

As **Matthew W. Stolper** works on a monograph about the Kasr archive (described in *The Oriental Institute Annual Report* for 1988-89) he continues a series of articles on topics arising from other Achaemenid Babylonian business texts. One of them, mentioned in the Annual Report for 1988-89 under the working title "More Babylonians at Ecbatana," returns to a theme that Stolper discussed in "The Neo-Babylonian Text from the Persepolis Fortification," in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43 (1984), the theme of Babylonians abroad in the Persian Empire. It was eventually submitted to *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* under the title "Tobits in Reverse," to indicate that unlike the Biblical Tobit, who laid up silver in Media for a rainy

day, the Babylonians documented in the article acquired debts in Media that were to be repaid at home in Babylonia, as other Babylonian businessmen sometimes did elsewhere in Achaemenid Iran. The heads of some of the leading Babylonian business houses of their day traveled to the Achaemenid imperial capitals—not only to Ecbatana, but also to Susa, and to a town in the shadow of Persepolis. They surely did not have to go to the capitals themselves just to conduct the routine transactions that were actually recorded in the surviving texts, the article suggests, but they went to keep their political fences mended, so the texts are not evidence of interregional trade under the imperial umbrella, but rather evidence of the relationships between Babylonian business and court politics—ancient clout.

An article submitted to *Revue d'Assyriologie*, “The Murasû Texts Written at Susa,” treats the evidence for another case of the same phenomenon. It argues on various grounds that the texts mentioned in the title were actually drafted at the city of Susa, the Achaemenid imperial residence in Khuzistān, and not (as a recently published proposal has it) at a village near Nippur that was named after the imperial city. The article includes an edition of one of those texts, put together from pieces in three different publications, the record of a complicated lawsuit involving a large amount of cash.

“A Property in Bīt Paniya,” also submitted to *Revue d'Assyriologie*, treats three new texts and one previously published text that make it possible to observe a date-orchard in a small town near Kutha (not far from Babylon) over the course of about twenty-five years in the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes I. The orchard, part of a woman’s dowry, was first rented out, later put up as security for a debt, still later sold, and then rented out again by the new owners. This little dossier may reflect a practice found in other Neo-Babylonian archives: before the orchard was sold, the woman who first owned it had died, and her husband had married her sister in order to retain control of the original dowry.

An article on “Late Achaemenid Texts from Dilbat,” now in preparation, returns to another theme raised in an earlier article, the distribution of textual evidence among the cities of Achaemenid Babylonia. Although Dilbat was important throughout Babylonian history, and is well represented in texts from Neo-Babylonian kingdom and from the time of the first Achaemenid rulers, the period after the early reign of Xerxes is blank in its history. There is only one published later Achaemenid text from Dilbat, and that one was published only last year; there are no published Seleucid or Parthian texts. This article presents textual evidence from and about Dilbat dated in the period between Xerxes and Alexander, including five previously unpublished business documents. These imply that legal, commercial and administrative interactions still tied Dilbat to Babylon, Borsippa, and the other cities of northwestern Babylonia. In fact some of the unpublished Kasr texts, though archived at Babylon, were written at Dilbat and concerned nearby properties.

Also in preparation is an article that expands some observations made in a paper "On Some Formal Resemblances Between Achaemenid and Hellenistic Babylonian Legal Texts" presented at the Tenth Achaemenid History Workshop in Ann Arbor, in April, 1990. The article discusses Achaemenid and Seleucid records of deposits of silver (mostly temple assets), and related promissory notes that apparently had the effect of transforming simple deposits into interest-bearing, income-producing investments. The whole procedure was recorded in distinctive forms, and it was governed by some state regulation, a "royal edict" cited but not described in some of the texts.

A short note on "Chronicle of the Diadochi r. 3f." in *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 1990 No. 1 comments on the possibility of using evidence from Seleucid astronomical diaries to restore a broken passage in this unique record of events in the tumultuous period of political manoeuvre and warfare that followed the death of Alexander.

In March 1990, Stolper presented a paper on "The Neo-Assyrian Province of Elam" at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society. The paper gathered passages in texts from the years before the massive Assyrian campaigns that reduced Susa to ruins, indicating that the Assyrian king considered his treaty relations with some Elamite puppet rulers, and his supply of political or military advisors, as reducing Elam (or some part of it) to the political status of an Assyrian province.

Another Elamite project is an article on "Elamite Brick Fragments from Chogha Pahn East and Related Fragments," co-authored with Henry T. Wright of The University of Michigan, and forthcoming in a festschrift. It summarizes the results of surveys at Chogha Pahn (KS 102), on the northern piedmont of the Susiana plain in Khuzistān, and it presents editions of three very modest fragments of Middle Elamite inscribed bricks found in the survey and of four somewhat larger fragments from the *Nachlass* of George G. Cameron that probably came from the same site. Unprepossessing as they are, these fragments make it possible to reconstruct part of another recently published, damaged Elamite text, and to propose a likely provenience for it.

Stolper and Charles E. Jones continue to collate the late Richard T. Hallock's transliterations of Persepolis Fortification tablets and to prepare them for publication in electronic and hard-copy forms.