsar; AOAT 318; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004), 173–188; idem, “Die Torlöwen von Arslan Tash,” in *Festschrift für Hermann Hunger zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet von seinen Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern* (ed. M. Köhbach et al.; WZKM 97; Wien: Selbstverlag des Instituts für Orientalistik, 2007), 193–211; K. L. Younger, “Some of What’s New in Old Aramaic Epigraphy,” *NEA* 70 (2007): 139–149, here 142; H. Tadmor and S. Yamada, *The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) and Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC), Kings of Assyria* (RINAP 1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 161–163, no. 2001. The hieroglyphic Luwian inscription is published in J. D. Hawkins, *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions* (vol. 1 of *The Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions of the Iron Age*; Untersuchungen zur indogermanischen Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft 8.1; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), no. III.10: pt. 1:246–248; pt. 3:pls., 103–105. For the Incirli inscription, see S. A. Kaufman, “The Phoenician Inscription of the Incirli Trilingual: A Tentative Reconstructive and Translation,” *Maarav* 14 (2007): 7–26. Kaufman is reportedly working on an official *editio princeps* of the Incirli trilingual with B. Zuckerman, but he provides a somewhat disheartening description of the state of the Akkadian text, for which he will offer “a very hypothetical suggested reading ...” Moreover, “the Luwian hieroglyphs and the [Assyrian] cuneiform on the right hand side appear to be beyond salvage with current imaging techniques” (*ibid.*, p. 8 n. 3). We thank here Younger, who kindly pointed these instances out to us and provided advanced views of the forthcoming *COS* entry for the Arslan Tash trilingual, including prior bibliography (personal communication).

1.2. Discovery and Historical Context of the Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription

The Tell Fekheriyeh inscription (*KAI* §309) was discovered on February 22, 1979, on the southwestern flank of that archaeological *tell*. The site had for some time been identified as ancient Sikan, and the discovery of the monument sealed that identification, with multiple mentions of Sikan in both a cuneiform (Assyrian Akkadian) and an Aramaic text.³ Tell Fekheriyeh lies not far (ca. 2 km) east of Tell Ḥalaf, flanking the Ḥabūr River on its west bank. This latter site is also known from antiquity, both from cuneiform sources (where it is called Gūzāna⁴) and from the Hebrew Bible (Gôzān; 2 Kgs 17:6, 18:11, 19:12; Isa 37:12; 1 Chr 5:26).⁵ It is also mentioned prominently in the inscription at hand. As will be seen below (section 1.3.2), the inscription evinces a composition history that seems to be bound up with the cultic apparatuses of both Guzan and Sikan.⁶ The object was published in short order, first in a series of preemptive announcements,⁷ and shortly thereafter in a monograph-length volume that is commonly considered the *editio princeps*.⁸ Several publications followed in quick succession,⁹ often working independently and therefore unaware of the

³ We offer no argument here as to whether Sikan should be identified with the city Waššukani, the former capital of the Mitannian state. For further discussion and much relevant bibliography, see K. L. Younger, *A Political History of the Arameans: From Their Origins to the End of Their Politics* (ABS 13; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 148, 243–244. Younger also provides an overview of the site’s archaeology (p. 242).

⁴ See the many Assyrian sources cited by S. Parpola, *Neo-Assyrian Toponyms* (AOAT 6; Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker and Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), 138–139.

⁵ For detailed attestations of this identification, see, e.g., A. Abou-Assaf, P. Bordreuil, and A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Études Assyriologiques 7; Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1982), 67; and E. Lipiński, “The Bilingual Inscription from Tell Fekherye,” in *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics II* (ed. E. Lipiński; OLA 57; Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 19–81, esp. 20, 23–26.

⁶ As noted by Younger (*Political History*, 244, 259), Sikan’s role as a cultic center for the worship of Hadad and Šala extends back to the Ur III period.

⁷ A. Abou-Assaf, “Die Statue des HDYS’Y, König von Guzana,” *MDOG* 113 (1981): 3–22; Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 640–655; A. R. Millard and P. Bordreuil, “A Statue from Syria With Assyrian and Aramaic Inscriptions,” *BA* 45 (1982): 135–141. For accounts of the inscription’s discovery, see Abou-Assaf, “Statue des HDYS’Y,” 3–4; Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 1–4, unnumbered pages (area map and site plan); Millard and Bordreuil, “Statue from Syria,” 137; and Lipiński, “Bilingual Inscription,” 19–21.

⁸ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*.

⁹ J. C. Greenfield and A. Shaffer, “Notes on the Bilingual Inscription from Tell Fekherye,” *Shnaton* 5–6 (1982): 119–129 [Hebrew]; idem, “Notes on the Curse Formulae of the Tell Fekherye Inscription,” *RB* 92 (1985): 47–59; and idem, “Notes on the Akkadian-

results of contemporaneous studies. Although the pace of studies dedicated specifically to this inscription quickly abated, the furious pace of early publication occasioned a great deal of redundancy in the early literature on the inscription.

The monument most likely dates to the third quarter of the ninth century (ca. 850–825 BCE). This determination of a ninth-century date for the epigraph was made already by A. Abou-Assaf on the basis of iconographic parallels and historical data,¹⁰ but subsequent studies have confirmed this date with few exceptions. Often these studies simply replicate the original argument, relying on the same types of data, but occasionally new arguments have been put forward, citing the style and diction of the formulaic content of the inscriptions¹¹ and the paleography of the Assyrian text.¹² One of the most commonly cited historical data in support of the ninth-century context is the fact that the eponym of the seventeenth year of Aššurnaširpal II (i.e., 866 BCE) was Šamaš-nūrī.¹³ Although the title of Šamaš-nūrī has not been preserved in the pertinent lists, “the eponym of 867 B.C. was almost certainly the governor of Tušhan,”¹⁴ the city whose governor regularly preceded that of Guzan in these lists (e.g., for 794–793, 764–763, 728–727, and 707–706 BCE).¹⁵ E. Lipiński has added to this

Aramaic Bilingual Statue from Tell Fekherye,” *Iraq* 45 (1983): 109–116; R. Zadok, “Remarks on the Inscription of *hdys* ‘y from Tell Fakhariya,” *TA 9* (1982): 117–129; F. M. Fales, “Le double bilinguisme de la statue de Tell Fekherye,” *Syria* 60 (1983): 233–250; T. Muraoka, “The Tell-Fekherye Bilingual Inscription and Early Aramaic,” *AbrN* 22 (1983–1984): 79–117; P.-E. Dion, “La bilingue de Tell Fekherye: Le roi de Gozan et son dieu; La phraséologie,” in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l’honneur de M. Mathias Delcor* (ed. A. Caquot, S. Légasse, and M. Tardieu; AOAT 215; Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker and Neukirchener Verlag, 1985), 139–147; D. M. Gropp and T. J. Lewis, “Notes on Some Problems in the Aramaic Text of the Hadd-Yith’i Bilingual,” *BASOR* 259 (1985): 45–61; V. Sasson, “The Aramaic Text of the Tell Fakhariyah Assyrian-Aramaic Bilingual Inscription,” *ZAW* 97 (1985): 86–103; and F. Vattioni, “La bilingue assiro-aramaica di Tell Fekherye,” *AION* 46 (1986): 349–365. An early bibliography was compiled by W. E. Aufrecht and G. J. Hamilton, “The Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription: A Bibliography,” *Newsletter for Targumic & Cognate Studies. Suppl.* 4 (1988): 1–7.

¹⁰ Abou-Assaf, “Statue des HDYS’Y,” esp. 9, 12–13. See also Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 9–12, 22, 87–102; as well as A. R. Millard, “Assyrians and Arameans,” *Iraq* 45 (1983): 104–105.

¹¹ Greenfield and Shaffer point to the origin of the curses in the first millennium rather than the second (“Notes on the Curse Formulae,” 49).

¹² S. A. Kaufman, “Reflections on the Assyrian-Aramaic Bilingual from Tell Fakhariyeh,” *Maarav* 3 (1982): 137–175, esp. 139–140.

¹³ E.g., Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 103–113.

¹⁴ Millard, “Assyrians and Arameans,” 105.

¹⁵ See A. R. Millard, *The Eponyms of the Assyrian Empire, 910–612 BC* (SAA 2; Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1994), 56–60; and, more recently, J. Dušek and J. Mynářová, “Tell Fekheriye Inscription: A Process of Authority on the Edge of the Assyrian

datum the observation that the eponym of the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser III (i.e., 841 BCE) was Adad-rēmāni (^dIM-ARḪUŠ-*ni*). Lipiński considers the meaning of this name (“Adad, show pity on me!”) sufficiently similar to the meaning of that of the author of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription (Haddu-yiṯō’ī “Hadad is my deliverance”) as to possibly warrant consideration as the same individual.¹⁶ Although this suggestion warrants further investigation, it is far from certain. Speaking against this identification is the fact that the eponym of the preceding year is given the title “governor of Nemed-Ishtar” rather than what would be the expected “governor of Tušhan.”¹⁷ Moreover, K. L. Younger has recently put forward a thorough and convincing challenge to the identification of Haddu-yiṯō’ī with Adad-rēmāni, based in large part on the different syntactic patterns of the two names.¹⁸ Nonetheless, aside from a few epigraphers, who have suggested that the Aramaic paleography suggests an earlier date (i.e., in the late eleventh century BCE),¹⁹ and a few art historians, who have adduced iconographic parallels in the eighth century BCE,²⁰ the date ca. 850–825 BCE has gone largely unchallenged and currently maintains a large consensus. This ninth-century date continues to receive support from most critics.²¹

Empire,” in *The Process of Authority: The Dynamics in Transmission and Reception of Canonical Texts* (ed. J. Dušek and J. Roskovec; Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies 27; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 9–39. Younger (*Political History*, 525–526) also includes a section of eponymic data relevant to the years 794–793.

¹⁶ Lipiński, “Bilingual Inscription,” 23–24.

¹⁷ See Millard, *Eponyms*, 56.

¹⁸ See Younger, *Political History*, 264–266, and bibliography cited there; also, *ibid.*, 255.

¹⁹ J. Naveh, “The Date of the Inscription from Tell Fekheriyah: A Palaeographic Analysis of the Aramaic Version,” *Shnaton* 5–6 (1982): 131–140 [Hebrew], esp. 134–135; and F. M. Cross, “Paleography and the Date of the Tell Faḡariyeh Bilingual Inscription,” in *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield* (ed. Z. Zevit, S. Gitin, and M. Sokoloff; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 393–409. Both studies recognize the difficulty of this proposal, even though Cross seems more willing to engage later dating than does J. Naveh. For a reasoned response to Naveh’s study, see Lipiński, “Bilingual Inscription,” 26–30.

²⁰ H. S. Sader, *Les états araméens de Syrie depuis leur fondation jusqu’à leur transformation en provinces assyriennes* (Beiruter Texte und Studien 36; Beirut: Steiner Verlag, 1987), 26–27; A. Spycket, “La statue bilingue de Tell Fekheriyé,” *RA* 79 (1985): 67–68. But these arguments have been effectively dispatched by A. R. Millard, “The Tell Fekheriyeh Inscriptions,” in *Biblical Archaeology Today, 1990: Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology, Jerusalem, June–July 1990* (ed. A. Biran and J. Aviram; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1993), 518–524, esp. 518–519; and Lipiński, “Bilingual Inscription,” 22.

²¹ See most recently the studies by Dušek and Mynářová, “Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription,” 33–36; and L. Quick, “‘To Hear and to Accept’: A Word-Pair in the Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription,” *JSS* 61 (2016): 413–429. Although Dušek and Mynářová adduce a possible date between 763 and 727 BCE, their preferred date is during the Assyrian civil war (827–820 BCE).

1.3. The Object and Its Inscription

The object on which the inscription appears is a large, anthropomorphic statue carved in basalt. The male figure is standing in a neutral, frontal pose, with his hands clasped across his midriff. His hairstyle, facial features, and clothing are consistent with exemplars from the mid-ninth century BCE. For the most part, these elements are unremarkable for our purposes, and more detailed discussions can be found in previous publications.²² More important for our study is the spatial arrangement of the figure's skirt, where the epigraph has been inscribed in the space approximately between the individual's upper thighs and his mid-shins. The Akkadian text is found on the front side of the skirt, the lines of text separated by thin vertical lines, inscribed as pleats or a design on the skirt. The Aramaic text occupies the back of the skirt, except for the two lines that did not fit and had to be inscribed on the lower hem of the front. The left ends of these final two lines reach around to the front of the skirt, and are inscribed below the Akkadian.²³ As observed already by the editors, this disposition signals the relative importance of the Akkadian text over the Aramaic.²⁴ This bilingual pair of texts has been preserved nearly completely, with only a few signs or graphemes in each language missing.

1.3.1. The Text of the Inscription(s)

For navigational purposes, we present the text(s) of the Tell Fekheriyeh inscription in Appendices 1 and 2 in an eclectic edition, assembled from several prior treatments. We have been unable to consult the inscription itself.²⁵ The only photographs to which we have had access were those kindly provided by Wayne Pitard, which are unfortunately not of paleographic quality. We have therefore compiled the following eclectic text by working from the base text provided in both the *editio princeps* and in *KAI*, and using emendations and suggestions for re-readings made by various interpreters. This goes especially for the Akkadian text, which for ease of reference we render here only in normalized Akkadian. Although most interpreters have reached some degree of unanimity in their understanding of the logographic values of the Akkadian texts, we have at times had to favor one interpretation over another. Our notes

²² E.g., Abou-Assaf, "Statue des HDYS'Y," 5–11; Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 5–7, 9–12.

²³ See Abou-Assaf, "Statue des HDYS'Y," 3; Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 8–9, and unnumbered page (autograph of Aramaic inscription).

²⁴ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 9.

²⁵ The Tell Fekheriyeh inscription is currently held in the National Museum of Syria, Damascus. Given the current state of conflict in Syria, we have not attempted a visit to the museum.

justifying various readings or translations have been incorporated into the discussion below, where they directly impinge on the interpretation, rather than left to congest the schematic presentation of the text.

It remains conventional to cite the inscription's physical lineation in modern discussions of the inscription, and we follow that principle in the discussion immediately following. However, in order to focus on the tightly corresponding translational segments in the co-texts, we have also divided the text into grammatical units – usually phrases or what we consider to be realistic translation segments. We call these unit “stichs,” with each stich reference containing a letter that designates the part of the inscription, A or B, and a number indicating the stich number of the individual part. For the most part we use this numeration as the primary form of citation in the translation-theoretic discussion below, instead of the more common line numbers. For coordination of these two systems, we present the texts in our own synoptic lineation in Appendices 1 and 2 (see pp. 305–308). Superscript numerals indicate the conventional line numbers.

1.3.2. The Physical History of the Statue and Its Inscription

In light of the statue's discovery at Sikan, the conflicting – and sometimes only implied – references in the text to the location of the statue's original disposition have elicited spirited discourse. In the Aramaic Introduction, unparalleled in the Akkadian text, the statue was commissioned by the Aramean king Haddu-yiθ'î to be dedicated to Hadad-of-Sikan (Aram. line 1 = stich Intro-RelVP). The testimony of this introduction is sustained throughout the Aramaic text (Aram. lines 5–6, 16 = stichs A:7; B:7), where the statue is consistently situated before the divine manifestation of Hadad in Sikan (יֹסֵב סִכָּן “dweller of Sikan”).²⁶ In contrast, in the corresponding portions of text, the Assyrian version at first locates Hadad's residence in Guzan (i.e., the nearby Tell Ḥalaf²⁷) (*āšib*^{uru}*guzani* “dweller of Guzan”; Akk. line 7 = stich A:7), but later in Sikan (*āšib*^{uru}*sikani* ~ יֹסֵב סִכָּן; Akk. line 25 = stich B:7). To complicate matters, the royal titles of the statue's commissioner, Haddu-yiθ'î, fluctuate as well. Originally, Haddu-yiθ'î seems to have positioned himself (as heir to his father's position) as the ruler of Guzan in both the Assyrian and the Aramaic texts (Akk. lines 8–9; Aram. lines 6–7 = stich A:9). But Haddu-yiθ'î then arrogates to himself an expanded set of titles, claiming to control Guzan, Sikan,

²⁶ Contrast Lipiński (“Bilingual Inscription,” 31), who argues that “both qualifications ... refer to the same deity.”

²⁷ See n. 5.

and Azran (*šakin māti* ^{uru}*guzani* ^{uru}*sikani* ^{uru}*zarani* ~ מלך גוזן זוי סכן זוי אזרן ~ Akk. lines 19–20; Aram. line 13 = stich B:1).²⁸

The contradiction in divine locale is not troublesome from the perspective of the history of ancient Near Eastern religion, since the phenomenon of local manifestations of deities is well known and admits a certain “fluidity” of divine identification.²⁹ The problem is rather one of physical *realia*: what is the composition history of this inscription and of the statue itself? Where was the votive offering initially deposited? Was the statue moved, and/or does this object comprise a *second* votive offering? The contradictions among the geographic references, in combination with structural repetitions, made clear early on that both the Assyrian and the Aramaic texts were composed of two units, traditionally called an A text (= Akk. lines 1–18; Aram. lines 1–12) and a B text (= Akk. lines 19–38; Aram. lines 12–23). Our division of the text into stichoi marked as A and B recognizes and follows this convention. In particular, the divergence of geographical markers in the A portion – the location in Guzan in the Assyrian text, compared to Sikan in the Aramaic text – has led to various proposals regarding the inscription’s history of composition and its relation to the statue’s manufacture.

In the *editio princeps*, the editors recognized that the second text (B) contains a new introduction (Akk. lines 19–20; Aram. lines 12–13 = stich B:1). Moreover, an indication of the statue’s improvement (or surpassing?) in the second text (Akk. lines 23–24, Aram. line 15 = stich B:5) “allows us to deduce the existence of an earlier monument which was replaced by the monument at hand.”³⁰ Thus, they argued that the differences between the two inscriptions allow us to hypothesize multiple stages of revision, culminating in the inscription of the statue now under discussion.³¹ Because the Aramaic Introduction text makes it clear that the statue is dedicated to Hadad-of-Sikan (Aram. line 1 = Intro-RelVP; see also Aram. lines 5–6 = stich A:7), and because only the Akk. A text locates Hadad in Guzan (Akk. line 7 = stich A:7), A. Abou-Assaf, P. Bordreuil, and A. R. Millard envision a scenario in which the A text was inscribed on an original monument that remains undiscovered.³² This original

²⁸ As Younger points out (*Political History*, 256), although no conclusive identification of Azran can be made yet, it seems to have been of a stature similar to that of Guzan, and Sikan.

²⁹ For the “fluidity” of divine manifestations, see recently B. D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); J. M. Hutton, “Local Manifestations of Yahweh and Worship in the Interstices: A Note on Kuntillet ‘Ajrud,” *JANER* 10 (2010): 177–210; and S. L. Allen, *The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh: Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East* (SANER 5; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015).

³⁰ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 67; our translation.

³¹ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 67.

³² Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 67–68.

monument was dedicated to Hadad-of-Guzan. Later, when the second monument (i.e., the one under consideration) was erected in Sikan, the Akkadian text (Akk. A) was replicated exactly, preserving the identification of Hadad as *āšib* ^{uru}*guzani* (Akk. line 7 = stich A:7), before the addition of the Akk. B text – which updated the author’s titles to reflect that he was now *šakin māti* ^{uru}*guzani* ^{uru}*sikani u* ^{uru}*zarani* (Akk. lines 19–20 = stich B:1b). At the same time, the Aramaic text (including the Introduction, which is unparalleled in the Akk. A text) must have been adjusted to account for the fact that this new statue was dedicated to the manifestation of Hadad resident in Sikan rather than the manifestation of the same deity resident in Guzan.³³

This geographic and chronological reconstruction makes generally good sense of the various geographical cues presented in the text and is the foundational argument challenged or tacitly accepted by subsequent interpreters. Yet, this solution poses a problem as well: why would the Aramaic text have been adjusted to recognize the new site of deposition while the Akkadian text was left undisturbed (and thus outdated)? As part of their solution, Abou-Assaf et al. hedged: “One can also suppose that Hadad of Guzana was identified with that of Sikan, but for whatever political, theological, or traditional reasons, the title carried by this god in the capital [= Guzan] was preferable for the cuneiform text.”³⁴ This is possible, but not entirely satisfying, as demonstrated by the fact that the editors themselves posed an alternative suggestion: they supposed it was possible that two statues had initially been erected, “one at Guzan bearing the Assyrian text of A, the other at Sikan bearing the Aramean text of A.”³⁵ Although they do not follow this solution to its logical conclusion, the implications are clear: with the establishment of the new (now, *third*) statue in Sikan, the first two texts (Akk. A and Aram. A) were combined, each in its original form, and Text B was added to each.

³³ See similarly C. Dohmen, “Die Statue von Tell Fecherīje und die Gottebenbildlichkeit des Menschen: Ein Beitrag zur Bildterminologie,” *BN* 22 (1983): 91–106, esp. 94–95. However, Dohmen argued that all of the Aramaic text (Aram. A + B) had been translated from the Akkadian at a single time (95–96). He based this assessment of two points of data: the location of the inscription in Sikan, and the lexical and syntactic correspondence of the Aramaic Introduction with the second portion of the inscription. However, Dohmen’s conclusions are not entirely necessary – he assumes, for example, that the Aramaic has been translated specifically for the second statue, and his analysis of the “correspondence” between the Aramaic Introduction and Akk. lines 23–26 is not spelled out.

³⁴ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 67 (“On peut aussi supposer que Adad de Gouzana était identifié à celui de Sikan, mais que pour des raisons politiques, théologiques, ou traditionnelles le titre porté par ce dieu dans la capitale a été préféré par le texte cunéiforme.”).

³⁵ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekherye*, 68 (“l’une à Gouzana portant le texte assyrien de A, l’autre à Sikan portant le texte araméen de A”).

In the initial presentations of the inscription, preceding publication of the *editio princeps*, the editors posited a more complex reconstruction than was eventually represented in the *editio*. In those preliminary offerings, they suggested that the original statue – dedicated to Hadad-in-Guzan and bearing only the Akk. A text – had been *transported* to Sikan. To this statue was then added the Aramaic translation of the original text (Akk. A), augmented by the novel formulation of a more typically West Semitic introduction. In a third stage, both the Akk. B and Aram. B texts were added.³⁶ Without making explicit reference to this effect, Bordreuil et al. seem here to be positing the gradual accumulation of separate (but related) epigraphs on a single object. Naturally, this hypothesis presents a difficulty, since, as was described above, all evidence points to a single moment of inscription for both the Assyrian and the Aramaic texts on the statue at hand. This difficulty was accounted for in the subsequent *editio*, in which the editors recognized that neither the spatial arrangement nor the style of the inscription provided evidence of successive acts of engraving.³⁷

Although this particular proposal is not the formulation that eventually emerged in the *editio*, it has recently been picked up and modified by J. Dušek and J. Mynářová.³⁸ They hypothesize a three-stage development of the text: like Bordreuil et al., they assume an object dedicated to the deity Hadad-in-Guzan and bearing only the Akk. A text. Yet, unlike the earlier editors, Dušek and Mynářová recognize that this object may not have been a statue at all: Akk. A nowhere claims that it appears on an (anthropoid) image (although compare the Aramaic Introduction in which the lexeme דמוֹתָא “likeness” is used; Aram. line 1 = stich Intro-NP), whereas both versions of Text B explicitly use terms indicating a human form (stich B:1: *šalam* ¹*adad(u)-it-’i* [Akk. line 19] ~ צלם הדיסטי [Aram. line 12]; stich B:5: *šalma šuāte*³⁹ [Akk. line 23] ~ דמוֹתָא זאֹת [Aram. line 15]). This possibility had been raised by D. M. Gropp and T. J.

³⁶ P. Bordreuil, A. R. Millard, and A. Abou-Assaf, “La statue de Tell Fekheriyé: La première inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne,” *CRAI* 125 (1981): 640–655, here 646–647.

³⁷ Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekheriyé*, 68; Dohmen, “Statue von Tell Fecherīje,” 95.

³⁸ Dušek and Mynářová (“Tell Fekheriyé Inscription,” 20–29) provide a very helpful review of the previous literature, but their analysis is not without errors. For example, they mistakenly assign this third reconstruction to the *editio* as well (p. 20 n. 21). While the eventual form of the *editio* may not stand in direct opposition to the hypothesis of the first statue’s physical removal to Sikan, neither does it explicitly articulate that proposal.

³⁹ We have normalized NU here as the accusative *šalma* rather than the nominative *šalmu* (with, e.g., Abou-Assaf, “Statue des HDYS’Y,” 21; Abu Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard, *Statue de Tell Fekheriyé*, 16; and *KAI*) since it is the direct object of the verb *ušātir*. The lack of a phonetic complement here requires interpretation. Fales (“Double bilinguisme,” 239) adduces the spelling *šu-a-te* as a marker of Assyrian scribal habit, since it is “practically absent” (“pratiquement absent”) in Standard Babylonian.

Ancient Texts Index

Biblical Texts

Genesis

12:13	207
14:19	286
19:24	52
32:3	43, 44
34:2	291
37:22	206
50:20	206

Exodus

1:11	206
9:16	206
10:1	206
11:9	206
23:17	181
29:25	179
34:23	181

Leviticus

14:38	91
20:3	206
20:28	150
26:26	165

Numbers

5:25	179
------	-----

Deuteronomy

2:30	206
5:16	207
5:29	207
6:18	207
6:23	206
8:2	206
8:3	206
8:16	206
8:18	206

Deuteronomy (continued)

9:5	206
12:25	207
12:28	207
13	231–233, 235
17:16	206
21:13	91
22:7	207
28	229–255, 300
28:22	237–239
28:23–24	251–254
28:23	253–254
28:30–32	243
28:30	239–242
28:31–32	243–251
28:31	243
28:32	243
28:33a	243
28:38–41	243
28:38	162
29:12	206
29:18	206
32:30	162

Joshua

3:13	181
13:26	43
13:30	43–44

Judges

17:10	123
18:19	123

1 Samuel

10:5	91
12:3	179

<i>2 Samuel</i>		<i>Psalms</i>	
2:8	43	2:9	146
5:3	181	89:33	145
6:12	181	<i>Isaiah</i>	
7:14	145	10:8	77
8:8	181	26:18a	170
8:10	181	37:12	3
8:11	181	40:2	179
9:5	181	50:8	60
11:4	291	60:22	162
13:39	181	<i>Jeremiah</i>	
<i>1 Kings</i>		7:23	207
7:48	158	42:6	207
7:48–50	158	<i>Lamentations</i>	
8:60–61	206	4:5	196–197
<i>2 Kings</i>		<i>Daniel</i>	
5:13	123	2:29	94
17:6	3	2:35	46
18	1	2:45	94
18:11	3	5:2–3	158
19:12	3	5:2	158
<i>Ezra</i>		5:3	158
5:14	158	<i>Hosea</i>	
5:15	158	2:18	49
6:5	158	12:12	150
6:12	48	<i>Micah</i>	
7:19	158	6:15	162
<i>1 Chronicles</i>		6:15a	172
5:26	3	<i>Haggai</i>	
<i>Job</i>		1:6	162
9:34	146		
37:13	145		
38:26	51		

Other Ancient Texts

<i>Assur 5764+9309</i>	93	<i>Behistun Inscription</i>	243–251
<i>Assur 10295</i>	93	<i>Behistun, Akkadian Version</i>	102–103 247–250, 251
			102 248, 250, 251

<i>Behistun, Akkadian Version (continued)</i>		<i>IRT</i>	
103	250	321	111–113
<i>Behistun, Elamite Version</i>		<i>Kuntillet Ajrud (KA)</i>	
col. III, ln. 74–76	247–251	4.1.1:2	207
col. III, ln. 75	249–250		
<i>Behistun, Persian Version</i>		<i>KAI §24 (Kilamuwa Inscription)</i>	
col. IV, lns. 55–59	246, 249–250	3	90
col. IV, lns. 55–56	249	5	90
col. IV, ln. 58	250		
<i>Behistun, Aramaic Version</i> (= <i>TAD C1.1</i>)		<i>KAI §26A (Karatepe Inscription)</i>	
72–73	247–249	i:5	90
72	248–250	i:9	90
73	248	i:16	90
		<i>KAI §195</i>	
		9–10	207
<i>CBS (Tablets in the University Museum, Philadelphia)</i>		<i>KAI §201</i>	62
473:5	179	<i>KAI §202 (Zakkur Inscription)</i>	62
<i>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum</i>		<i>KAI §203</i>	78
CT 24			
XI:66	146	<i>KAI §214 (Hadad Inscription)</i>	
<i>Deir 'Allā Balaam Text</i>		1	188
II.12	93	2	179
		12	172
		14	188
<i>Eidem, The Royal Archives from Tell Leilan</i>		<i>KAI §215 (Panamuwa Inscription)</i>	
L.T.-3		9	207
col. V, lns. 24b'–28'	166	20	188
<i>Fales, Aramaic Epigraphs on Clay Tablets of the Neo-Assyrian Period</i>		<i>KAI §222 (Sefire I)</i>	230–231, 255–295, 300–301
no. 3	196	A	165, 257, 259, 261, 267, 270
no. 6	196	A:1	258, 260
no. 7	196	A:5	70, 293
no. 9	196	A:6–14	268, 270
<i>Incirli Trilingual</i>	2	A:7–12	273, 276–287
front face, ln. 3	78	A:7	277–278
right face, ln. 4	199	A:8	277
		A:9	277, 286
<i>IPT</i>		A:10	277, 285
24a	111–113, 116	A:11–12	285, 286
		A:11	277, 286

- A:12–13 278
 A:12 277
 A:14–42 270
 A:14–15 262
 A:21–31 259
 A 21–25 262
 A:21–24 260–261, 263
 A:21–23 273, 289
 A:21–22 165, 170
 A:22 165
 A:22–23 163, 165, 260
 A:23–24 165
 A:24–25 262
 A:24 165–166, 178, 261,
 263
 A:29–30 273, 289
 A:31 263
 A:32–35 275
 A:32 273–274
 A:35 291
 A:36–40 273–274, 290–291
 A:36–37 291
 A:37 291
 A:38–39 273, 287–288, 291
 A:39 291
 A:40–41 291
 A:40 273
 A:41–42 291
 A:41 291
 A:42 291
 B 257, 259, 261, 267,
 270
 B:1–13 268, 270–271
 B:21–45 262, 270
 B:21–28 259
 B:23–25 273
 B:28–33 273, 289
 C 257, 259, 261–262,
 267
 C:1–25 268, 270
 C:1–9 271
 D 257, 267, 270

KAI §223 (Sefire II) 230–231, 255–263,
 265–295, 300–301
 A 259, 263, 267, 270
 A 1–10 270
 A 1–4 262
 A:1–3 261
 A:1–2 165, 260, 263
 A:1 260
 A:2–3 260–261
 A:2 260
 A:3–4 262
 A:3 261, 263
 A:9 263
 B 258–259, 262, 267,
 270
 B:1–20 270
 C 258, 259, 262, 267,
 270
 C:1–17 270
 C:5 258
 C:15 258
 D 267, 270

KAI §224 (Sefire III) 230–231, 255–
 263, 265–267, 294,
 300–301
 1 258
 2–3 273, 275
 2 179
 4–6 273, 275
 9–20 273
 11–13 273
 25 258
 27 258

KAI §309 (Tell Fekheriyeh Inscription)
 Intro + Stichs A:1–17 63–64
 Intro-NP 10–11, 17, 63–64,
 188, 201–202
 Intro-NP + Intro-RelVP 104
 Intro-RelVP 7–8, 10, 18, 62–64,
 194
 A:1–19 14, 41, 62
 A:1–17 65, 71, 185
 A:1–14 70
 A:1–9a 62, 71
 A:1 11–12, 17, 47, 52,
 58, 62–63, 65, 67–
 70, 80, 82, 85, 141,
 176, 189, 199, 252
 A:2–11 58
 A:2 16, 46–47, 150
 A:2a 17, 58, 212
 A:2b 16, 52, 57–58, 66–
 69, 80, 176, 189

KAI §309 (continued)

A:3	58
A:3a	53, 57–58, 80, 85, 189, 199
A:3b	16, 59, 66–71
A:4–9	58
A:4	16, 47, 58, 66–69, 85, 150, 189
A:5	16, 50, 58, 66, 68– 69, 150
A:6	47, 50, 58–59, 71, 176, 194
A:6a	58
A:7	7–9, 11, 20, 45, 58
A:8	49, 58, 125–126
A:9	7, 58, 62–63, 71
A:9a	17, 44, 58–59, 62, 77, 79–80, 141– 142, 185
A:9b	44, 77, 80
A:10–16	62, 65, 71
A:10–14	73
A:10–11	58
A:10	12, 16, 19, 48–49, 59, 63, 67–71, 73
A:11	48, 57–59, 67–69, 71, 144
A:12	48, 50, 57, 59, 67– 69, 71, 204
A:13	59
A:13a	57, 59, 71, 189, 204
A:13b	57, 59, 71, 189, 204
A:13c	57, 59, 67–69, 71, 189, 204
A:14	51, 59, 71
A:14a	57
A:15–16	73
A:15	19, 50–51, 57, 59, 70–73, 210
A:16	16, 19, 51, 51, 57, 61, 70–73
A:17	51, 54, 62–63, 65, 71, 80, 154, 158
A:17a	61, 175
A:18	11–13, 48, 70–72, 76, 89–100, 176, 210
A:18a	51
A:18a–b	91

KAI §309 (continued)

A:18b	59, 71, 91, 95–99
A:18c	48, 57, 59, 61, 65, 71, 158, 175
A:19	71, 85–89
A:19a	19, 49, 57, 59, 61, 65, 71, 175, 176, 194
A:19a–b	74
A:19b	19, 50, 59, 70–71, 74, 158
A:19b–c	72
A:19c	44, 51, 59, 70–71, 81–85, 141–142
B:1	8, 10–11, 13, 20, 92, 201
B:1a	18, 141–142, 144, 147, 157–158, 187– 190, 203
B:1b	9, 17–18, 142, 147, 153, 155–156, 172– 176, 194, 203
B:2–4	211
B:2	144, 153, 156–157, 204, 211–212
B:3	144, 146–148, 151, 153, 155–156, 172– 173, 178, 193, 203, 212–213
B:4	213–217
B:4a	18, 147, 149, 151, 172–174, 180, 203– 217
B:4b	144, 147–148, 180, 193, 213–217
B:5	8, 10–11, 191–193, 196–197
B:5a	92, 147–148, 151– 152, 154, 157, 187– 189
B:5b	17, 144, 147–149, 151–152, 175–176, 188, 193–194, 212
B:6–8	183
B:6	141–143, 152, 193
B:7	7, 11, 18, 142, 144, 147, 203
B:8	18, 142, 147, 149, 203

KAI §309 (continued)

B:9	11, 92, 144, 154, 158, 182–183, 187– 189
B:10	11, 17, 19, 149, 151, 175, 180–181, 193–194, 201–202
B:10a	73, 144, 147, 149, 151–152, 154, 158, 193, 203
B:10b	73, 141–144, 151, 182
B:11–20	143
B:11	16, 143, 171–172, 174, 182–183, 198
B:11a	19, 73, 141–143, 149, 181
B:11b	144, 149, 151, 172– 173, 175, 179–180, 280
B:12	174–175, 183, 198
B:12a	73, 142, 149, 182
B:12b	144, 149, 172–173, 175, 198, 280
B:13–20	172
B:13–14	171–172
B:13	145, 149, 172–173
B:14	149–151, 154, 159– 173, 175, 194, 196– 197
B:15–19	19, 140, 185
B:15–18	161
B:15–17	165, 169, 260
B:15	145, 149–151, 159– 173, 195–197, 212
B:16–18	239
B:16	145, 147, 149–151, 159–173, 195–197, 212
B:17	145, 149, 151, 154– 155, 159–173, 195, 196–197, 212
B:18	145, 149, 151, 155, 159–173, 175–178, 195–197
B:19	15, 145, 151, 155, 159–173, 195–197

KAI §309 (continued)

B:20	17, 19, 143, 145, 147–148, 155, 159– 173, 180–183, 193– 194, 198–202, 238– 239
B:20a	142
B:20b	149, 151

KAI §320 (Bukan Inscription)

2'	199
5'–6'	165
6'–8'	165, 178

Karkamiš

A 11 a 2–3	179
A 11 a 6	179

b. Ketubbot

66b	197
67a	197

Kuttamuwa Inscription 179

Michel, “Die Assur-Texte
Salmanassars III”
Text 18, lns. 12–13 93

*Postgate, Fifty Neo-Assyrian
Legal Documents*

12:23	82
19:22	82
46:10	82
47:18	82

PRU

III 15.14:20, 22	60
III 16.112:11	60
IV 17.68:11	60
IV 17.83:14–15	60
IV 17.391:6, 10	60

RIMA

2 A.0.87.1 i 82	67
-----------------	----

*SAA 2 2 (Treaty of Aššur-nerari V
with Mati'ilu, King of Arpad)*

	255, 259, 263–267, 300
i 4'	273, 274
i 5'–9'	275
i 10'–35'	273–274, 290–291
iii 9'–10'	273, 275
iii 21'–22'	273, 275
iii 23'–27'	273
iv 1–3	273, 289
iv 7	273, 289
v 1'–4'	273
v 12'–14'	287, 288
v 12'–13'	273, 287–288
v 14'	273, 289
vi 6–26	273, 276–282, 285– 287
vi 6	276, 285
vi 7	276
vi 8	276, 286
vi 9	276, 286
vi 10	276
vi 11	276
vi 12	276, 286
vi 13	276
vi 14	276
vi 15–16	285
vi 15	276
vi 16	276
vi 17	276, 285
vi 18	277
vi 19	277
vi 20	277
vi 21–25	286
vi 21	277
vi 22	277
vi 23	277
vi 24	277
vi 25	277
vi 26	277, 285

SAA 2 6

(Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty)

	229–255, 300
§§1–2	284
§1:1	283
§2:13–24	282–283
§2:13–23	283
§2:13	282
§2:14	282
§2:15	282
§2:16	282
§2:17	282
§2:18	282
§2:19	282
§2:20	283
§2:21	283, 286
§2:22	283
§2:23–24	283
§2:23	283
§2:24	283
§3:40a	286
§42:428–430	240–242
§49:455–456	146
§56:476	286
§56:479–481	237–239
§§63–64	251–254
§63	253–254
§64	253

TAD

B2.2:11	207
B2.9:8	207
C1.1:82	94
C1.1:82–83	94
C1.1:83	91, 93–95
<i>(see also Behistun Inscription)</i>	
C2.1	244
C2.1:72	249
D1.1:1	249
D7.21:3	249

Weidner, “Die Kämpfe Adadnarâris I.
gegen Ḫanigalbat”

Text A, lns. 61–65 92

Text B, lns. 42–44 93

Modern Authors Index

- Abou-Assaf, A. 3–4, 6, 8–10, 12, 47–51, 54, 57, 66–67, 80, 91, 93, 142, 144–145, 147, 150, 153–155, 188, 196, 199
- Abrahamsen, A. 120–121, 124
- Adams, J. N. 20, 109–110, 113–115, 127, 130
- Aejmelaeus, A. 134
- Ahituv, S. 207
- Allegro, J. M. 18
- Allen, S. L. 8, 276
- Altman, A. 256, 259
- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. 111
- Andersen, F. I. 48
- Andruska, J. 291
- Angerstorfer, A. 21, 77, 138
- Arnold, B. T. 91, 204
- Assis Rosa, A. 251
- Aufrecht, W. E. 4
- Baranowski, K. J. 19–20, 142, 159, 162, 165, 225, 259, 261, 299
- Barr, J. 24, 56, 134
- Barré, M. L. 276–277, 282, 286
- Beaulieu, P. A. 1
- Bechtel, W. 120–121, 124
- Beyer, K. 53, 68
- Bickel, B. 86
- Biggs, R. D. 12, 21, 67, 203
- Blois, R. de 46
- Bonesho, C. E. 22, 107, 112–113, 116, 119, 127
- Bordreuil, P. 3–4, 6, 8–10, 12, 18, 21–22, 47, 48–51, 53–54, 57, 60–61, 66–67, 73, 77–78, 82, 91, 103, 137, 141–145, 148–151, 153–155, 157, 159, 165, 171, 174, 182, 188, 195, 200, 203
- Borger, R. 244
- Boyd-Taylor, C. 27–29, 32, 36, 75, 134–135, 158, 189
- Brockelmann, C. 54
- Brongers, H. A. 204
- Brugnatelli, V. 261
- Cantineau, J. 230, 264–265, 294
- Caquot, A. 4, 148
- Catford, J. C. 24
- Chavel, S. 192
- Chesterman, A. 26–27, 29, 33, 158, 239, 242
- Choi, J. H. 91, 204
- Cicero, M. T. 118, 236
- Comrie, B. 86
- Cook, J. 219
- Cowley, A. E. 244–246
- Cross, F. M. 5, 54, 86
- Crouch, C. L. 235, 252–253, 260, 265, 269, 291, 295
- Dalley, S. 277
- Darbelnet, J. 52, 60
- Davis, M. T. 61
- Degen, R. 18
- Dewrell, H. 290–291
- Dion, P.-E. 4, 18, 49, 51, 144, 146, 148, 157, 171–172, 188, 232–233, 269
- Dobbs-Allsopp, F. W. 207
- Dohmen, C. 9, 10, 104–106, 157, 188
- Dossin, G. 230
- Dupont-Sommer, A. 230, 256, 258, 260–263
- Durand, J.-M. 256, 259, 262–263, 266, 269, 273, 276, 286, 289, 292–293, 301
- Dušek, J. 4–5, 10–13, 15, 21, 104, 137, 188
- Eidem, J. 166
- Eisner, J. 30
- Eph'al, I. 199
- Eshel, E. 207
- Estarán Tolosa, M. J. 115–116
- Even-Zohar, I. 28, 128
- Fales, F. M. 4, 10–17, 20–21, 53–54, 60, 65, 67, 92, 104, 106, 108, 126, 138, 145–146, 148–150, 154, 157, 166, 168, 171, 174, 176, 182, 186,

- 195–196, 201, 203, 225, 238, 296,
299
- Feeney, D. 236
- Fernández Marcos, N. 117
- Fitzmyer, J. A. 256, 258–259, 261–263,
275, 289, 293
- Frankena, R. 231–233, 251
- Freedman, D. N. 48, 51
- Fuchs, A. 295
- Galter, H. D. 2
- Garelli, P. 1
- Garr, R. 12
- Geeraerts, D. 120
- Gelb, I. J. 231
- Geller, M. J. 54
- Gellerstamm, M. 208
- Gibson, J. C. L. 257, 261
- Greenfield, J. C. 3–4, 12, 20–22, 50,
52–54, 57, 60–61, 67, 77, 82, 104,
138, 142–162, 165, 168, 171–172,
174, 179, 181–182, 194–200, 225,
244, 247–248, 262, 299
- Grillot-Susini, F. 244–247
- Groot, A. M. B. de 45, 119–125
- Gropp, D. M. 4, 10–11, 21, 50–54, 61,
91, 93, 95, 104, 138, 143, 147, 150–
155, 159, 162, 176, 178–179, 188,
191, 196, 199–200, 202
- Gzella, H. 15–16, 20, 53, 74, 219
- Hackett, J. A. 93
- Haines, B. L. 261
- Halverson, S. 45, 120–121
- Hamilton, G. J. 4
- Haspelmath, M. 86
- Hasselbach, R. 208
- Hawkins, J. D. 2, 179
- Healey, J. F. 145
- Heinz, J. 30
- Herrenschmidt, C. 244
- Hillers, D. R. 165, 172, 263
- Hinz, W. 244, 247
- Hoftijzer, J. 82, 90, 207
- Holmes, J. S. 26
- Holmstedt, R. D. 219
- Holz-Mänttari, J. 43
- Huehnergard, J. 12, 34, 50, 54, 57, 67,
86–89, 143, 145, 149, 153, 155, 159,
171, 179, 195, 203, 208
- Huffman, H. B. 86
- Hutton, J. M. 8, 22–23, 26, 28, 29, 33,
36–39, 41, 43, 55–56, 66, 75, 107,
115, 119, 127, 202, 233
- Idsardi, W. J. 30, 34
- James, P. 109, 111
- Janse, M. 20, 110–111
- Jastrow, M. 49, 157, 249
- Jongeling, K. 82, 90, 207
- Kager, R. 29–35, 84
- Karttunen, L. 29, 30
- Kaufman, S. A. 2, 4, 12, 22, 49, 51,
53–54, 57, 68, 77–78, 92–93, 95,
98–99, 142, 145, 148–155, 159, 165,
172, 174, 182, 199–200, 204
- Kitz, A. M. 290
- Klein, J. S. 248–249
- Kobele, G. 30
- Koby, G. S. 114
- Koch, C. 230, 235, 259–260, 268–270,
276, 286
- Koch, H. 247
- Koller, A. 145
- Korošec, V. 255
- Krašovec, J. 43
- Kroeze, J. H. 204
- Kurtz, P. M. 66
- Kutscher, E. Y. 18
- Lambdin, T. O. 34
- Langacker, R. W. 120
- Lauinger, J. 237
- Lefevre, A. 24
- Lehmann, C. 86
- Lemaire, A. 199, 256, 259, 262–263,
266, 269, 273, 276, 286, 289, 292–
293, 301
- Levi Della Vida, G. 111
- Levinson, B. M. 230–233
- Levý, J. 210, 222
- Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, B. 120
- Lewis, P. E. 114,
- Lewis, T. J. 4, 11, 21, 51, 53, 54, 61,
91, 93, 95, 104, 138, 143, 147, 150–
155, 159, 162, 176, 178–179, 188,
191, 196, 199–200, 202
- Lindenberger, J. M. 94
- Lipiński, E. 3–5, 7, 12–13, 21, 44, 50–
51, 53, 57, 60, 63–64, 67–68, 70, 74,
77, 93–95, 98–100, 142, 145–156,

- 159, 171–172, 174, 182–183, 199,
201, 204, 218, 293, 295
Liverani, M. 231
Llamas Fraga, L. 118
Louw, T. A. W. van der 134–135
Luckenbill, D. D. 264
- Maia, R. B. 251
Malamat, A. 293
Malbran-Labat, F. 244
Mayer, W. 171
Mazzoni, S. 296
McCarthy, D. J. 257, 259, 269, 273,
286–287
McCarthy, J. J. 32, 34
McElduff, S. 117–118, 236
Merwe, C. H. J. van der 47, 204
Meshel, Z. 207
Michel, E. 93, 116
Millard, A. R. 3–6, 8–10, 12, 21–22,
47–54, 57, 60–61, 66–67, 73, 77–78,
82, 91, 103, 137, 141–159, 165, 171,
174, 182, 188, 194–195, 200, 203,
255
Miller(-Naudé), C. L. 56, 219
Morrow, A. R. 66
Morrow, W. 269, 286
Mullen, A. 109, 111
Muñoz Martín, R. 208
Muraoka, T. 4, 18, 73–74, 159
Mushayabasa, G. 47, 56, 134, 236
Mynářová, J. 4–5, 10–15, 21, 104, 137,
188
- Naudé, J. A. 204
Naveh, J. 5, 245
Nida, E. A. 24
Nord, C. 26–27, 32–36, 43
- O'Brien, S. 45
O'Connor, M. 204, 206
Olmo Lete, G. del 68, 150
Otto, E. 232–234
- Pakkala, J. 234
Pardee, D. 12, 18, 21, 67, 159, 179, 203
Parpola, S. 3, 230–231, 237, 255, 264–
265, 268–269, 273–276, 282, 284,
286–289, 294, 301
Pat-el, N. 18, 201
Pavlenko, A. 124
Peiser, F. E. 263
Peters, K. 47
- Pięta, H. 251
Pietersma, A. 27, 36, 44–45, 75, 134
Porten, B. 94, 244, 247–248
Postgate, J. N. 82
Prince, A. 26, 29–37, 78, 84
Pritchard, J. B. 172, 289
Puech, E. 12, 61, 143–144, 159
Pym, A. 26, 32, 52, 60, 80, 114
- Quick, L. 5, 19–21, 51, 53, 62, 72,
113–114, 118–119, 138, 140, 144–
145, 154, 160–168, 199, 225, 230–
231, 255, 261, 299
- Radford, A. 97
Radner, K. 230, 234, 295
Ramón Guerrero, R. 118
Ramos, M. 15, 19–21, 140, 162, 165–
166, 168, 225, 230, 259–261, 299
Reiner, E. 289
Rendsburg, G. A. 148, 208
Reynolds, J. M. 111
Riggle, J. 30
Risku, H. 46
Röllig, W. 2
Ronzevalle, S. 256, 264
Rooy, H. F. van 257–259, 267, 270–
271
Rubach, J. 34
- Sachau, E. 244
Sader, H. S. 5
Sanders, S. L. 1, 179
Sasson, V. 4, 53, 61, 64, 143, 171, 194
Schmitt, R. 244, 246, 249–250
Screnock, J. 33
Segert, S. 91
Shaffer, A. 3–4, 12, 20–22, 50–54, 57,
60–61, 67, 77, 82, 104, 138, 142–
162, 165, 168, 171–172, 174, 179–
182, 194–200, 225, 299
Shead, S. L. 47, 86
Sherkina, M. 45, 125
Shreve, G. M. 114
Skjærvø, P. O. 248
Smolensky, P. 26, 29–37, 78, 84
Soden, W. von 51, 171
Sokoloff, M. 5, 49, 78, 199
Sommer, B. D. 8
Spycket, A. 5
Stadel, C. 69
Starcky, J. 230, 256, 258, 260–262
Stefanovic, Z. 1

- Steymans, H. U. 232–252, 255, 274
Stuckenbruck, L. T. 61
Swain, S. 20, 110–111
- Tadmor, H. 1–2, 255
Taylor, D. G. K. 111–115
Taylor, J. R. 120
Taylor, R. A. 146
Teixidor, J. 199
Tercedor, M. 46, 49, 125
Thompson, R. J. 256, 259
Thureau-Dangin, F. 54
Toury, G. 25–32, 128
Tropper, J. 199
Troxel, R. L. 134
Tsumura, D. T. 192
Tully, E. J. 134
- Vattioni, F. 4
Vermeer, H. J. 27, 33, 36
Vinay, J.-P. 52, 60
Voigtlander, E. N. von 244–247
- Wagner, J. R. 134
- Waltke, B. K. 204, 206
Ward-Perkins, J. B. 111
Watanabe, K. 230–231, 237, 255, 264–
268, 273–276, 282, 284, 287, 289,
294, 301
Weeks, N. 269
Weidner, E. F. 92–93, 162, 172, 264
Weinfeld, M. 48, 231–233, 251
Wilcke, C. 179
Wilson, A. 111–113
Wiseman, D. J. 146, 231, 240
Wolde, E. van 47
Wright, B. G. 75
Wright, D. P. 48
- Yamada, S. 2
Yardeni, A. 94, 247–248
Younger, K. L. 2–5, 8, 45, 54, 68–69,
74, 80, 166, 168, 294
Yun, I.-S. A. 159
- Zadok, R. 4, 21, 53–54, 68, 77, 91, 157,
171, 194
Zevit, Z. 5, 219

Subject Index

- abstraction (translational process) 52,
54–55, 80, 121, 158, 170
- Abyss (deity) 277, 286
- acceptability 27–28, 33, 37, 55, 75, 96,
101, 115, 134, 141, 297–298
- Adad 5, 60, 87, 141, 153, 201–202,
276, 282, 285 (see also “Hadad”)
- Adad-rēmāni 5, 44, 218, 295
- adequacy 27, 32, 37, 45, 101, 298
- Ahura-mazda 246–247
- apposition 18, 66, 70, 174, 179, 181–
183, 191, 281, 283
- Antu 276, 285
- Anu 276, 282, 285
- Aramaic dialects 46
- Early Standard (Central Syrian) 15
 - Mesopotamian 15, 21
 - word ordering 18–20
- Arpad 289–290, 294 (see also “Mati’ilu
[Mati’el] of Arpad”)
- gods of 277, 286
- Arslan Tash trilingual 2
- Aššur 92, 276–277, 282, 285
- Assurbanipal 231–232
- annals 165, 172
 - library 201
- Aššurnaširpal II 4
- Aššur-nerari V 23–24, 43, 102–103,
136, 162, 230–231, 255–296, 300–
301
- Azran 8, 13, 141, 156, 175, 201, 306
- Babu 276, 285
- Bar-Ga’yah of KTK 230, 256–263,
266–267, 278
- Behistun 234, 237, 243–251, 255
- Belet-ili 282
- Belshazzar 158
- bilingual composition 14, 20, 22–23,
25, 104, 106–119, 127–128, 130,
132–139, 141, 166, 168, 187, 200,
221, 225, 298–299
- bilingual inscriptions (/co-texts) 1, 6,
22, 77, 109–119, 127–128, 130, 137,
188, 196, 225–226, 229, 233, 238
- bilingualism 2, 20, 23, 107–109, 109–
132, 137–138, 225
- Bisotun (see “Behistun”)
- brief (see “commission”)
- broken plurals 53, 68
- Bukan 165, 167, 199, 260
- calque 54, 74, 82, 84–85, 101, 144,
146, 148, 233, 297
- candidates
- evaluation of/competition between
29–31, 35, 37, 44, 78, 81, 83, 87–89,
96–99, 162–164, 167–168, 204–207,
210, 214–215, 240–241
- code-switching 110
- commission (brief, *Skopos*) 28, 33, 35–
36
- cognate 38, 45–46, 48–51, 76, 78–79,
101, 125, 128, 134, 143, 145, 147,
149, 151, 158, 163, 170, 184, 191–
192, 195, 197, 199, 220, 249, 297
- cognition 119–133, 210
- cognitive load 45, 125, 147
- conceptual (/cognitive) priority 21–22,
107, 113–114, 127, 140, 166, 195
- constraints (definition) 30
- constraints,
- competition 34, 42, 55, 81, 83, 99,
281, 294
 - culture-specific 35–39, 56
 - DEPENDENCY (definition) 55–56

- faithfulness 32–33, 36–38, 41, 80, 169, 210, 294
- hierarchy of 33–37, 41–43, 44–47, 49–50, 56, 58, 64, 74, 76, 78–81, 83–85, 87–89, 96, 99–102, 135, 138–140, 142, 152, 159, 163–164, 180–186, 189, 193–194, 203–209, 218, 220, 222–226, 230–231, 239–241, 248–250, 253, 255, 281–282, 287, 292, 296, 298, 300
- IDENTITY (definition) 37, 55
- language-specific 35–39
- LINEARITY (definition) 56
- local 37, 39, 117
- markedness 32–33, 37, 39, 47, 75, 80, 202, 217, 236, 294
- MAXIMALITY (definition) 55–56
- hierarchy shifts 58, 104, 174–175, 206–207, 220
- universal 32–33, 35–39, 44, 80, 85, 255, 268, 272, 294, 296–297
- violations of (definition) 34–35
- construct (state/chain) 15, 17–18, 50, 57, 61, 63, 68, 78, 82, 140, 147, 157, 199–203, 219
- coordination/coordinating conjunction, 56–59, 75, 99, 101, 139, 143, 160, 172–176, 185, 190, 192, 196–197, 204, 206, 229, 248, 250, 268, 280, 298–299
- clause level 58, 185, 250
- phrase level 197
- curses 4, 20, 22, 82, 139–140, 146, 159–172, 185, 194, 196–197, 229, 231, 239–242, 244, 257–261, 263–264, 267–268, 270, 273, 287, 290–291

- Dagan 277, 285–286
- Damkina 276, 285
- Day (deity) 277, 286
- deities, identification of (see “fluidity”)
- deletion of **h* 15–16, 66
- demetaphorization 51
- demonstrative adjective 18, 147–149
- demonstrative pronoun 15, 18, 141, 146, 175, 194
- Descriptive Translation Studies 25–26, 29–36, 103, 135
- determination (of nouns) 69–70, 202
- determinative use of *ʔr* 17–18, 140–141, 156, 175–176, 194, 201
- Deuteronomy (as treaty text) 23–24, 43, 113, 138, 229–255, 296, 300–301
- directionality 14, 45, 109, 128–130, 139, 141–142, 156, 174, 200, 225–226, 299
- “distributive” memory 120
- Document Preservation Clause 267–268, 270–271
- domination (constraints) 33, 35, 37, 43, 47–49, 58, 69, 73, 76, 81, 83–85, 88, 100–101, 139–140, 142–143, 146, 151–152, 156, 160–161, 175, 178, 183–184, 186, 189, 202, 218, 221–222, 226, 248, 250, 272, 278, 281, 285, 294, 295
- “double-bilingualism” (see “bilingual composition”)
- dragoman 187, 218–220

- Ea 276, 282, 285
- Earth (deity) 277, 286
- ʾEl 277, 286
- Elephantine 82, 207, 244–245, 249
- ʾElyān 277, 286
- entrenchment 120–121, 139, 168, 214, 222, 225
- equivalence,
 - assumption of 31–32
 - departures from 77, 100, 104, 115, 187
 - dynamic equivalence 116
 - formal equivalence 28, 54, 114, 116–117, 198, 267, 297
 - notion of 119, 168
 - pragmatic equivalence 84, 184
 - “rough equivalence” 105–106, 133–134
 - semantic equivalence 132
- Esarhaddon 231, 283, 284, 295
- Vassal (/Succession) Treaty of 23–24, 43, 72, 102–103, 136, 229–255, 274, 282–284, 296, 300
- Eshmun 277, 285–286
- EVAL 29, 30, 210

- faithfulness (see “constraints, faithfulness”)
 fatality (violations) 35, 79, 81, 83, 88–89, 98, 204, 269
 “fluidity” 7–8
 futility curse 19, 139, 159–172, 239–242, 258, 260–261, 263, 282, 290
- Game Theory 210–215
 GEN 29, 210
 generalization. (see “abstraction”)
 genitive particle (ṛ) (see “periphrastic genitive”)
 genre 118
 Girra 276
 god list 267–268, 270, 273, 276–284, 284–291
 gods
 – dwelling in heaven and earth 283, 286
 – of Assyria 283
 – of the land 283
 – of the plain and cultivated ground 277, 285
 – of Sumer and Akkad 283
 grammar, 31–32, 34, 37, 84, 110, 185, 219
 – of translation 36, 41–42, 64, 76, 83, 102, 137, 241, 297
 grammaticality 31, 35, 37, 213–214
 Gula 276–277, 285
 Guzan 4, 7–13, 20, 44–45, 54–55, 58, 73–74, 80, 107–108, 119, 141–142, 147–148, 201, 218, 226–227, 294, 299, 303–306
 – dialect of 181
 – identification of 3, 105
- Hadad, 3, 11, 44, 51, 58, 62, 65, 71, 126, 141, 147, 159, 171, 175, 179, 181–183, 188, 201, 277, 285–287, 304, 306
 – of Aleppo 277
 – of Guzan 7–13, 304, 306
 – of Kurba'il 276, 285
 – of Sikan 7–13, 17, 63, 183, 304, 306
 Haddu-yiθ'i 5, 7, 13, 20, 44, 61–63, 65, 69, 70–74, 77, 80, 103, 107, 135,
- Haddu-yiθ'i (continued)*
 141, 147, 156, 159, 174, 201, 210–211, 218, 249, 295, 304, 306
 Heaven (deity) 277, 286
 Humhummu 276, 285
 hybridity 21, 110, 113, 127, 138, 227
- Illil 276, 282, 285
 Incirli trilingual 2, 78, 199
 Indirect Translation 251
 injunctive modality 85–89, 98–100, 147, 151, 161, 178
 interference 53, 74, 110, 128, 144, 146, 157, 208
 Inurta 287
 Ir 277
 isomorphism 24, 36, 50, 55–56, 61, 100, 112, 117–118, 134, 136, 144, 154, 172, 181, 198–199, 208, 220, 229, 272, 300
 Ištar 287, 289
 – of Arbela 276, 283, 285
 – of Nineveh 276, 283, 285
 Išum 276, 285
- Jerusalem Temple 158
 Judah 1
 Jupiter 282
- Kapara of Guzan 74
 Kadi'ah 277, 285
 Karhuha 277, 285–286
 king(ship) 76–81
 KTK (see “Bar-Ga'yah of KTK”)
 – gods of 277, 286
 Kubaba 277, 285
- Laš 276–277, 286
 lexical alternation 157–158
 localization 80, 143
- Madanu 276, 285
 Mahanaim 43
 Marduk 276–277, 282
 Mars 282
 Mati'ilu (Mati''el) of Arpad 102–103, 136, 162, 230, 255–267, 270–271, 275, 279, 287, 290–294, 300
 material presentation 22, 103, 127

- Melqart 277, 285–286
 Mercury 282
 mixed inscriptions 115–116
 monumental formula 93
 Mullissu (Mulleš) 276–277, 282
 Mušuruna 277, 285–286
- Nabû (Nabu) 276–277, 282
 Naqî'a (see “Zakutu”)
 negative adverb 151, 163, 167, 169,
 171, 177, 178,
 Neo-Assyrian Empire 1, 60, 76–81
 Nergal 146, 155, 173, 181–182, 198,
 200–201, 221, 238, 276–277, 282,
 286
 Night (deity) 277, 286
 Nikkal 276–277, 286
 Nikkar 277, 285
nil phonology 86–87
 Ninegal 276, 285
 Ningirsu 276, 285
 Ninurta 276, 285
 non-assimilation
 – of */ 15, 16
 – of *n 12, 16
 – of *t 13
 non-identity 132–136
 norms (translation) 26–29, 36–37, 41,
 43, 45, 55, 114, 134–135, 170, 248
 – constitutive 135
 – operational 27
 – regulative 134–135
 noun phrase 17, 59, 62–63, 86, 90–92,
 95–97, 104, 152, 163, 172, 176, 178,
 180–182, 193, 200–202, 211–214,
 217, 238–239, 242, 278–279, 283–
 284, 289
 Nur 276–277, 286
 Nusku (Nusk) 276–277, 282
- Optimal Translation 23, 25–39, 95
 Optimality Theory 29–39, 42, 76, 78,
 81, 89, 100
- pairwise comparison (constraints) 37,
 39, 41–43, 45, 76, 82, 100–101,
 139–140, 186, 222–225, 294
 Palil 277, 285
- periphrastic genitive (ṛ) 15, 17–18, 64,
 146–147, 151, 157, 185, 194, 200–
 203, 218–220, 226, 238, 298
 philological argumentation 89–100
 Phrase Structure Change 239
 preposition 56–59, 62, 65, 152, 174,
 175–180, 190, 193, 204, 206, 211–
 215, 280
 prepositional phrase 59–60, 63, 65, 68,
 89, 96, 147–148, 179, 181, 191, 193,
 211–213, 280
 pronoun 59–66, 70–72, 75, 89–92, 98,
 101, 190, 268, 278, 283, 298–299
 – demonstrative 15, 17, 141, 146, 194,
 201
 – indefinite 57, 89, 92, 96, 176, 193–
 194
 – relative 57, 149, 175, 201–202
 – personal object 13, 50, 59–66, 70–
 72, 75, 176, 178–179
 – personal possessive 15–16, 59–66,
 70–72, 75, 82, 92, 99, 137, 139–140,
 175, 178, 185, 202, 210
 proper noun 39, 147, 174, 200
 prototypicality 120
- quantification (of nouns) 16–17, 66–70,
 75, 101, 151, 268, 298
 quantitative equivalence 75, 249
- Rammān of Damascus 277, 285–286
 rank-shift 90, 97
 redundancy 62, 95, 176, 178
 refraction 24
 relative particle 18, 57, 63, 90–91, 96–
 97, 149, 176, 193–194, 201–202,
 208, 278–279, 284
 relative clause 62–64, 91, 97, 176, 221,
 278, 283
 rhetorical disjuncture 72
- Šala 3, 142, 174, 182, 198, 276, 285,
 305–306
 Šamaš (Shamash) 60, 276–277, 282,
 286
 Šamaš-nūri 4, 44, 77, 218, 294, 303–
 304
 Šamši-ilu 267, 293, 295, 301
 “sanctioning” 27–28, 30

- Saturn 282
- Sefire (Treaty) 23–24, 43, 70, 102–103, 136, 138, 165, 167, 170, 172, 230–231, 255–296, 300–301
- semantic shift 51–52, 249
- semantic spreading (redistribution) 98–99, 169–170, 176–178, 185, 190, 194
- Septuagint, translation of 27, 36, 45, 75, 124, 134, 158, 189
- sequentiality (of translation) 130–132
- Šerua 282
- Shalmaneser III 5, 93, 218
- Šibitti (Sibbit) 277, 287
- Sikan 7–13, 20, 45, 73, 80, 90, 119, 141–142, 147, 173, 175, 181, 201, 211, 226–227, 294, 299, 305–306
- identification of 3, 105
- Sin 276–277, 282, 286
- Sirius 282
- Skopos* (see “commission”)
- specification (translational process) 80, 158
- Springs (deity) 277, 286
- stipulations (treaty articles) 256–258, 262, 264, 267–268, 270, 278–279, 290, 292
- stock replacement 167–168
- storage (lexical vs. conceptual) 119–128, 203
- syntactic rearrangement 19, 42, 55, 64, 73–75, 139, 141, 146–147, 164, 180–183, 185, 193, 203, 234, 277, 281–282
- because of addition of Intro 61–64, 75, 185, 299
- tableau, tableaux
- computational power of 82, 89
- as methodological tools 37, 39, 42, 76–81, 81–97, 100, 161, 163–164, 167–168, 204–209, 212, 214, 240–241, 253, 286, 288
- Tašmetu (Tashmet) 276, 277
- Tell Fekheriyeh inscription
- composition process 7–13, 14–22, 42–43, 103–109, 137–138, 142–143, 226–227, 297–299
- discovery 3
- historical context 4
- spatial arrangement of 6
- text of 303–306
- Tušhan 4, 5
- untranslatability 85
- Uraš 276, 282, 285
- Venus 240, 242, 282
- verb-final word order (Akkadian) 19, 62, 74, 172, 181
- verbal phrase 50, 59, 61–63, 90–92, 95–96, 98, 163, 174, 178, 180–183, 191, 193, 212–213, 278–280, 283–284
- violations (see “constraints, violations of”)
- visual priority 22, 127
- VTE (see “Esarhaddon, Vassal [Succession] Treaty of”)
- Zababa 276, 285
- Zakutu 295
- Zarpanitu 276–277

Constraint Index

- AVOID LEXICAL REPETITION (*LEXREP) 187–190, 207, 220, 224
- AVOID NEW LOANS (*NEWLOAN) 81–85, 88, 100–101
- AVOID UNUSED CONSTRUCTIONS (*UNCONST) 208, 210
- CHANGE LINGUISTIC SYSTEM (CHLINGSYS) 39, 43–45, 55, 84–85, 100–101, 139–143, 184, 208, 222, 224–225, 266, 292, 294–295
- COORDINATION EXPLICITATION (EXPLIC-COORD) 56–59, 75, 89, 99–101, 143, 169, 172–175, 192, 196–197, 204–206, 212, 216–217, 222–225, 248, 250, 280, 285
- DEIXIS CONSTANCY (DEIXISCONS) 70–73, 75, 100–101, 137, 210–211, 223
- FAVOR AKKADIAN CONVENTIONS (FAVOR-AKK_CONV) 250
- FAVOR GENITIVE-ŷ (FAVOR-GEN-ŷ) 201–203, 220, 223, 226
- FAVOR LOCAL STATUS TITLES (FAVOR-LOC.TTL) 39, 76–81, 100–101, 156, 223
- FAVOR NORTHWEST SEMITIC CONVENTIONS (FAVOR-NWS_CONV) 59–64, 75, 100–101, 146, 159–172, 178, 185, 196, 222, 224, 239, 249, 268–272, 277, 281, 282, 284
- LEXICAL DEPENDENCY (DEP:LEX) 38, 46, 281, 285
- LEXICAL IDENTITY (IDENT:LEX) 38, 45–52, 55, 76, 78–79, 81–83, 85, 88, 96–97, 100–101, 125, 139–140, 143–144, 147, 149–152, 163–164, 167–168, 184, 187–190, 192, 208–209, 220, 223, 225, 248–249, 252, 280, 285, 287
- LEXICAL LINEARITY (LINEAR:LEX) 38, 46, 62, 64, 73–75, 83, 96–97, 100–101, 141, 164, 167, 172, 180–183, 186, 193–194, 206, 213, 215, 221, 223, 225, 281, 286
- LEXICAL MAXIMALITY (MAX:LEX) 38, 46, 88, 280–281, 285–286
- MORPHOLOGICAL DEPENDENCY (DEP:MORPH) 38, 56–60, 64–70, 75, 87, 89–90, 96–97, 100–101, 140, 146, 160, 163, 167, 172–175, 175–180, 190–193, 194–198, 201–203, 205–206, 209, 212, 220–225, 238–239, 254, 280
- MORPHOLOGICAL IDENTITY (IDENT:MORPH) 38, 46–49, 51, 55, 59–60, 65, 70–73, 75–76, 87–88, 96–98, 100–101, 137, 140, 146, 151–152, 161–164, 167, 170, 205–206, 210, 214, 222–225, 239, 242, 248, 254, 287
- MORPHOLOGICAL LINEARITY (LINEAR:MORPH) 38, 56
- MORPHOLOGICAL MAXIMALITY (MAX:MORPH) 38, 59–65, 75, 82–85, 88, 96–97, 99, 100–101, 152, 174, 193–194, 221, 223–225, 238, 241, 250, 254, 278, 280, 287–288
- NORTHWEST SEMITIC SYNTACTIC ORDERING (NWS-SYN) 73–75, 96–97, 100–101, 180–183, 193–194, 204–205, 213–214, 221–223, 225, 236, 269
- OMIT COORDINATION (OMIT-COORD) 250
- PHRASAL DEPENDENCY 239
- PHRASAL MAXIMALITY 238–239, 280
- POSTPOSITIVE DEFINITE ARTICLE 56

- PRAGMATIC LEXICAL CORRESPONDENCE
(IDENT:PRAG.LEX) 52–55, 76–77,
79–81, 83–84, 100–101, 143, 152–
172, 184–185, 192–193, 200, 205,
212–213, 222–224, 249–250, 281
- PRAGMATIC CLAUSAL
CORRESPONDENCE (IDENT:PRAG.CL)
213, 216–217, 223–224, 281–282
- PREPOSITION EXPLICITATION
(EXPLIC-PREP) 58–59, 100–101,
175–180, 190, 204–206, 211–213,
215–216, 222–225
- PRONOUN EXPLICITATION (EXPLIC-PRO)
64–66, 75, 89, 99–101, 175–180,
190, 201, 222–223
- QUANTIFIER EXPLICITATION
(EXPLIC-QUANT) 66–70, 75, 100–
101, 223
- SEMANTIC EXPLICITATION
(EXPLIC-SEM) 190–193, 212, 223
- SEMANTIC FRAME EXPLICITATION (EX-
PLIC-FRAME) 178, 194–198, 223
- SEMANTIC IDENTITY (IDENT:SEM) 38–
39, 45–55, 76–85, 88–89, 96–101,
125, 140, 143, 146–147, 149–172,
184, 192, 197, 204–205, 207, 209,
212–216, 222–225, 242, 248–249,
252, 254, 280–281, 287–288, 295
- SYNTACTIC CONSTANCY (SYNCONS)
73–75, 100–101, 141, 164, 180–183,
186, 213, 222–223, 269, 281
- SYNTACTIC DEPENDENCY (CLAUSE)
(DEP:SYN.CL) 161, 163–164, 167,
222–224, 248, 250
- SYNTACTIC IDENTITY (IDENT:SYN) 64,
82–85, 88, 96–101, 139–140, 147–
149, 160–162, 170, 184, 191–193,
202, 205–207, 214, 220, 222–225,
239, 242, 254, 280, 288
- SYNTACTIC IDENTITY (CLAUSE)
(IDENT:SYN.CL) 242
- SYNTACTIC IDENTITY (PHRASE)
(IDENT:SYN.PHR) 242
- SYNTACTIC MAXIMALITY (CLAUSE)
(MAX:SYN.CL) 248, 254
- TRANSLITERATE PROPER NOUNS
(TRPROPNS) 39, 43–45, 55, 85,
100–101, 139–143, 184, 200, 221–
222, 225, 267, 277, 285, 291–292,
294–295
- TRANSLITERATE UNTRANSLATABLE
TERMS (TRUNTRANS) 85, 101, 225
- VERBAL EXPLICITATION (EXPLIC-VERB)
59, 100–101, 189–190, 212, 223