MARI AND EBLA: OF TIME AND RULERS

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1. Introduction

In the recent past, several studies have appeared regarding lists of dam, “women”,1 nan, “singers”,2 NE.DI, “dancers”,3 with the purpose of ascertaining an internal chronology of the tablets brought back to light at Ebla.

Two other major essays have been added recently to the directory;4 they address the question with a broader perspective in the commendable attempt to set this large number of transactions in order of time.

The purpose of the present work is to provide a small contribution to the solution of this problem, but it will be limited to the trades concerning Mari and Ebla. In other words, I will try to organize the tablets dealing with the transactions involving the two cities in chronological sequence.

2. The Mari Rulers: the lugal

In the quest of establishing an internal time sequence of the dealings recorded in the tablets found at Ebla, a good starting point is to gather some information concerning the leaders of the Mari administration and, also, to consider the role played by the top officials of both cities throughout the Ebla economic texts.

A special thanks to Gertrud Farber and Migel Civil for the many valuable suggestions; the responsibility of the conclusions, though, is only mine.

At this moment, it is noteworthy to remember that, according to the Ebla administrative terminology, en designates the highest authority and finds its counterpart in the Semitic word ma-lik, while lugal indicates an executive of high rank second only to the ruler; that represents a departure from the use of the latter denomination in Mesopotamia where it always carries the meaning «king». For that reason a few years ago, A. Archi suggested that, in the tablets coming from Ebla, the term lugal plainly designates the king when referring to top officials of Mari as well as to those of cities located in central and southern Mesopotamia.

My investigation will seek to establish the chronological sequence examining first the texts mentioning the Mari officials holding the latter title, then, the few cases in which an en of the city of Mari is quoted.

a) Iblu-Il

Just two tablets mention Iblu-Il as lugal (ma-rîkî), i.e. TM 1657 and 1953. The first one could easily be assigned to the Ar-Ennum period, while the latter was drafted subsequently in EnnâDagan’s time, being a general summary.

TM 1657 lists seventeen monthly transactions covering four years (âš-du 4 mu). Fourteen of those dealings are deliveries (šu mu-tak) organized in this fashion: six deliveries of silver and gold by the Mari lugal; a list of goods for the i-giš sag lugal, “the anointing of lugal’s head”; a
nig-ba, «gift» delivered (šu mu-tak) by u₄-li of Mari;¹⁰ six deliveries of silver, gold and goods by the lugal, plus the insertion of another delivery, qualified as: in u₄ kas₄-kas₄ ga-sur₄₈₄₉, “when the messengers of Gasur (delivered to Ibdur-Išar).” To the present list, a final delivery of gold and goods, apparently, by Iblu-Il, the lugal, is added and is followed by silver and two gold pendants by Baba,¹¹ Iblu-Il’s wife; both transactions are related to the ÉxPAP.¹² The total registers 156.45 pounds of silver and 21.33 pounds of gold.¹³

The names of the Ebla officials mentioned in the deliveries are: GIBIL-zi-il (nine times), the two judges: Ibdur-Išar (three times) and Enna-Il (only once), du-zi-kir (twice; a short form for du-bi-zi-kir), Igna-Damu (twice), Ilzi-Damu (twice), i-HAR-li-im, Irib-Damu,¹⁴ EN-ar-ha-lab₅ (LAM), Titina, Ar-Ennum, Ladat (once each); Dubišum is the Ebla dignitary dealing with queen Baba. All these officials were active during the Ar-Ennum period.

TM 1953, instead, is a comprehensive summary of the amount of silver qualified as nig-ba, «gift» and delivered (šu mu-tak) by three lugal of Mari, namely Iblu-Il, NI-zi and Enna-Dagan. The names of the Ebla officials are not provided. Thus, in my opinion, the tablet should be assigned to Enna-dDagan’s rulership, even though it is not clear who was in office at Ebla at that time.

To the previous two tablets I should add two other reports which register the same six deliveries (šu mu-tak) in the same four cities¹⁵ and to the same Ebla officials: TM 1555 and 2592.¹⁶ The mention of queen Baba

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¹⁰. Note that the Mari nig-ba, «gift» is delivered to Irib-Damu.
¹³. The present totals are almost identical to the amount of silver and gold given by NI-zi in TM 1953.
¹⁵. Za-la-ga-tum₅₁ appears in TM 1555 and 2592 only.
in the first tablet would incline me to think that these texts began to be drafted during the reign of Iblu-Il, merely designated here as **lugal** of Mari.

The two quoted tablets represent the backbone of a canvas which casts us into a larger picture and includes several other texts. TM 2221, for instance, appears to be a carbon copy of the first half of TM 1555, perfectly matching entry after entry; it is continued by TM 2115 and 2009 and, when both end, TM 1299 and 1557 will pick up the task to provide a continuous string of records. However, with the last two, we have crossed the line which gets us into NI-zi’s leadership.

I have visualized all this chain of transactions from the Iblu-Il period until Enna-dDagan’s times in a forthcoming article, in which I have put side by side the «common» sections in texts related to Mari.

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**b) NI-zi**

All tablets referring to NI-zi as **lugal** of Mari belong to the period of Ar-Ennum’s leadership. It is well stated in the colophon of TM 1866: *dub kū:babbar / ar-en-núm / in-na-sum* (rv.1:1-3). I will render it: “tablet of the silver that Ar-Ennum has given to (the Ebla administration).” So, I will then ascribe the present tablet to the Ar-Ennum period.

Regarding TM 1368 and 1987, where NI-zi’s name occurs, but Ar-Ennum is not mentioned, it must be said that the Ebla officials, Irīgunu, Ilguš-Damu, II-Damu and il-iš-ā-UR, appearing in these tablets, are all active during the Ar-Ennum period.

In reference to NI-zi and before examining the records related to him, I must add two further observations. The first one concerns the spelling of...
NI-zi’s personal name (PN). In TM 1886 and 10256, NI-zi does not indicate the Mari lugal, but a well-known Ebla šeš-2-iβ, “an official”22 whose name usually is written à-zi.23 The pair NI-zi = à-zi makes me question whether the NI-zi, lugal of Mari, should be read a-zi instead.

My second remark regards the NI-zi mentioned in relation to the city of Nagar. The texts concerning that PN are:


[b] TM 10091 ob.7:1'- rv.1:3: 26 [ ] kú-sig17 / níg-ba / na-gàrkì / puzur₄-ra-BE / maškim / i-bí-zi-kir / šu mu-tákš / 2 ma-na / kú-sig17 / NI-zi / [ ]: “... of gold, «gift» of the king of Nagar, delivered to PN₁, officer of PN₂, 2 pounds of gold, NI-zi[ ].”


[d] Finally, TM 76.G.528 rv.5:2-5: (garments) / mu-túm / NI-zi / na-gàrki / itu i-si: “garments, contribution by NI-zi of Nagar (for) the month of I.”

Regarding the last text, after a subtotal (anšè-gú), the third column in the reverse of TM 76.G.528 registers a series of mu-túm, “contributions”, namely by KU-KU,27 iš-má-NI,28 and the lugal of Mari.29 The section re-

25. Usually the title ur₄, “collector” is said of an Ebla representative.
27. See the variant gú·gú (TM 1886 rv.4:2). KU-KU and iš-má-NI are people from Mari.
28. The MÁ.HU, “courier.”
29. See rv.4:8–12: mu-túm / lugal / ma-ríki / en / itu i-si: “contribution of the lugal of Mari to the (Ebla) king. Month of /si.” The syntax of the current section should be compared...
garding NI-zi follows immediately concerning the same month (Isi). Then, the list continues with a mu-túm, “contribution” of Mari in the month of Igza, three mu-túm of DU-lu Ki, a long list of goods by the city of Dugurasu (given?) in Arugadu and, again, the mu-túm of the Mari lugal and of KU-KU for the month of Irisa.

From all these texts, it is clear that the NI-zi related to the city of Nagar not only [1] is strongly related to Mari; in fact he is also qualified as lú-tuš, “(a Mari) resident”, in TM 2337; [2] retains close ties with HI-da-ar, the known Mari lugal; but also, unexpectedly, [3] seems to act as an Ebla agent, receiving goods from the king (en) of Nagar and bringing his mu-túm, “contribution” into the Ebla treasury.

Moreover, it is quite certain that the tablets referring to NI-zi in Nagar belong to a late period, but it is also highly probable that they deal either with a-zi,30 previously quoted as lú-kar ma-ri Ki, “the Mari merchant” or, less probably, with the NI-zi who held the position of lugal just for three years at Mari.31

Returning now to Mari’s NI-zi, I have already said that TM 1299 draws the line between Iblu-Il and NI-zi’s period; it is a text, which reports the amount of silver and gold, together with manufactured objects, delivered (šu mu-tak χ) in ir-ra-KU Ki by NI-zi’s administration in the first year in the month of G. The two registered deliveries are labeled, the first, as the nig-ba, «gift» by NI-zi together with the Mari elders, and the second one by Enna-Dagan.32

The two groups of Ebla officials, receiving the deliveries, are lead by EN-à-da-mu and Dubiåum respectively, and both are qualified as ur 4, “collectors.”33 Yet Ar-Ennum holds the top position in the first list, thus, it seems to me, the tablet should be considered drafted at the time of his leadership.

with the one of rv.7:13–8:8: (garments) / en / lugal ma-ri Ki / šu mu-tak χ / (garments) / en / KU.KU / sagi / mu-túm / itu i-ri-sá: “garments, to the (Ebla) king the lugal of Mari has delivered; garments, to the (Ebla) king, KU.KU, the cupbearer (as) contribution; month of I.”

30. See TM 1828 rv.8’ :32–35.
31. See TM 1368.
32. Written without the d determinative. I wonder if some of the deliveries, reported in TM 1299, to the Ebla officials are also found in TM 1983. See, especially TM 1983 ob:5–8 (EN-à-da-mu), ob.5:9–6:6 (Titina = Titinu), ob.6:7–7:3 (Dubiåum).
33. EN-à-da-mu and Dubiåum appear together, both as ur 4, “collectors” and related to the city of ir-ra-KU Ki, in TM 1983, a «nig-sám tablet», price tablet (see colophon). For the «related» sections mentioned above, see below.
The colophon seems to agree with my suggestion and assigns the whole text to NI-zi, the Mari **lugal**: (silver) / (gold) / šu mu-tak_{χ} / ir-ra-KU_{ki} / in u_{4} / NI-zi TIL.TIL 1 mu / itu ga-sum: “silver, gold, *delivered* in GN, when NI-zi ...; first year, month of G.”\(^{34}\) The same idea is endorsed by the joint appearance of the three Ebla officials in the section related to Enna-Dagan. In fact, Dubišum, Sagusi and i-PĒŠ-zi-*nu* occur together elsewhere only in TM 1702, which is a «**mu-tüm** list», “list of *contributions*” also clearly belonging to the Ar-Ennum period.

Another tablet, TM 2412+, is a similar report, which mentions NI-zi, Enna-dDagan, as well as HI-da-ar. It also belongs to the Ar-Ennum period and, like the previous text, is a list of *deliveries* to various Ebla officials; Ar-Ennum is mentioned twice, as recipient of two *deliveries* (**šu mu-tak**_{χ}) together with Il-Damu and Ilum-AK.

The first half of the report refers to eleven *deliveries* by the Mari **lugal**, who, apparently, is NI-zi and who is mentioned four times; the part ends with the amount of twenty pounds of silver to be «exchanged» into the four pounds of gold related to the unnamed, but, supposedly the same, Mari **lugal**. From that point on Enna-dDagan takes over and the Mari **lugal** is not longer mentioned.

Yet the current tablet displays two unexpected features in this part:

1. **ob.4:** 7-6:1: (silver, gold, silver) / **lugal** / NI-zi / [ ] // [ ] / [ ] / (silver) / ABxÅŠ.ABxÅŠ / NE-x[ ] / 'ı'-HAR-li-im / i-rí-gú-nu / GIBIL-za-il / [šu mu-tak_{χ}?]. While the meaning of the second half of the sentence is quite clear: “silver by the elders ... [*delivered*] to PN_{1}, PN_{2} and PN_{3}”, the first segment is a little obscure. In fact, the profession name **lugal** comes before the PN NI-zi; that word order is unusual and, in my opinion, the expression cannot be plainly rendered: “the king Nizi”\(^{35}\) because a title always follows the PN it is related to. On the other hand, the break of at least three cases after the name of NI-zi renders the solution more difficult;

2. The same structure occurs a second time in **ob.6:** 8-7:2: (gold) / *ir-da-ma-lik* / ti-ti-na / **lugal** / NI-zi / šu mu-tak_{χ} / du-du-la-aki; in this case, **lugal** could be explained as a title of the two preceding officials who held

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\(^{34}\) TM 1299 rv.4:3–4. The colophon has been explained as the tablet had been drafted on the “*derniers mois de NI-zi et premières d’Enna-Dagan*” [A. Archi, “Les rapports politiques ...,” *MARI* 4 (1985) 70].

that position at Ebla. I could render the clause: “gold, to Irdad-Malik and Titina, the *lugal* (?), NI-zi has *delivered* (in) GN.” Yet, this seems unlikely to me.

Furthermore, the section quoted under [1] is almost identical to a small tablet written only on the obverse, TM 1987: ‘101 ma-na kù:babbar / níg-ba / lugal / 6 ma-na 5 // ABxÁŠ. ABxÁŠ / i-1 HAR’-li-im / i-rí-gú-nu / GIBIL-za-il // NI-zi / [remainder of the column blank]: “silver, «gift» to PN₁, to PN₂, to PN₃, NI-zi.” Note that the name of NI-zi is separated from the Ebla people and kept apart in the third column; note also that this triplet of Ebla officials jointly occurs only in the two parallel texts among the tablets published to date.

However, I believe that the opening sentence of TM 2412+ could offer a viable explanation of the unusual structure. See ob.1:1’–6’; [ ] (gold) / níg-ba / NI-zi / in 1 mu / lugal / itu i-si: “[ ] gold, «gift» of NI-zi in the first year as lugal. Month of Isi.” Then the sections under scrutiny could be rendered: “NI-zi, the *lugal* ” or “the *lugal* (who is) NI-zi.”

Finally, the peculiar presence in this tablet of another Mari (?) people could help to prove the connection with another text belonging to the end of NI-zi’s leadership. A-bú-u₉ occurs elsewhere only in TM 1368 ob.7:2–6: –.20 (silver) / a-bû-u₉ / il-da-mu / ì-lum-AK / šu mu-takₓ, where he delivers the same amount of silver to the same Ebla official. The missing Il-Damu is involved with two previous *deliveries* in TM 2412+. Note that the colophon of TM 1368 reads: dub-gar / lú šu-ba₄-ti / in u₄ / NI-zi / lugal / 3 mu: “tablet of (the goods) that were *received*, when NI-zi (was) *lugal* . Third year.” (rv.10:3–8)

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36. Both, Irdad-Malik and Titina, held the position of *lugal* ; see A. Archi, “Les synchronisme entre les rois de Mari et les rois d’Ebla au IIème millenaire,” *MARI* 4 (1985) 49. Titina was *lugal* / *ugula* BAR.AN BAR.AN , “chief/overseer of the BAR.AN-animals”, but also is quoted as an Ebla official in the Mari deliveries (TM 1657 ob.8:7–9). Note the translation by A. Archi, *ARET* vol. 7, (Rome, 1988), p. 4: “NP e NP (al) re Nizi hanno consegnato.”

37. “20 shekels of silver, Abu’u to Il-Damu and Ilum-AK has *delivered*.” Note that *puzur* ᵙ₄-aš-dar, the officer of HI-da-ar, is mentioned twice in the following two deliveries. Abu’u is called *sukkal*, “vizier / minister”, in TM 2412+, but, curiously enough, in TM 1368, the section prior to the one where his name is quoted, a *sukkal delivers* a small amount of silver to another Ebla official, *il-gú-uš-da-mu*. Ilguu-Damu occurs twice only, in TM 1368 and 3005, and the variant Išgū-Damu only twice in TM 2235. Another possible spelling of this name is *il-uš-da-mu* (TM 1557 rv.5:5–6:5: (silver) / in šu mu-takₓ₁₄ // la-ti-at / ū / il-uš-da-mu / ma-rî₄ / itu MÀxGÀNÀ-tenù sag: “silver as the 14th *delivery* to Latiat (= Ladat) and Iluš-Damu by Mari. Month of M.”
Enna-dDagan holds an important but not the top position in TM 2412+, and, even though his role is placed in more evidence in the second half of the tablet, clearly he seems not yet in charge.

Enna-dDagan is mentioned three times in the present tablet; once in the first half (ob.3:2’–4’) in connection with Šu-Malik;38 the other two occasions, in the second half, together with his maškim, “officers”39 only, and not with the ABxÁŠ, “elders” as in the case of NI-zi.

HI-da-ar seems to have held an even less significant position in TM 2412+; the two barren quotations of his name, are interrupted by the one of his officers, puzur 4-aš-dar.40

Unfortunately, the colophon, if there was one, is lost; in any case, I will draw the conclusion that, even though either Enna-dDagan or HI-da-ar were very active during this early period, they were still under NI-zi’s authority.

Then, I will assume that the present tablet has been compiled starting in the early period of NI-zi’s rulership and, perhaps, in his first year, as stated by the opening sentence.

Furthermore, as already indicated above, the colophon of TM 1368 tells us that the tablet was drafted in the third and, supposedly, final year of NI-zi. Yet it seems to me that this tablet registers the transition point from NI-zi to Enna-dDagan, because of the occurrence of two rare PNs, i.e. the two brothers: i-ti-il41 and il-iš-ā-UR,42 in the two deliveries at the beginning.


39. At first, it does not seem to be a substantial remark. But compare TM 1953, where the three lugal in question are equally treated and are followed by their ABNÁŠ, “elders” and e-gi4-maškim, “officers”. See P. Michalowski, “Mari: The View from Ebla,” in Gordon D. Young ed., Mari in Retrospect, (Winona Lake, IN, 1992), p. 245f and note 11.

40. Puzur 4-ra-aš-dar occurs in a list of lú-kar ma-nki, “merchants of Mari” in recent tablets (TM 76.G.529 and 530). But, spelled puzur 4-aš-dar, he is labeled e-gi4-maškim HI-da-ar, “officer of HI-da-ar” in tablets belonging to the Ar-Ennum period or prior to it (TM 1233 rv.5:7; 1368 ob.8:5–7; ob.9:7–8; rv.4:8–5:1.) Another puzur 4-aš-dar occurs as simug, “blacksmith” together with i-KU-il, both from Mari. Note that in TM 1233 rv.5:7, puzur 4-aš-dar delivers the same amount of silver as in TM 2412+ rv.5:7. Further TM 2412+ rv.5:8 could be restored as [e]-gi[4-maškim].

41. In the tablets published to date, Iti-II occurs in TM 1271 ob.5:7; 1336 ob.6:6; 1349 rv.9:1; 1368 ob.1:3.8; 1435 ob.12:7’; 1534 ob.2:6; 3576 rv.4:11; 3623 ob.2:2.

42. In the tablets published so far, Il-iš-ā-UR appears in TM 1271 ob.6:2; 1354 rv.6:3; 1368 ob.2:1.3; ob.10:1.
In fact, in TM 1271, the same individuals appear together with Gulla, Enna-dDagan’s brother, and with Hazumu. This time, the colophon gives the total amounts of silver and gold, áš-du / en-na-da-gan / lugal / 1 mu, “when Enna-dDagan (was) lugal. First year” (rv.7:1–6:3).

Il-iš-à-UR’s brother, presumably the same Iti-Il, occurs also in TM 1354 where not only Ar-Ennum is mentioned, but the tablet is qualified as: dub-gar / níg-ba / en-na-da-gan / [+]1 mu, “report of the «gift» of Enna-Dagan; First? year.”

So, it is clear that NI-zi’s leadership covers a three-year period, nevertheless Enna-dDagan and, even, HI-da-ar were active already at Mari.

c) Enna-(d)Dagan

Enna-(d)Dagan is the PN of a Mari ruler appearing more often in the Ebla administrative records; his name occurs already in tablets belonging to the period of the two previous lugal, i.e. Iblu-II and NI-zi.

Besides all that has been said above, three tablets can provide us with further evidence for establishing the moment of transition between the two NI-zi and Enna-(d)Dagan. TM 1233, 1564 and 2135 are interlocked reporting almost identical sections.

The first two transactions of TM 1233 (ob.1:1–9 and ob.2:5–3:9 respectively) are recorded already in the last two sections of TM 1564 (rv.3:1–4:6 and rv.5:1–5). The latter, a summary tablet, continues in TM 2135, whose dealings are also registered in the quoted TM 1233. So TM 1233 plays the role of the connecting element between the two summary tablets, while these report an uninterrupted list of Mari deliveries by Enna-Dagan, starting when NI-zi was still the lugal.

I can illustrate what I have just pointed out in the following way:

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44. Hazumu is spelled ha-su-mu in TM 1368 ob.6:2.
45. See TM 1293 rv.5:3–6:3: áš-du / en-na-da-gan / lugal / an-še-gú / (silver) / (gold) / 1 mu: “... when Enna-dDagan was lugal. Total: silver and gold. First/1 year.” The peculiar use of the terms mu-túm ... è ... šu mu-tak x, “contribution ... disbursement ... delivery” could be explained in the light of TM 1353.
46. TM 1354 ob.8:5.
Let us examine a little closer the data. As mentioned, TM 1564 reports ten monthly transactions, nine by Enna-Dagan and one by Saut at the end. The ninth entry, the last one by Enna-Dagan, is described as a delivery (šu mu-tak x), the only one so qualified in the present text; its silver and gold amount is followed by the one of his officers (maškim) and, for the first time, by that of the Mari elders (ABxÁÅ / ma-říkī). In addition, the current section provides the names of the Ebla officials to whom the delivery had been made; Ar-Ennum and GIBIL-za-il are the only Ebla people quoted in TM 1564; the last two sections omit the month when the transaction took place and, finally, these two are in parallel with the first two entries of TM 1233.

Furthermore, Enna-(d)Dagan’s name is consistently spelled without the determinative d in TM 1564 versus Enna- dDagan in TM 1233. Observe also, that the nine pounds of silver delivered by the Mari elders (ABxÁÅ) to Ar-Ennum and GIBIL-za-il in the quoted entry of TM 1564 do not ap-

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<th>TM 1564</th>
<th>ob.1:1–2:2</th>
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pear in the parallel section of TM 1233. All this represents a shift in pattern as to how the tablet had been drafted prior to it and could be considered an additional sign of the occurred transition.

Finally, if the sequence of the monthly entries in TM 1564 is registered in the correct order as assumed, the silver and gold by Enna-Dagan and his officers (maškim) refer to a span of time of at least two years, in which case the colophon could not be rendered “one year”, but “the first year” (1 mu, rv.6:2). All this, again, could suggest that some kind of change did occur at the top of the Mari administration and, exactly, that the first eight transactions of TM 1564 took place when NI-zi was still the lugal at Mari, and that the transition occurred during the Ar-Ennum period at Ebla.

In addition, in one instance TM 2135 rv.1:2–3:1, conveys to us the sort of transactions these records are recounting, namely that the Mari deliveries are mu-túm, “contributions” (to Ebla): 8 ma-na kù:babbar / mu-túm / ìl-zi // GIBIL-za-il / ù / ìl-zi-da-mu / ù / la-da-at / šu mu-takx / ma-rfki: “8 pounds of silver, contribution of Ilzi, Mari delivered to PN1, PN2, PN3.”51 So, supposedly during the Enna-dDagan rulership, Mari sent a contribution (mu-túm) to the Ebla treasury.

Summing up, it seems to me that two conclusions could be drawn:

[a] that the beginning of Enna-dDagan’s rulership should be placed still during the Ar-Ennum period and it will stretch out through part of Ebrium’s leadership;

[b] that TM 1368 on one side, and TM 1271, 1293, 1354 and 1564 on the other side, determine the transition point from NI-zi’s rulership to the one of Enna-(d)Dagan.

Unexpectedly, very few tablets, among those published to date and belonging to the Ebrium leadership, mention Enna-Dagan, but it seems that he still holds a high position, even though not the top one, when the Ebla queen (ma-lik-tum) gave birth to the king-to-be. In fact, he is listed with his ma-za-lum, “guard” only; see TM 1276 ob.3:13–4:9: (garments) / en-na-dda-gan / (garments) / ma-za-lum-sù / gār-mukî / šu mu-takx / nî-îm / ma-lik-tum / ũ / tu-da-sû: “garments by Enna-Dagan; garments by his guard (in) GN delivered as «gift» to the queen who gave birth.” But, perhaps, the present Enna-dDagan should not be identified with the Mari lugal but with the one qualified lû-kar ma-rfki, a “Mari merchant” in TM 76.G.542 (ob.8:11).

51. TM 2135 rv.1:2–3:1 is parallel with TM 1233 ob.9:8–10:7.
d) HI-da-ar

Like Enna-dDagan, HI-da-ar begins to be active in Mari during NI-zi’s rulership, but his PN does not occur qualified as lugal until later.

In the early tablets, HI-da-ar’s name occurs without any title and it is not even followed, as customary, by the name of his city of origin, Mari. Then, in the Ar-Ennum period, we learn that he has some officers (e-gi₄-maškim) under his command; and, finally, he is certainly in charge in the latest period, not only because his name occurs holding the title lugal ma-r̄ki, the “Mari lugal”, but also because he is quoted together with some of his elders (ABxÅŠ). TM 76.G.522 rv.5:5f.8: HI-da-ar / ma-r̄ki / ... / ABxÅŠ-sù: “HI-da-ar of Mari ... his elder” or TM 1828 rv.8’:32–35: (garments) / dumu-nita / HI-da-ar / ma-r̄ki / (garments) / à-zi / ABxÅŠ-sù: “garments, the son of HI-da-ar of Mari, garments, Azi, his elder.”


Unfortunately the few small sections of the current texts published by A. Archi [MARI 4(1985)76] do not allow any evaluation as to which period they belong; the mention, then, of Ibbi-Zikir in the latter case makes me think that they come from a late period.

Finally, in HI-da-ar’s regard, I must add that his name occurs in a small round tablet unearthed in the little archive (L. 2712) at the North end of the Audience Hall inside the Royal Palace. This text comes certainly from the latest period of the Pre-Sargonic Ebla and HI-da-ar has been re-

52. See TM 1233 (twice), 1368 (twice), 2412+ (twice)
53. See ex.gr. TM 1368, 2412+.
55. TM 271 is a small round tablet dealing exclusively with à-ši-hu, son (dumu-nita) of HI-da-ar, and HI-da-ar himself and regarding quantities of flour.
corded together with his son à-ši-hu, receiving amounts of different kinds of flour.

L. Milano positively identifies him with the Mari HI-da-ar and it seems to me that it is confirmed by the mention of his son’s name which is a variant of ar-si-a-hu (TM 2240, 2250), and, possibly, also of ar-šè-a-hu (TM 2270. 2372) and ar-šè:a-ha.58

However, I am not able to explain why HI-da-ar and his son, apparently from Mari, are listed in tablets regarding Ebla’s Royal Palace personnel.

3. The Mari Rulers: the en

a) The en’s of Mari

Three en, “kings” of Mari only are quoted throughout the Ebla corpus; two already have been studied under lugal’s section: Iblu-Il (occurs as en, in TM 2367 only), and Enna-(d)Dagan (called en in TM 2367, 1390 only). The third one is I-KU(-i)-šar (TM 1321; 1705).

Apart from the well-known Enna-Dagan’s letter (TM 2367), Iblu-Il’s name occurs in two other tablets only, TM 1657 and 1953, studied earlier; consistently, he holds the title, lugal ma-rī, “the lugal of Mari.”

Enna-(d)Dagan, designated as en, “king”, appears only in an unpublished tablet in a broken context.59 Otherwise his name occurs either without any title or qualified as lugal.

I-KU(-i)-šar is the sole ruler of Mari consistently called en, “king” and does not show any Eblaite connections. Yet, [1] his name occurs only twice


in the whole Ebla corpus: TM 1321 and 1705; in both cases, he is said to be delivering (šu mu-tak) goods presumably to Ebla; TM 1321 belongs unquestionably to Ebrium’s times, as pointed out by A. Archi, MARI 5(1985)49; since merely a few sections of TM 1705 have been published to date, I am not able to evaluate from which period the current tablet could come. I can only add that, from the few PNs – all belonging to Mari and disclosed in MARI 4(1985)75 – some of them are related to the old period, like Išma‘-II who does not occur after the Ar-Ennum leadership. But others like UR-na, ū-da-a-hu (spelled ū-da-a-hu in TM 1255 rv.3:17), or ib-gi-TUM are around until the latest period.

Besides the previous three “kings”, only two other tablets mention an unnamed Mari en: TM 1233 and 1336. The first text helped to provide the evidence for establishing when Enna-dDagan took office and, since its initial section registers silver and gold as nig-ba, «gift» by Enna-dDagan and his officers (maškim) to Ar-Ennum and other Ebla officials, it belongs to the time of the latter’s leadership at Ebla. In the second tablet, assigned to Irkab-Damu’s period, the Mari en is said to be delivering (šu mu-tak) goods to Ebla, apparently for a stele (na-rú).

In the same tablet, TM 1336, a series of interesting people appear: Ebrium (twice), Dusigu, known later as ama-gal en, “the mother of the king”, the two judges Ibdur-Išar (di-ku₅, followed by the gloss, ÉxPAP), Enna-Il (da-núm), and, surprisingly, Igriš-Halab, supposedly the Ebla en – still alive (?).

60. See A. Archi, “Les rapports ...,” MARI 4 (1985) 75
61. Iš-má-NI is a well-known Mari liú-kar, “merchant” or MÁ:HU, “courier” until the most recent periods.
62. Ib-gi-TUM is mentioned in early tablets like TM 1559, where he appears in the section that follows the one of en-na-il sagi ba₁₄-ba₂, “Enna-II, the cupbearer of Baba,” the wife of Iblu-II (ob.1:2) and where Išma‘-II is quoted as well. Note that, in TM 1256, ib-gi-TUM and ū-da-a-hu appear together and, in TM 1233, Išma‘-II is mentioned with UR-na.
63. See the parallel text TM 1564 rv.3:1–4:6.
65. See my article, “The Judges at Ebla,” in LA 41 (1991) 303–310; both judges are well known from the transactions regarding Baba, Iblu-II’s wife.
Ar-Ennum, instead, is not listed in the present tablet. So I would suggest that TM 1336 has been drafted during the Ebrium supremacy, since the activities of the two Ebla powerful men seem not to be overlapping. Furthermore, a quotation of the first one almost dismisses the presence of the second. As a matter of fact, among the tablets published to date, only two (TM 1292 and 1358) hold both names of Ar-Ennum and Ebrium.

b) Iku-Išar, the *en*

Nevertheless, at this point, one could raise the simple question, where I-KU(-i)-šar will fit into the picture.

It has been stated already that I-KU(-i)-šar did reign in Mari at the time that his counterpart at Ebla was Irkab-Damu and that his successor at Mari was HI-da-ar. In other words, it has been said that I-KU(-i)-šar finds his place between the rulership of Enna-dDamu’s reign that is so well attested to in the Ebla administrative texts.

Generally speaking, I do not disagree with this picture, but, I think, some basic questions remain unanswered; such as, why the mentioned Mari ruler is the only one consistently called *en*, “king” throughout the Ebla corpus, or why his name is quoted so seldom if, supposedly, he ruled “during the longer part of Irkab-Damu’s reign” that is so well attested to in the Ebla administrative texts.

Regarding I-KU(-i)-šar’s few appearances in the Ebla corpus, it seems to me that the statement by M.G. Biga and F. Pomponio, “in contrast to Nlzi, Enna-Dagan and Hidar, there is no sign of his (I-KU(-i)-šar’s, *mine*) having taken part in the Mari administration prior to his ascent to the throne”, is substantially correct but a little too conservative.

The infrequent presence of I-KU(-i)-šar could reveal far more than what had been suggested. It seems to me that the restricted mention of his name always qualifying him as the Mari *en*, “king” makes me think that I-KU(-i)-šar, had very little to do with Ebla before and after being appointed king. It does not mean necessarily, then, that he did not hold any official

position at Mari but that, like Iblu-Il, he unquestionably came from and belonged to the city of Mari.

It could also mean that the officials actually dealing with Ebla had been NI-zi and Enna-dDagan, as at Ebla it was the case of Ar-Ennum and Ebrrium who held an important position in the administration almost equal to the one of the en’.

Again it has been mentioned that his name is quoted in TM 1321, which belongs positively to Ebrrium’s times, or, more precisely, to an early period of Ebrrium’s leadership during the reign of Irkab-Damu. In fact, the tablet is dated by a few special events referred to in it, such as the wedding of da-hir-ma-liš, one of Ebrrium’s daughters. Another entry in the tablet describes a dug₄-ga, «offering»(?) by Ebrrium in the city of Arugadu. Further clues could be provided by the presence of various members of the Dusigu family: her mother (a-da-da, twice), her father (only once, but his name is not given) and her brother (Ib-Malik, twice). Then, at the end of the tablet (rv.10:16–11:5), appears a list of dam en’, “king’s women” that has been ascribed by M.V. Tonietti to the second phase of Dusigu.

Surprisingly, TM 1321 shares several people in common with TM 1336 – the tablet which quotes the unknown Mari en. Besides Ebrrium and Dusigu, the names of three Eblašeš-2-ib-officials occur in both texts: EN-zi-li-im Ṽ i-rf-ig, bar-zi Ṽ a-buₓ-LUM and du-bi (Ṽ i-i-i ga-mi-iš). Along

70. TM 1953 is a comprehensive summary of Mari’s deliveries by Iblu-Il, NI-zi and Enna-dDagan. But one of the interesting points of the present tablet is how each section ends. The first delivery has been carried out, in u₄ / ib-lu₃-il / lugal / ma-[rí ki]: “in the days of Iblu-Il, lugal of Mari” (rv.4:4–5:3); and the second by NI-zi, the [Mari] lugal, in u₄ / NI-zi, “in the days of NI-zi” (notice that NI-zi’s title is omitted). In the third one not only Enna-dDagan’s name is not qualified by any title, but also the time of the delivery is not given at the end. See P. Michalowski, “Mari: the View from Ebla,” in Gordon D. Young ed., Mari in Retrospect, (Winona Lake, IN, 1992), p. 245f.


75. Note the different spelling of his name earlier in the same tablet: bar-zi Ṽ a-bù-LUM (ob.10:2–4).
with them Inut-Damu, the ugula (superintendent)\textsuperscript{76} of the city of Kakkium and Rî-i-Malik, his officer (maškim), are present in both tablets; and also Nuzar, qualified as ur\textsubscript{4}, “collector”\textsuperscript{77}, puzur\textsubscript{4}-ra-BE and ri-dam-ma-li.R

To all these officials who seemingly belong to the early days of Ebrium’s leadership,\textsuperscript{78} three additional PNs should be considered:

[a] Igriš-Halab, the Ebla en, who receives a delivery (šu mu-tak \textsubscript{X}),\textsuperscript{79}

[b] Iti-II, whose name has been mentioned above when studying TM 1271 and 1368. He is the Ebla official to whom the Mari en, “king” delivers (šu mu-tak \textsubscript{X}) the golden object in the current text two sections down from the one mentioning Igriš-Halab;

[c] Wabarum, who held an even more interesting position; he was one of the officials on duty responsible for receiving (šu ba\textsubscript{4}-ti) wool.\textsuperscript{80} In fact, at the end of the present text he receives some woolen items just prior to the mentioned Nuzar. Their names appear also in TM 1365\textsuperscript{81} where both are designated as ur\textsubscript{4} “collectors” jointly with KUM-nu, another «wool-official»; and they occurs also in TM 1289\textsuperscript{82} where Wabarum receives (šu ba\textsubscript{4}-ti) wool to manufacture woolen items for Ebrium and Bagama, while Nuzar\textsuperscript{83} is the «wool-official» on duty. KUM-nu, Nuzar and Wabarum held the profession of «wool-officials» at the turn of Ar-Ennum’s

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\textsuperscript{76} See TM 1321 ob.11:3:9; rv.2:6; 1336 ob.7:2.

\textsuperscript{77} Nuzar was in charge of receiving (šu ba\textsubscript{4}-ti) wool for wagons in the final period of Ar-Ennum and at the beginning of Ebrium’s leadership. See M.G. Biga - F. Pomponio, “Elements for a Chronological Division ...,” JCS 42 (1990) 200f.

\textsuperscript{78} Note the mention in TM 1321 of Enna-Damu, the king (en) of Ma-nu-wa-arki, who is in power since the Ar-Ennum period.

\textsuperscript{79} The name of Igriš-Halab appears in the section after the one mentioning, na-AN dam en, “PN, woman of the king” (TM 1336 ob.4:13–15); that is the only time that na-AN occurs in the Ebla tablets published to date.

\textsuperscript{80} M.G. Biga - F. Pomponio, “Elements for a Chronological Division ...,” JCS 42 (1990) 199ff and n.43, already pointed out that these officials “unexpectedly,” offer “the possibility of arranging in chronological order a large number of texts.”

\textsuperscript{81} TM 1365 ob.11:10–12:1 (Wabarum); rv.3:1–4:5 (Nuzar ur\textsubscript{4} and KUM-nu). TM 1365 is an archaic text of the early Ar-Ennum period.

\textsuperscript{82} Wabarum is designated ur\textsubscript{4}, “collector” in TM 1358 ob.9:4; 3052 2:2’; 3304 rv.1:1–5; 3706 rv.2:4’–7’.

\textsuperscript{83} TM 1289 has been published by G. Pettinato, MEE vol. 2, (Rome, 1980), # 11; on the present tablet, see also C. Zaccagnini, “The Terminology of the Weight Measures for Wool at Ebla,” QdS 13 (1984) 189–204.

\textsuperscript{84} TM 1289 ob.3:9–13 (Ebrium); ob.4:9–5:3 (Bagama).

\textsuperscript{85} TM 1289 rv.5:8–6:2.
and Ebrium’s period. The present chronology is validated by the quotation of Wabarum’s name side by side with IbduR-Isar, the judge, and Iti-Il, the brother of Il-iš-à-UR in TM 1354.86

All that makes more and more likely that also TM 1336 belongs to the early part of Ebrium’s times, and, therefore, that the unnamed Mari en, “king” could be identified with I-KU(-i)-šar,87 and that the latter was already in power at Mari at the beginning of Ebrium’s leadership, as shown also by TM 1321.

Yet, it seems to me, that establishing the initial point of I-KU(-i)-šar’s reign in the early part of Ebrium’s administration would shorten too much the period when Enna-dDagan ruled in Mari.

Then, it is imperative to raise the question why only I-KU(-i)-šar held the rare title of en, “king” of Mari, when Iblu-Il, NI-zi, Enna-dDagan and HI-da-ar are qualified lugal in periods prior to and after his reign.

A further problem is brought up by another tablet studied above. In TM 1233 (ob.6:3–6), there is an additional quotation of a Mari en, “king”. The section related to him refers a small amount of silver given as níg-AN.AN:AN.AN, «offering to the gods» by the Mari king (en ma-rkí) as previously rendered by A. Archi.88

TM 1233 is unquestionably a text belonging to the Ar-Ennum period and, as shown above, together with TM 1564 registers the transition point from NI-zi’s to Enna-dDagan’s rulership; in other words, it is a text belonging to the early years of Enna-dDagan.

Thus, it seems to me a bit difficult to identify the unnamed Mari en, “king” with I-KU(-i)-šar because it is a little too early for him, since he took office almost at the beginning of the Ebrium period, and, specifically, because Enna-dDagan’s rulership and I-KU(-i)-šar’s kingship would overlap. On the other hand, it appears a little too late also for Iblu-Il, because he does not hold the title of en, “king” aside from TM 2637 and because, supposedly, after him NI-zi ruled over Mari for at least three years.

Nevertheless, TM 1233 tells us the following: at the moment that Enna-dDagan took office and his name had been listed together with the Mari elders designating the acquisition of his full authority, a Mari en, “king”

86. TM 1354 rv.6:12–13.
not only is registered together with him, but also exercised his royal power of presenting an offering to the gods during an official ceremony. Furthermore, from TM 1564 we learn that it happened when Ar-Ennum was still in office at Ebla.

If I am correct in relating TM 1233 ob.3:10–4:6 to TM 1657 ob.3:7–4:5, TM 1233 ob.5:1–6 to TM 1657 ob.4:6–5:1 and, possibly, TM 1233 ob.6:8–12 to TM 1657 ob.8:4–9:1, I can assume that TM 1657 belongs to the same period, even though it reports two transactions quoting the old royal couple of Mari associated with the ÉxPAP.

In fact, Iblu-Il, qualified as lugal, is referred to at the end of his section regarding a delivery to four Ebla officials. TM 1657 rv.6:7–8 reads: (goods and/of gold) / GIBIL-za-il / la-da-at / il-zi-da-mu / ig-na-da-mu / šu mu-takx / ib-luš-il / lugal / 1 mu / TIL // ÉxPAP / itu NI-nun: “goods and/of gold, delivered Iblu-Il, the lugal; first year ... ...; month of A.” Baba, the Mari queen, instead, is quoted twice together with the known Ebla official Dubišum after an almost entirely blank column.

Whether or not Iblu-Il and Baba were still alive, TM 1657 confirms that TM 1233 deals with transactions having taken place during the rulership of Enna-dDagan in Mari and that of Ar-Ennum at Ebla. So, as argued above, it is difficult to ascertain which Mari en, “king” TM 1233 refers to. Yet I can assume, without further doubt, that under the Ar-Ennum leadership at Ebla and the early Enna-dDagan’s rulership at Mari, an en, “king” did reign in the city along the Euphrates. The candidacy of Iblu-Il to the top position at Mari should be disregarded because he is again designated as lugal in TM 1657 belonging to the same period.

Therefore, it seems to me that the mention of whichever en, “king” at Mari in those early times shows that the office held by NI-zi and Enna-dDagan should be viewed from a different angle.

Without jumping to any quick and easy solution about this matter, I would rather raise the further question whether it is accurate to support the alleged meaning lugal, «king» when applied to the Mari ruler, while sev-

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89. TM 1564 rv.3:1–4:6. As mentioned above, note that, purposely perhaps, in TM 1233 ob.1:11–2:4, the silver amount delivered by the Mari elders is not reported. The omission could be explained in the way that TM 1233 registers the generic receipts of goods at Mari (?), while TM 1564 and TM 2135 are the lists of the deliveries (šu mu-takx) from Mari. Note that TM 2135 picks up exactly where TM 1564 ends.

eral examples are available of the use of the word en designating the highest authority at Mari. This would be more in agreement with the Eblaite scribes’ terminology.

4. The Mari Rulers: Baba, Iblu-Il’s Wife

I have already dealt a little with Baba, the wife of Iblu-Il, and in my article regarding The Judges at Ebla, I explain how she was, in a special way, related to Dubišum,92 qualified ur₄, “collector” and to two Ebla’s judges,93 i.e. Ibdur-Išar and Enna-Il, to whom she delivered (šu mu-tak Ṫ) her níg-ba, «gift».

She is also mentioned in TM 1559, a monthly inventory, whose colophon registers silver amounts of the Mari elders during a four-year period.94 Her name’s quotation together with the one of Enna-Dagan — consistently spelled without the determinative d as in TM 1564 and 136895 — and the one mentioning some Mari officials not appearing after the Ar-Ennum period like Išma`-Il or Alma96 could suggest an early date of the present text.

One of the peculiarities of TM 1559, compared with TM 1657, mentioned above, consists in their colophons. The first one states that it deals with the silver of the Mari elders (ABxÁŠ) during four years while the latter reports the silver and gold of an unnamed lugal for exactly the same length of time. Yet, while in the second text the deliveries of the Mari lugal are tied up with the names of the Ebla officials, in the first tablet, mainly all the quoted PNs belong to Mari.

In TM 1559, Baba is mentioned in connection with Enna-Il as her sagi, “cupbearer”,97 ob.1:1–2: (silver) en-na-il / sagi ba₁₄-ba₄: “silver, Enna-Il,

91. Among the tablets published to date, the only example of a foreign king called lugal is, to my knowledge, the king of Kiš (TM 10091 ob.4:3–4). In TM 76.G.540 ob.7:15–8:5, though, he is registered as en kiš ḫ₄, “the king of Kiš.”
92. See TM 1555 ob.5:5 // TM 2221 ob.3:1; TM 1657 rv.8:2.8.
93. See TM 1555 rv.4:7 // TM 2115 rv.1:3.
94. TM 1559 rv.10:1–5: an-šē-gū (silver) / ABxÁŠ-ABxÁŠ / ma-pi₄ki / āš-du / 4 mu. Note the similarity to TM 1657’s colophon: an-šē-gū (silver) / (gold) / lū / (blank) / lugal(?)/ āš-du 4 mu: “total: silver and gold, that (blank) the lugal, for four years.”
95. As mentioned above, TM 1368 belongs to the NI-zi rulership.
96. The PN Alma occurs only in two tablets, among those published to date: TM 1559 and 1368, both belonging to the Ar-Ennum period.
the cupbearer of Baba.” It is difficult to identify the present sagi, “cupbearer”, but it is noteworthy to underline that he carries the same name of the Ebla judge (di-ku₅, da-núm) mentioned along with her in TM 1555 rv.4:5–5:2 and in TM 2115 ob.5:2–rv.1:3.

As seen above, Baba’s name appears in the last section of TM 1657, after the reference to her husband and in relation to the ÉxPAP, but it would not necessarily mean that she had passed away. In fact, she is quoted in a text that unquestionably should be assigned to the times of Ebrium’s leadership, i.e. TM 1435. Rv.11:11–19 reads: 6 gi₅KINₓ-síg / du-bí-zi-kír / lú i-da-NI-ki-mu / à-ti-du / baₕ₄-ba₅ / puzur₉-ra-a-ba₅ / ABxÁŠ / en-na-il / lú a-ma-za: “6 K.-measures of wool, PN₁ of PN₂, PN₃, Baba, PN₄, the elder, PN₅ of PN₆.”

So as the infrequent presence of I-KU(-i)-šar’s name represents a problem of not easy solution, so the repeated mention of Baba in the Ebla texts reveals to us the major role played by Iblu-II’s wife during the long and not always smooth relationship between the two rival cities. In fact, even not appearing officially in the final summary tablets, she sent her níg-ba, «gift» through her own officials to Ebla.

5. Conclusion

At the end of this paper, in which I tried to sort the Ebla texts dealing with Mari in a chronological sequence, it seems to me to have reached two main conclusions: [a] two Mari en, kings only are mentioned in the Ebla records; [b] a big question mark should be put after the names of NI-zi, EnnadDagan and HI-da-ar regarding their roles at Mari.

Having second thoughts about TM 1705 mentioned at the beginning of the Mari en section, in my opinion even the few published segments could reveal that it belongs to an early period. My argument is based on the quo-

97. The sagi, “cupbearer” played an important role in Mari, since he is quoted many times together with the lugal (TM 1564 rv.5:1–5 // 1233 2:5–3:9; see TM 1233 (passim), TM 76.G.528 rv.8:3–7, etc) and had ma₅škim, “officers” under his command. For the role of the sagi in Mesopotamia at a later period, see D. Charpin, Le clergé d’Ur au siècle d’Hammurabi, (Paris-Genève, 1985), p. 237–240 and B. Lafont, “zabar-dab₅, zab/mardabbum,” NABU 1987/94.

tation therein of Iš-má-il’s name which does not appear after the Ar-Ennum leadership times.

Therefore, if I am correct, since the whole tablet has not yet been made available and my statement would appear to be supported by the quotation therein of a PN only, I-KU(-i)-šar bears the strong possibility not only to have been in power during the Ar-Ennum period but also of being the en, “king” mentioned in TM 1233.

If this assumption is correct and I-KU(-i)-šar was the king (en) of Mari in the Ar-Ennum period, it means that just two Mari en, “kings” are quoted in the Ebla tablets: Iblu-Il and I-KU(-i)-šar, exactly as it was already revealed by the texts found at Mari.99

So, in summing up this paper I will add the following brief remark, that, even though I have tried to clarify some of the problems dealing with the two Syrian cities, many other questions suggest many more leading questions.

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