

# “I constructed palaces throughout my country” establishing the Assyrian provincial order : the motif and its variants

**Mario Liverani**

IN **REVUE D'ASSYRIOLOGIE ET D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ORIENTALE** 2012/1 Vol. 106 , PAGES 181 TO 191  
PUBLISHER **PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES DE FRANCE**

ISSN 0373-6032

ISBN 9782130593768

DOI 10.3917/assy.106.0181

Uploaded: 01/17/2014

Article available online at

<https://shs.cairn.info/revue-d-assyriologie-2012-1-page-181?lang=en>



Discover the contents of this issue, follow the journal by email, subscribe...  
Scan this QR code to access the page for this issue on Cairn.info.



**Electronic distribution Cairn.info for Presses Universitaires de France.**

You are authorized to reproduce this article within the limits of the terms of use of Cairn.info or, where applicable, the terms and conditions of the license subscribed to by your institution. Details and conditions can be found at [cairn.info/copyright](http://cairn.info/copyright).

Unless otherwise provided by law, the digital use of these resources for educational purposes is subject to authorization by the Publisher or, where applicable, by the collective management organization authorized for this purpose. This is particularly the case in France with the CFC, which is the approved organization in this area.

**“I CONSTRUCTED PALACES THROUGHOUT MY COUNTRY”  
ESTABLISHING THE ASSYRIAN PROVINCIAL ORDER:  
THE MOTIF AND ITS VARIANTS**

BY  
Mario LIVERANI

**1. THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD.**

The growth of the Assyrian empire can be followed in the archaeological record especially thanks to a very specific marker, the Assyrian provincial palace. Other markers - like pottery and other objects, even tablets – couldn't exist without a palace, the administrative centre of the newly organized province. Of course the texts tell a much more detailed story about the growth of the empire, but even in case we had no texts (I admit: it is hard to imagine Assyria without the Assyrian texts!) we could follow the progressive dissemination of the palaces as a proxy for a major political process.

Thanks to the combined evidence of texts and archaeology, we can outline three major phases in the spread of the Neo-Assyrian palaces. In a first phase, from early-11<sup>th</sup> to mid-9<sup>th</sup> century, the Assyrian kings were engaged in recovering the territory already conquered by their Middle Assyrian predecessors, namely Tukulti-Ninurta I and Tiglath-pileser I, therefore disseminating palaces in the area between the Euphrates and the Zagros piedmont, the area that we can define “Assyria Proper”. After a century of exploration (Shalmaneser III) and rest (“feudal” period), the second phase came, restricted to the second half of 8<sup>th</sup> century (Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II), when the Assyrian kings conquered most of the outer provinces, in the wider space from central Iran to the Mediterranean and the border of Egypt. In the third phase, the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the empire had already been built, apart from minor details, and the military campaigns in distant countries of major (Egypt, Susiana) or minor (Bazu) relevance did not produce new provinces – and some of the north-western provinces could not be preserved.

While some of the Assyrian provincial palaces<sup>1</sup> are known since long (Guzana/Tell Halaf, Arslantash, Til-Barsip, Zincirli, Megiddo, and a few others), several have been excavated and/or published more recently (like Dur-Katlimmu and Tille<sup>2</sup>), or quite recently (like Ziyaret Tepe,<sup>3</sup> Mezraa,<sup>4</sup> Tell Barri), so that in some regions the summaries provided 20 years ago are already outdated.<sup>5</sup> In addition to new digs (and salvage interventions), also the resumption of old ones can produce positive results: at Arslantepe we cleaned a building (A1139+), adjacent to the site of the “Lions Gate”, that Louis Delaporte excavated some 70 years ago<sup>6</sup> but could not publish because of his tragic, untimely death in a Nazi concentration camp. The stratigraphy and to some extent also the plan (only the stone foundations

1. Manuelli 2009 provides the basic references.

2. On Tille see also French 1987; 1988; Summers 1990.

3. On Ziyaret see also Matney 2003 (with fig. 6 on p. 242); and more reports in the same series until Matney et al., 2009 (with fig. 7 on p. 519).

4. Karul et al., 2002; 2003; Özdoğan et al. 2004.

5. Russell 1987 for south-east Turkey.

6. A schematic plan in Delaporte 1940, Pl. XI.

being preserved) tell that it is an Assyrian building, probably part of a wider complex,<sup>7</sup> built shortly after Sargon's conquest of Melid in 712 BC.

## 2. THE LITERARY MOTIFS AND THEIR VARIATIONS.

The same trajectory of growth, stabilization, and final decline can be followed on the royal inscriptions. This is generally and obviously done (since long) by following the available information about military expeditions, conquests, destructions, establishment of new provinces, reign by reign (or even year by year). Another possible approach is to analyze the literary motifs that the authors of the inscriptions used in order to describe recurrent actions by means of a recurrent imagery. The set of motifs is rather standardized in general terms, yet it is subject to change both in frequency of use and in stylistic variations. As compared to the bare count of the recorded "events", the literary approach allows to collect additional information of a more qualitative nature, pertaining not to the event in its material terms, but to its connotations and to its appreciation by the authors and their public, in other words revealing the ideological principles that provided the basic justification for the action.

The analysis of the recurrent motifs and their characterization is a more common practice in the realm of visual art (the study of the so-called "historical reliefs"), but its application to the literary production is as well promising – and it is in fact a current practice in other cultural horizons. Moreover, the two analyses (on the sculptured and the written programs) should go side by side, and be mutually helpful.

I want to quote here just a small example: the recurrent problem of dating the "White Obelisk" (which mentions an Ashurnasirpal as eponym, and has been therefore attributed to Ashurnasirpal I or to Ashurnasirpal II),<sup>8</sup> has recently received an interesting solution by Holly Pittman,<sup>9</sup> who suggested that the monument belongs to Ashurnasirpal I, but its imagery was copied from (or at least inspired by) the lost reliefs in the Ninevite palace of Tiglath-pileser I.<sup>10</sup> Such a proposal can find an additional support in the image of case D1, illustrating the motif of the "difficult road", to be surmounted by the heroic king to arrive at the site of confrontation with the enemies. Now, the general motif is so widely used that could not provide any reasonable "date". But the image in D1 makes use of a specific sub-motif, namely that the mountain track is so steep that the king has to dismount from chariot and proceed by foot, while his soldiers lead the horses by hand and carry the chariot on their shoulders. This sub-motif is not only specific, but also quite rare: it is in fact used by Tiglath-pileser I,<sup>11</sup> but is eventually abandoned, to reappear only once under Sargon II<sup>12</sup> and more often under Sennacherib,<sup>13</sup> to disappear again and forever in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In particular Ashurnasirpal II, while repeatedly describing the mountain path as "unsuited to the passage of chariots and soldiers" (*ana mēteq narkabāte u šābē lā šaknū* or the like),<sup>14</sup> never uses the specific notation of the king dismounting and the chariot being carried on the necks of his soldiers.

Note that Ashurnasirpal I had specific political reasons to look for a direct connection with his grandfather Tiglath-pileser I, bypassing his uncles Ashared-apil-Ekur and Ashur-bel-kala and his cousin Eriba-Adad II. In fact Shamshi-Adad IV, father of Ashurnasirpal I, was an usurper who went back from a

7. See Liverani 2010, fig. 1; the building seems to continue southwards at a higher elevation on the terraced slope.

8. Ashurnasirpal I: see esp. Reade 1975; Ashurnasirpal II: see esp. Sollberger 1974; followed by RIMA 3, pp. 254-256. An intermediate king (Tiglath-pileser II): von Soden 1975.

9. Pittman 1995; see also Harmanşah 2007.

10. RIMA 2, p. 55: 75-77, 87-88.

11. RIMA 2, p. 16 (69-77), p. 25 (vi 51-53) and especially p. 18 (iii 41-47). On the motif of the "Difficult Road", waiting for my own study (see below), see Ponchia 2004.

12. Mayer 1983, pp. 102-103 (330-332).

13. Chicago Prism OIP II, p. 26 (i 66-71), and parallel passages in the Bellino, Rassam and Jerusalem prisms.

14. RIMA 2, pp. 196 (i 45-46), 206 (ii 62-63), 207 (ii 76-77), 209 (ii 95-96), 240 (i 65), 247 (iii 56-58, 62-65), 249-250 (iv 31-35), 259 (60-62); already in Adad.nirari II: RIMA 2, p. 152 (82-84).

Babylonian exile, already in an advanced age, and drove Eriba-Adad from the throne.<sup>15</sup> Ashurnasirpal I, son of a usurper and in need of legitimacy,<sup>16</sup> but unable to carry out any major military success of its own (possibly for health reasons,<sup>17</sup> beside the troubled period), tried to enhance his quite modest campaigns by making them a kind of repetition of his grandfather’s enterprises.

Going back to the “Palace” motif, this is variously present in the Assyrian royal inscriptions, in the first phase (10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries) adapted to the ideological climate of the *Reconquista*, and then especially in the second phase (8<sup>th</sup> century) adapted to the major program of building the outer provinces, under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II. Both sub-types are under study, in the frame of a general collection and analysis of the basic motifs in the series “Domesticating the Periphery. Exploration, Conquest, Organization of the Assyrian Empire”, that I hope to be able to carry out to a positive end in the next years. I want here just to anticipate some of the results, in honor of a colleague and friend who devoted a relevant part of his amazing scholarly activity to the Assyrian palaces.

### 3. CENTRAL VS. PERIPHERAL PALACES.

At the culmination of the *Reconquista* phase, under Ashurnasirpal II, there is a clear, explicit connection between a successful campaign and the building of a provincial palace in the newly conquered and reorganized city. On the one hand, the appointment of the Assyrian administration in a city or country that had been previously lost to the chaotic forces of the surrounding enemies is the logical outcome (and the very purpose) of the campaigns. On the other hand, the acquisition of human and material resources is the necessary pre-requirement for the building activity.

In particular, the campaign of the second year, culminating in the conquest of Nairi, was followed by the building of a palace at Tushkhan.<sup>18</sup> The fourth campaign, culminating in the conquest of Zamua, was followed by the building of a palace at Dur-Ashur.<sup>19</sup> And the ninth campaign, ending on the Mediterranean shore, was marked by the opening of an (already existing?) palace at Aribua.<sup>20</sup>

When the recovery of Assyria proper was already in an advanced stage, work begun for building the central royal palace, in the new capital city at Kalkhu. The parallelism is clear: one campaign led to building one provincial palace; the entire set of campaigns led to building the central palace. In the Annals of Ashurnasirpal II, a first narrative of the building of Kalkhu (the Ninurta temple) is inserted – breaking the annalistic pattern – in between a first set of five campaigns, and a second set of another five campaigns. Then the major narrative of the building of Kalkhu (and the royal palace) follows, and the passage is preceded, both in Annals and in other inscriptions as well, by a general (and quite standardized) summary of the accomplished conquests. Probably, works at Kalkhu started after the first set of campaigns, to be completed after the second set. Already after the first set, conquests in the north (Tumme, Kirruri, Khabkhu *ša bētāni*, campaign IA), in the south (Khabur and Middle Euphrates, campaign IB), in the west (Kashiyari and Nairi, campaigns II and V) and in the east (Zamua, campaigns III and IV) allowed the king to boast prominence above rulers “of the four quarters” (ii 126-127), implying domain over the entire world. After the second set, the same idea is expressed more firmly, with the title “king of the four quarters” (iii 131). And the connection between the acquisition of the human and material resources, and architectural accomplishment remains mostly implicit, but is hinted at the end: “I rebuilt this city (= Kalkhu). I took people which I had conquered from the lands over which I had gained dominion [list follows], I settled them therein” (iii 133-134).

Considering Ashurnasirpal’s pattern of a set of peripheral palaces in the provinces, plus a central palace in the capital city, we expect to find something similar also in the texts of Sargon II, who built his

15. From the Assyrian King List, see lastly Glassner 2004, pp. 142-143.

16. Shamshi-Adad IV (or Ashurnasirpal I himself) was probably the author of a legitimizing chronicle inserted in the King List, see Liverani 2011.

17. See his prayer to Ishtar, in Seux 1976, pp. 497-501; Foster 1993, pp. 239-242.

18. Annals, RIMA 2, p. 202: ii 3-12; also in the Nimrud Monolith, RIMA 2, pp. 242-243: ii 6-36.

19. Annals, RIMA 2, p. 208: ii 84-86.

20. Annals, RIMA 2, p. 218: iii 81-82.

palace in the new capital city of Dur-Sharrukin, and of Sennacherib, who built his palace in the renovated capital city of Nineveh. But this is not so: the boast of building palaces, which had been so relevant from the 9<sup>th</sup> century down to Tiglath-pileser III, disappeared under Sargon and Sennacherib, as if it was no longer considered an important aspect in the provincial organization. I have no explanation for this fact, which contrasts with the enduring habit of building provincial palaces under the Sargonids, as proved by the archaeological record.

We can just hypothesize that, as the empire had grown bigger (under Tiglath-pileser), the task of palace building was entrusted to the governors, no longer to the king himself, and therefore disappeared from the royal boasts. Note that the emblematic sentence used as a title for this article derives from the *Reconquista* phase, when the recovery of an ordered and functional Assyria was brought into being by a set of building and administrative/fiscal measures, all over the “Land of Assur”. After a phase (Shalmaneser III) when no new palaces had to be built because the enlargement took place by means of indirect rule, the new project of an extended empire had a different configuration, and a different focus on governors and deportees. In this sense, Tiglath-pileser’s use of the palace building sub-motif seems an inheritance from the past, to be immediately and totally dismissed as soon as the new project became a reality.

#### 4. PALACES AND GOVERNORS.

During the crucial phase when most of the outer provinces were conquered and organized, namely under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II, the motif I called “Palaces and Governors” is in principle characterized by a double statement, one related to the building of the provincial palace (*āla ana eššūte epēšu, ekalla nadû*), and another to the appointment of the Assyrian governor (*šūt-rēši ana bēl pīhāti šakānu*). Apart from different stylistic levels (Tiglath-pileser being especially simple and repetitive) and specific idiosyncrasies, we expect an equal treatment of the same *topos* by the scribes of two kings so strictly close in time and in operative programs. A statistical count of the presence/absence of the two sub-motif (Tab. 1) tells a different story. The fact that the general statements are more frequently used under Tiglath-pileser, can be simply due to a more traditional style (as compared to the more original Sargon). But the insistence on palace building in Tiglath-pileser, almost three times more frequent than in Sargon, cannot be devoid of a specific meaning – and the hypothesis advanced in the previous paragraph seems pertinent here. On the other hand, the mention of the governors’ appointment has very high percentages under both kings (this is in fact the core of the motif, in the 8<sup>th</sup> century), but the difference of 20% is statistically meaningful. Even more meaningful are the differences as regards fiscal charges (five times more frequent under Sargon) and deportees (two times more frequent under Sargon). By combining all these differences in dosing the sub-motifs, we get the impression that Tiglath-pileser although “obliged” to mention the appointment of governors, tried to obtain a more balanced effect by underscoring the building of palaces as well. On the other hand, Sargon’s insistence on governors is the highest possible, and is sided by major details about the management of the provinces, to the detriment of the palace building (which is totally ignored, since the idioms about the “weapon of Assur” and the name-giving are not properly architectural).

Such differences can be explained by a general trend in the historical context, and by personal reasons. The general trend is related to the shift from the first to the second phases as described above. At the beginning (and a quite abrupt one, at that) of the new imperial program, Tiglath-pileser still made use of traditional motifs, including the reference to palace building, only introducing the governors sub-motif; while Sargon achieved a complete change, by discarding traditional statements and palace building, by over-emphasizing the new features: the role of the governors and the references to deportees.

But also the personal reasons are clear and notorious. Tiglath-pileser III, as soon as he seized the throne, acted with utmost resolution to put an end to the power and the ambitions of the most important (even half-independent) governors. The willingness to underscore his own centrality is also noticeable in the use of the *qati kašādu* idiom “to seize/conquer by his own hand” (double frequency as compared to Sargon). On the contrary, the usurper Sargon appears to positively underscore the role of the governors, who were taken from the ranks of the officers who had helped him during the civil war ending in his

enthronement. This is conformed by (and most evident in) the visual programme, where the long lines of courtiers (both bearded and eunuchs) are characteristic of Sargon’s reliefs – much more than those of his father.

### 5. NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CORRELATIONS.

Some interesting results can be achieved by tabulating the positive correlations between various idioms and actions. The case with the idiom *ana eššūte šabātu* “to take over for renovation / reorganization”, “to arrange anew” seems especially meaningful. In the passages of Sargon II there is a total correlation (12 cases out of 12) between this idiom and the mention of incoming deportees (Tab. 2): the renovation of a conquered province is basically a turnover of people, the new order could not be established unless the former “guilty” inhabitants be substituted by new ones. This would look all to normal, were it not for the fact that previously, during the 9<sup>th</sup> century, such a correlation did not exist. In the texts of Ashurnasirpal II, two idioms were in use: *ana eššūte šabātu* and *ana ramāni šabātu* “to seize for himself”, which at a first impression could be considered as equivalent, since both are referred to newly conquered cities or countries. At a closer analysis, however, the two idioms have different implications, and both are different from the usage in Sargon II. The first is rather connected to references to the building activities (both in the provincial cities and in the central capital of Kalkhu); the second (which disappears in the 8<sup>th</sup> century) to administrative/fiscal measures, especially the forced afflux of straw and corn. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, therefore, the renovation was perceived as related to buildings rather than people.

If we consider that under Sennacherib the *ana eššūte šabātu* idiom loses again the strict connection with deportees, a meaningful historical trajectory can be reasonably suggested. In a first phase, when conquests took place inside the “Land of Assur”, we have an architectural an administrative reorganization, with no incoming deportees (just some outgoing prisoners). In the second phase, when the outer provinces were conquered, the policy of mixing people by cross-deportations became paramount (and should refer also to Tiglath-pileser III, who however makes a very limited use of the *ana eššūte šabātu* idiom). In a third phase (Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal) the organization of new provinces was no longer a relevant item in the agenda, and the *ana eššūte šabātu* idiom was used in a loose sense, i.e. with varied connections (Tab. 5).

As much evident are the negative correlations. In Tab. 3 I have collected those between the “yoke” idiom (*nīr* <sup>d</sup>*Aššur* or *nīr bēlūti emēdu / šakānu*), synthesizing the obligations of the countries submitted to Assyrian dominance,<sup>21</sup> and the more specific mentions of tribute delivery and corvée work. Note that our reference *corpus* is limited to the passages in which the motif “Palaces and Governors” is present (in whatever form), so that some additional pertinent passages could have been neglected; yet I am confident that the collected passages may be considered a sufficient statistical sample. Now, it is evident that in each passage the presence of the yoke idiom excludes the mention of tribute and labour, and vice-versa. Such an alternation cannot mean that tribute and forced labour were not part of the “yoke”: quite the contrary, they were its basic manifestations. The explanation is the reverse: when the scribe made use of the yoke metaphor, he considered its material/explicit terms as unnecessary; and vice-versa. Metaphor and technical terms were reciprocally redundant.

### 6. DESTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION.

The burden of the destructive actions is paramount in Assyrian representations, both visual and textual, to the point of providing the neat impression of a purposeful display of violence, overbearing and even sadism.<sup>22</sup> In Assyrian ideology, however, this is a first, necessary, step, to be followed by a second step, reconstruction. Just like in mud-brick architecture it proved necessary to remove a shaky wall down to the bottom of its foundation, in order to rebuild it anew, so also in the general imperial project it was necessary to cancel out all the features of the previous order (or better: disorder!) before constructing the

21. See Postgate 1992.

22. On the ideology of violence (and its exaggerations) see Dalley 2005.

definitive, perfect, cosmic order. Destruction and reconstruction are both on the fore in the royal inscriptions, but our problem is to understand whether the connection between the two phases was intentionally pursued by the scribes, or it was just a mechanical issue of the sequence of the operations.

The only way to solve this problem is a statistical count of the relationships between the negative/destructive premises and the positive/reconstructive effects of the provincial organization. We can select three parallel aspects: demographic (outgoing vs. incoming deportees), architectural (destruction of old palaces vs. building of governors' residencies), and political (elimination of former local kings vs. appointment of Assyrian governors). The results of the statistical count, as applied to the entire set of passages in which the motif "Palaces and Governors" is used, is interesting, although not totally consistent (Tab. 4).

Incoming deportees are mentioned or described in a percentage of 38.6% of the entire set of passages. But the percentage becomes almost the double (73.7%) when mention had been previously made of outgoing deportees. The connection between the two actions is positively established. It remains to be decided, however, whether this is the result of an explicit scribal intent, or simply a consequence of the chain of events – in the sense that no incoming deportees could be introduced unless the space had been freed by deporting part of the local population. The lexical analysis seems to favour the second alternative, because the consistency of the choices is not firm enough to imply an intentional cross-reference. Note also (Tab. 5) that mention of outgoing deportees (*itti nišē māṭ Aššur manū*) was more frequent in the 9<sup>th</sup> (but war prisoners were often hinted at), while the mention of incoming deportees (*nišē māṭāti ina libbi šušubu*) grows suddenly under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II. In this case the historical explanation is obvious: the boast of taking prisoners applies to all forms of conquest, while the boast of implanting new people is specifically linked to the provincial organization as carried on by the two great conquerors of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (and almost completed after them).<sup>23</sup> Note also (in the same Tab. 5) that the technical idiom for governors' appointment displaces the more general idiom previously in use; and that the fiscal charges of an indirect type leave place to the all-encompassing yoke metaphor.

The architectural sub-motif provides similar results (see again Tab. 4). The construction of Assyrian buildings (mostly governors' palaces) is mentioned in 32.5% of the entire set of passages, but it becomes 60.0% (also in this case almost the double) when the destruction of the local buildings (including the local royal palaces) had been previously recorded. The super-position of the Assyrian buildings to the local ones is quite clear in the archaeological record: just think at the case of Megiddo (the pre-conquest level IV vs. the Assyrian level III), or also at many other cases stretching from Palestine to Northern Syria, Upper Mesopotamia, and South-Eastern Turkey, including the Arslantepe superposition of the Assyrian building A1139+ to the local pillared hall A1142. Note that it is not just a matter of new buildings, but of an entire re-shaping of the urban planning, substituting a regular ("cosmic", in fact proto-Hippodamean) pattern to the previous city-plan characterized by disorder and by the centrality of an unlawful power (the local royal palace).

On the other hand, the third sub-motif provides different results. The appointment of the Assyrian governors is mentioned in 84.2% of the entire set of passages, but in 79.4% of those passages that had previously mentioned the elimination (be it physical or just political) of the local ruler. At a first impression, this datum seems discord, and we could not find a historical reason thereof. But we have to take into account that the mention of the governors' appointment is over-represented in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, when the standard idiom *šūt-rēši ana bēl pīḫāti šakānu* became the core of the entire motif. The presence of the sub-motif is almost total, with a frequency much higher than the two other sub-motifs – to the point that few space is left for a difference between the two sub-sets (with or without the elimination of local rulers): in statistical terms, the difference between 79.4% and 82.4% is negligible in a sample of limited dimension. We could say that the connection between the destructive and constructive phases, that in the two first sub-motifs could be established by way of contrast, could not be appreciated in the third sub-motif because of its ubiquitous presence.

23. Cf. the summary table in Oded 1979, p. 20, in which, however, no distinction is made between outgoing and incoming deportees.

period		Tiglath-pileser III		Sargon II	
number of passages		39 (100%)		64 (100%)	
general	<i>māta (ana pāt gimri) bēlu</i>	6 (15.4%)	44 (112.8%)	12 (18.75%)	29 (45.3%)
	<i>qati kašādu</i>	13 (33.3%)		11 (17.2%)	
	<i>ana libbi/mišir māti turru</i>	25 (64.1%)		6 (9.4%)	
palace	<i>ana eššūte epēšu / banū</i>	10 (25.6%)	28 (71.8)		16 (25.0%)
	<i>ēkalla nadū</i>	4 (10.3%)			
	<i>šalmu / kaku</i>	7 (17.9%)		10 (15.6%)	
	<i>šuma nabū</i>	7 (17.9%)		6 (9.4%)	
gover.	<i>šūt-rēši ana bēl pīhāti šakānu</i>	31 (79.5%)	32 (82.1%)	60 (93.75%)	66 (103.1%)
	<i>šaknūte šakānu</i>	1 (2.6%)		6 (9.4%)	
fiscal charges	<i>nīr bēlūti šakānu / emēdu</i>	1 (2.6%)	3 (7.7%)	12 (18.7%)	23 (35.9%)
	<i>urdūta epēšu + tupšikka emēdu</i>			3 (4.7%)	
	<i>bīlta maddatta šakānu / maḥāru</i>	2 (5.1%)		8 (12.5%)	
deportees	<i>ana eššūte šabātu</i>	2 (5.1%)	16 (41.0%)	17 (26.6%)	56 (87.5%)
	<i>nišē māt(at)i ina libbi šūšubu</i>	11 (28.2%)		29 (45.3%)	
	<i>itti nišē māt Aššur manū</i>	3 (7.7%)		10 (15.6%)	

Tab. 1. - “Palaces and Governors”: the basic idioms, Tiglath-pileser vs. Sargon.

Text	Province	Idiom	deportees follow
Fuchs 1998, p. 25: 5	Kishesim	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 211: 62	Harhar	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 127: 213	Til Garimmu	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 217: 82	Til Garimmu	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Gadd 1954, p. 183: v 67	Kammanu	<i>mātāte ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Gadd 1954, p. 183: v 67	Gurgum	<i>mātāte ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 134: 253	Ashdod	<i>ālāni ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 221: 107	Ashdod	<i>ālāni ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Weidner 1941-44, p. 50: B6	Ashdod	<i>ālāni ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 178: 408	Kummuh	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Fuchs 1993, p. 223: 115	Kummuh	<i>āla ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x
Gadd 1954, p. 179: iv 2	Kummuh	<i>māta ana eššūte ašbat</i>	x

Tab. 2. - Sargon II: the *šabātu*-idiom and its connection to incoming deportees.

Province	Text	tribute	corvée	“yoke”
Samaria	Fuchs 1993, pp. 87-88: 15-17	x		
	Fuchs 1993, p. 197: 24-25	x		
Harhar	Fuchs 1998, pp. 27-28: IIIc 6-9			x
	Malbran-Labat 2004, p. 347: dr. 33-36			x
Bit Barutash	Fuchs 1993, p. 125: 202-204		x	
	Fuchs 1993, p. 200: 32	x		
Gurgum	Fuchs 1993, pp. 127-128: 213-220		x	
	Fuchs 1993, p. 217: 82-83		x	
Ashdod	Fuchs 1993, pp. 134-135: 253-254			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 221: 107-109			x
	Weidner 1941-44, p. 50: B 6-11			x
Gambulu	Fuchs 1993, pp. 142-143: 275-281	x		
Kummuh	Fuchs 1993, pp. 178-179: 408-411			x
	Fuchs 1993, pp. 223-224: 115-117			x
Carchemish	Fuchs 1993, p. 94: 75-76			x
Hama	Malbran-Labat 2004, p. 347: dr. 57-65	x		
	Thompson 1940, p. 87: 20	x		
Detailed Summaries	Fuchs 1993, p. 196: 22-23			x
	Fuchs 1993, pp. 77-78: 26-27			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 251: 20-23			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 252: 16-18			x
	Fuchs 1993, pp. 256-257: 20-23			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 274: 26-28			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 266: 87-89			x
	Frame 2004, p. 101: 17-19			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 34: 16	x		
	Thompson 1940, pp. 87-88: 14			x
	Frame 1999, p. 37: 36			x
	Hawkins 2004, p. 154: 11-13	x		
Generic Summaries	Fuchs 1993, p. 56: 11-13	x		
	Gadd 1954, p. 199: 14-15	x		
	Fuchs 1993, p. 46: 23-25	x		
Additions to Provinces	Mayer 1983, p. 110: 410		x	
	Fuchs 1993, pp. 147-148: 286-288	x		
	Fuchs 1993, p. 77: 19-20			x
	Levine 1972, pp. 38-39: 32	x	x	
Additions to Vassals	Fuchs 1998, p. 38: V b-d 37-39			x
	Fuchs 1993, p. 93: 70-71	x		
	Fuchs 1993, p. 199:29	x		

Tab. 3. - Complementarity between tribute/corvée and “yoke” motif.

incoming deportees	following outgoing deport.	73.7%
	on total corpus	38.6%
building actions	following destructions	60.0%
	on total corpus	32.5%
appointment of governor	following abduction of king	79.4%
	on total corpus	84.2%

Tab. 4.- Frequency of main motifs  
related to main premises

number of passages		entire series 159	9th cent. 45	TP III - Sarg. 103	Late Assyr. 11
govern.	<i>šūt-rēši ana bēl pīḫati šakānu</i>	96 (60.4%)	0	91 (88.4%)	5 (45.5%)
	<i>šaknūte šakānu</i>	18 (11.3%)	11 (24.4%)	7 (6.8%)	0
fiscal charges	<i>nīr bēlūti šakānu / emēdu</i>	13 (8.2%)	0	13 (12.6%)	0
	<i>urdūta epēšu + tupšikka emēdu</i>	16 (10.1%)	13 (28.9%)	3 (2.9%)	0
	<i>bilta maddatta šakānu / maḫāru</i>	24 (15.1%)	10 (22.2%)	10 (9.7%)	4 (36.4%)
deport.	<i>niše mā(āt)i ina libbi šūšubu</i>	47 (29.6%)	3 (6.7%)	40 (38.8%)	4 (36.4%)
	<i>itti niše mā(āt)i Aššur manū</i>	24 (15.1%)	11 (24.4%)	13 (12.6%)	0

Tab. 5. - "Palaces and Governors": selected basic idioms, by periods.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dalley, S.  
2005 The Language of Destruction and Its Interpretation, in *BaM* 36, pp. 275-285.
- Delaporte, L.  
1940 *Malatya I. La porte des lions*, Paris 1940.
- Foster, B.R.,  
1993 *Before the Muses. An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, I-II, Bethesda MD.
- Frame, G.  
1999 The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var, in *Or* 68, pp. 31-57.  
2004 The Order of the Wall Slabs with the Annals of Sargon II in Room V of the Palace at Khorsabad, in G. Frame (ed.), *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea. Studies in Honour of A.K. Grayson*. Leiden, pp. 89-102.
- French, D.H.  
1987 Tille, in 8. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı (1986), Ankara, pp. 205-212.  
1988 1986 Tille arkeoloji kazısı, in 9. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (1987), Ankara, pp. 335-344.
- Fuchs, A.  
1993 *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad*, Göttingen.  
1998 *Die Annalen des Jahres 711 v. Chr.* (= SAAS 8), Helsinki.
- Gadd, C.  
1954 Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud, in "Iraq" 16, pp. 173-201.
- Glassner, J.-J.  
2004 *Mesopotamian Chronicles* (SBL, Writings from the Ancient World, 19), Atlanta GA.
- Harmanşah, O.  
2007 Upright Stones and Building Narratives: Formation of a Shared Architectural Practice in the Ancient Near East, in J. Cheng – M.H. Feldman (eds), *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context. Studies in Honor of I.J. Winter*, Leiden-Boston 2007, pp. 69-99
- Hawkins, J.D.  
2004 The New Sargon Stele from Hama, in Frame G. (ed.), *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea. Studies in Honour of A.K. Grayson*, Leiden, pp.151-164.
- Karul, N. – Ayhan, A. – Özdoğan, M.  
2002 2000 yılı Mezraa-Teleilat kazısı, in 23. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (2001), II, Ankara, pp. 63-74.  
2003 2001 yılı Mezraa-Teleilat kazısı, in 23. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (2002), I, Ankara, pp. 159-170.
- Levine, L.D.  
1972 *Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae from Iran* (Royal Ontario Museum, Occasional Paper 23). Toronto.
- Liverani, M.  
2010 Il salone a pilastri della Melid neo-hittita, "Scienze dell'Antichità" 15, pp. 649-675.  
2011 Portrait du héros comme un jeune chien, in J.-M. Durand, Th. Römer et M. Langlois (eds.), *Le jeune héros*, OBO 250, Fribourg, Göttingen, pp. 11-26.
- Malbran-Labat, F.  
2004 Inscription assyrienne, in M. Yon (ed.), *Kition dans les textes* (= Kition-Bamboula 5), Paris, pp. 345-354.
- Manuelli, F.  
2009 Assyria and the Provinces. Survival of Local Features and Imposition of New Patterns in the Peripheral Regions of the Empire, in "Mesopotamia" 44, pp. 113-127.
- Matney, T.  
2003 Fifth Preliminary Report on Excavations at Ziyaret Tepe, 2001 season, in 24. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (2002), I, Ankara, pp. 233-242.
- Matney, T. – Rainville, L. – Köröğlu, K. – Wicke, D. – MacGinnis, J.  
2009 Tenth Preliminary Report on Excavations at Ziyaret Tepe, 2007 Season, in 30. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (2005), I, Ankara, pp. 507-520.
- Mayer, W.  
1983 Sargons Feldzug gegen Urartu - 714 v.Chr. Text und Übersetzung, in *MDOG* 115, pp. 65-132.
- Özdoğan, M. - Karul, N. – Özdoğan, E.,  
2004 Mezraa-Teleilat Höyüğü 4. dönem çalışmaları, in 25. *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (2003), II, Ankara, pp. 235-244.
- Pittman, H.  
1997 Unwinding the White Obelisk, in H. Waetzoldt – H. Hauptmann (eds), *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten* (RAI 39), Heidelberg, pp. 347-354.

- Ponchia, S.  
2004 Mountain Routes in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions (Part I), in "*Kaskal*" 1, pp. 139-177.
- Postgate, J.N.  
1992 The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur, in "*World Archaeology*" 23, pp. 247-263.
- Reade, J.  
1975 Aššurnāširpal I and the White Obelisk, in "*Iraq*" 37, pp. 129-150.
- RIMA 2 = A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium, I* (= The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods, 2), Toronto 1991.
- Russel, H.F.  
1987 Archaeological Evidence for the Assyrians in South-East Turkey in the First Millennium BC, in A. Çilingiroğlu (ed.), *Anatolian Iron Ages [1]*, Izmir, pp. 56-64.
- Seux, M.-J.  
1976 Hymnes et prières aux dieux de Babylonie et d'Assyrie, Paris.
- Sollberger E.  
1974 The White Obelisk, in "*Iraq*" 36, pp. 231-238.
- Summers, G.D.  
1990, 1988 Tille Höyük kazısı, in *11. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı (1989)*, Ankara, pp. 305-316.
- Thompson, R. Campbell,  
1940 A Selection from the Cuneiform Historical Texts from Nineveh (1927-32), in "*Iraq*" 7, pp. 85-131.
- von Soden, W.  
1975 Zur Datierung des 'Weissen Obeliskens', in *ZA* 64, pp. 180-191.
- Weidner, E.  
1941-44 Šilkan(he)ni, König von Muşri, ein Zeitgenosse Sargons II. Nach einem neuen Bruchstück der Prisma-Inschrift des assyrischen Königs, in "*AfO*" 14, pp. 40-53.

### ABSTRACT

The building of provincial palaces marks the expansion of the Assyrian Empire, in a first phase (XIII-IX centuries) in the core area of Assyria proper, and in a second phase (VIII century) in the newly established provinces in the conquered territories. Besides being attested in the archaeological record, the dissemination of provincial palaces is a standard topic and a specific literary motif in the Assyrian royal inscriptions. The article tries to demonstrate how minor variations in the literary motif are linked to specific historical conditions or trends. The emphasis on palaces (Tiglath-pileser III) vs. governors (Sargon II), the correlation between metaphoric vs. technical expressions, the relationship between the destructive and the reconstructive stages in the conquest, are among the selected aspects here under study.

### RÉSUMÉ

La construction de palais provinciaux marque l'expansion de l'empire assyrien, dans une première phase (XIII<sup>e</sup>-IX<sup>e</sup> siècles) dans le territoire de l'Assyrie et dans une seconde (VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle) dans les provinces nouvelles établies dans les territoires conquis. En plus d'être attestée par les rapports archéologiques, la dissémination de palais provinciaux est un thème standard et un motif littéraire spécifique dans les inscriptions royales assyriennes. Cet article tente de démontrer comment des variations mineures dans ce motif littéraire sont liées à des conditions ou des tendances historiques spécifiques. L'accent mis sur les palais (Tiglath-phalazar III) vs. gouverneurs (Sargon II), la corrélation entre expressions métaphoriques vs. techniques, les rapports entre les étapes de destruction et de reconstruction dans la conquête, sont quelques-uns des éléments ici étudiés.