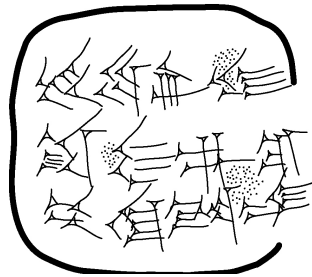


Terqa Final Reports 2

Terqa: Les textes des saisons 5 à 9



Bibliotheca Mesopotamica

Primary sources and interpretive analyses for the study of Mesopotamian civilization and its influences from late prehistory to the end of the cuneiform tradition

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Terqa Final Reports 2

Les textes des saisons 5 à 9

by
Olivier Rouault



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This volume presents the publication by O. Rouault of the epigraphic documents discovered in the 5th through the 9th season of excavations at Tell Ashara-Terqa (Syria), by the Archaeological Mission directed by G. Buccellati and M. Kelly-Buccellati. The total of 97 documents, found in Areas C and F, is unevenly distributed between the five seasons of excavation (respectively 17, 6, 20, 24 and 30). Three periods are represented: Old Hana (Area C), late Šakkanakku and Old Babylonian (Area F). The ten documents of the Šakkanakku period – legal and administrative – present data that are rather new: they illustrate the specificity of the scribal tradition during this period, but at the same time they show that some characteristics of the legal Old Babylonian documents find their origin there.

Of the 62 Old Babylonian documents, around 20 are of administrative type (management of workers, various distributions, recording of the production of fields, etc) and ten are letters. Two legal texts are particularly interesting: a contract of division of heritage and a report of a lawsuit mentioning the governor Kibri-Dagan and the royal judge. School texts and a literary fragment written in emesal dialect show that a high level scribal school functioned at Terqa at that time. Lastly, a fragment of a divinatory report and allusions in the letters give information on these types of activity. Among the 27 texts of the time of Hana, we find the same typology: administrative documents and letters, school, legal and religious texts, this last category being represented by a list of offerings to the goddess Ninkarrak, found in her temple.

The work presents first all the texts, season by season, in transcription and translation. Exhaustive indices are given, along with an analytical table where the texts are sorted according to chronology and typology, allowing a thematic approach to the collection. After the bibliography, the documents are presented with hand copies and photographs given side by side.

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Preface

After a hiatus of some twenty-seven years, we resume publication of the *Terqa Final Reports*, with a volume that, like the first one, we owe to Olivier Rouault. He had served as our Chief Epigraphist up to the time when, in 1986, we ended the operations of the Joint Expedition to Terqa, recommending that the Syrian Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums transfer to him the permit and handing over to him the Expedition assets. By then, we had started excavations at Tell Mozan, and had hoped that we might maintain a working relationship with the new Terqa team. Unfortunately, this did not materialize, but Rouault did maintain his commitment to complete publication of the epigraphic record for the season under our watch, for which we are most grateful.

While his first volume was devoted to a homogeneous corpus, i. e., the archive of Puzurum, *TFR 2* is a collection of almost one hundred heterogeneous texts, coming from a variety of different stratigraphic contexts. In particular, these contexts are the administrative sector in area F and the residential sector in area C (the same where the house of Puzurum is located, from which come the texts published in *TFR 1*). The pertinent contextualization will follow in a volume on stratigraphy and architecture. In this volume, the texts are presented in an exemplary documentary style, sorted typologically within each season, with exhaustive indices and highly accurate autograph copies. As Rouault mentions in the introduction, a full study of the historical implications of these texts would require many volumes. What is offered here is the indispensable set of data on which any such future interpretation may be possible.

An important additional feature of the present publication is that a full set of color photographs of the texts will be made available online at the Terqa website (www.terqa.org). These photographs are correlated to the paper volume being published here, and thus increase the documentary scope of the project. It must be noted that the photographs are all due to Rouault himself (both in this volume and online), his photographic skills matching those of his epigraphic endeavor.

We just spoke of a hiatus in our publication program, and this requires an explanation. During the course of our ten seasons at Terqa, we began to develop a complex recording system that found its first codification already by the end of the third season (1978).¹ This resulted in a major effort, not only because of the substantive difficulties inherent in the application of the procedures, but also because those were the years when we began the transition from “non-digital” (as was expressly indicated in the title of our Manual) to digital. The details of that effort, which are given in the section on METHOD in the Terqa website, led eventually to the development of the Urkesh Global Record.² The preoccupation with this transition (both to a digital system and to the excavations at Mozan) meant that, unfortunately, we were unable to proceed with the final publication of our results, even though we did produce a sizable number of other publications (all now given in full in the Terqa website).

The inspiration to return to our long overdue publishing obligation came from a grant from the Shelby White – Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publication at Harvard University.³ This enabled us to organize our “non-digital” archives and to plan a publication program, of which this volume is the first result. We are most grateful for this opportunity, which provided the financial means to revisit material we had stored not only physically but also, you might say, psychologically. This aspect, in fact, was also an important benefit of the grant. We must admit to a certain inertia that develops as the data come to be “archived” in a more ominous sense than what one would otherwise attribute to the folders neatly stacked on shelves and the slides neatly filed in the old metal cabinets. The success of the Shelby White – Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publication

1 G. Buccellati and M. Kelly-Buccellati, *IIMAS Field Encoding Manual (Non-Digital)*, Aids and Research Tools in Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Vol. 2. Malibu: Undena Publications, 1978. Now available online at www.terqa.org, under ELECTRONIC LIBRARY > ARTICLES AND MONOGRAPHS > ARTANES 2.

2 This is embodied in the Urkesh website (www.arkesh.org), which is still in an alpha mode, but will be opened to the general public when completed.

3 See the website <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~semitic/wl/publications.html>.

is the best measure of its merit, and we are grateful and delighted to be able to add the titles of this and the other forthcoming volumes to the impressive list of publications the Program has already made possible. Reflecting on the history of our past efforts has been enlightening also in the sense that it has urged us to proceed even more forcefully with the ambitious goal of offering a whole new approach to archaeological publishing, the properly digital system which we have implemented in the Urkesh Global Record.

In the process, we have also developed the Terqa website, which is on the one hand a companion to the data publication in paper format as in this volume, but on the other is also a study in the history of archaeological publishing. Our ten year tenure at Terqa (1976-1985) corresponded to a period of radical change. We were experimenting, in those years, with modes of communication that eventually showed to have no future, technically, but which, from a substantive point of view, anticipated mechanisms which were to come to full fruition only in the digital age. This included audio-visual modules with slides and synchronized audio tapes – antecedents of a multimedia environment; modular print publications – antecedents of the linked pages on a website; highly diversified coding of data – antecedents of tagging in electronic corpora; and rudimentary digital dissemination – on floppy disks with a 360K capacity! Seen together, this represents a chapter not only in the history of our project, but in fact in the history of the discipline. We have incorporated this in the Terqa website, which not only serves, as indicated, as a support for the paper publication we undertake with this volume, but also re-proposes online the data no longer usable in their original embodiment. This online supplement to the continuing series of the *Terqa Final Reports* was made possible through a Faculty Research Grant from the Council on Research of the UCLA Senate, to which also goes our gratitude.

Even though the excavations have receded in the distant past, it is a pleasant duty to thank those institutions and individuals who were most instrumental in making it possible at that point in time – the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums and its then Director, Dr. Afif Behnassi; the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation and its chief cultural adviser, Dr. Herman H. Hoeh; the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and its president, Dr. Franklin D. Murphy.

Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati
Directors, Joint Expedition to Terqa, 1976-1985

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