

# Transmission and reception of Babylonian knowledge in Ugarit. A preliminary study

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## *ABSTRACT*

In the Late Bronze Age, the Near East saw the Babylonian intellectual heritage expansion throughout the region. Although previous works only studied this phenomenon from the Babylonian perspective, recent trends and methodologies prefer to present it from the reception sites. One of them was the Levantine city of Ugarit. This kingdom developed an active and profitable international commerce as well as intense diplomatic contacts with the cradles of that knowledge, Babylon and Assyria. On this matter, clay tablets that belong to Babylonian tradition were unearthed in several private houses whose owners were important merchants and administrators of the Kingdom. Some of these texts reveal that these houses were also schools where Babylonians and Assyrians worked as teachers.

## *KEYWORDS*

Trade, diplomacy, intellectual, Ugarit, Babylon

## 1. Introduction: Ugarit and Babylonian intellectual heritage expansion in the Late Bronze Age

The Near Eastern Late Bronze Age became an international age; this means that different political entities were in continuous contact with each other.<sup>1</sup> Commerce and diplomacy underwent an incredible development and, with the rise of international relations, some authors have considered the appearance of an international society who shared institutions, codes of communications and common tastes.<sup>2</sup> In this context, Babylonia became a leading cultural centre like the brand of high culture in the Late Bronze Age. We can see this fact in the spreading of Babylonian scholarly texts along the Near East.

One of the first states that received this intellectual tradition was the Mitanni Empire. Once Samsu-iluna (1749-1712 BC) lost the south of the unified reign inherited from his father, the king Hammurabi, many scholars took up exile to cities and states on the North of Babylonia and beyond, making contact with territories that after will belong to Mitanni. These cities constituted the nexus between the Late Old Babylonian intellectual heritage and its expansion in the Early Late Bronze Age.<sup>3</sup> In this way, the Mitanni Empire was an important agent in the expansion of Babylonian intellectual heritage as we can see in Nuzi<sup>4</sup> and Alalah.<sup>5</sup>

On his behalf, Assyria played an important role in the process of irradiation of Babylonian intellectual heritage. When Assyria woke up from the submission to Mitanni (ca. 1350 BC), Assyrians did not have any intellectual tradition so they began to import Babylonian texts and scholars.<sup>6</sup> It is possible that imperialistic policy carried out by Assyrians from this moment onwards, as well as their admiration for Babylonian culture, were the main factors for the intellectual development in Assyria<sup>7</sup>. It is ev-

ident the special use that Assyrian kings made with the Babylonian intellectual tradition imported to Assur and Ninive from the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I onwards, when Babylonian scholars and texts are present in the Assyrian court.<sup>8</sup> This scholarly knowledge was necessary in construction of the ideological apparatus of Assyrian kingship.<sup>9</sup> This process fed an increasing expertise in Assyrian scribes, and they were well valued by other societies, such as Emar and Ugarit.<sup>10</sup>

However, we cannot forget that around 13<sup>th</sup> century BC Nippur was reborn as cultural and intellectual centre under a Kassite dynasty. This was a period of great creativity in Babylonian *belles-lettres* with the compilation and canonization of Mesopotamian cultural heritage.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, we can establish several places (Nippur, North-Babylonia, Mitanni, Assyria, etc.) where scribes cultivated the Babylonian intellectual heritage and, from which, these “intellectuals” will spread it to other cities.<sup>12</sup>

However, by what means travelled this intellectual heritage? How and why did it arrive to other cultural environments? In order to answer these questions, Ugarit offers interesting explanatory possibilities. On one hand, Ugarit harboured one of the most important Babylonian text *corpora* outside Mesopotamia; on the other, this city was an important trading centre. Therefore, in this article I hope to explain the relationship between the international trade development of Ugarit and the special interest of this city in Babylonian knowledge.

## 2. Intellectual History in the Ancient Near East: recent trends and perspectives

The interest in culture contact and exchange of knowledge studies have increased in last years. Recent questions in modern societies about globalization and intercultural relationships have influ-

<sup>1</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2016a, pp. 45-46.

<sup>2</sup> RAGONERI 2000, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2016a, pp. 45-46.

<sup>4</sup> LION 2015, pp. 23-24.

<sup>5</sup> NIEDORF 2008, pp. 119-120.

<sup>6</sup> VELDHUIS 2012, pp. 11-17.

<sup>7</sup> LIVERANI 2017, pp. 73-74.

<sup>8</sup> PONGRATZ-LEISTEN 2015, p. 31.

<sup>9</sup> PONGRATZ-LEISTEN 2015, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> PONGRATZ-LEISTEN 2015, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2007, pp. 196-205.

<sup>12</sup> VIANO 2016, pp. 374-375.

enced these new motivations and the renewal of this kind of studies. Among the recent trends in the research of the Ancient Near East, intellectual history is one of the most powerful and it has as object of study the production and transmission of knowledge.<sup>13</sup>

Previously, historical research understood intercultural relationships as unequal relationships and scholars studied it from a unidirectional point of view: from states or political structures more complex and powerful (“centres”), to political environments considered more simple, (“peripheries”). Therefore, the scholarship analysed exclusively the external dynamic, studying exclusively the diffusion of cultural forms from centres to peripheries. Two were the theoretical frameworks of reference: the concept of acculturation and the world-system theory.<sup>14</sup> Acculturation implies the loss of cultural identity by the peripheral society and the gradual adoption of central culture features. On his behalf, the world system theory establishes that culture contact depends on the economical network of exchange: while peripheries supplied raw materials to the centre, the centre sold commodities and spread its own culture to the periphery. Both theories came from studies about modern and contemporary history and, despite they were the first to considering the culture contact as object of study, nowadays they have serious explanatory and conceptual limitations.<sup>15</sup> In relation to Babylonian knowledge diffusion to the “western periphery” in the Late Bronze Age, historiographical tradition has always studied it from the perspective of the original “pure” Babylonian centre to less qualified peripheries.<sup>16</sup>

Nowadays, we know that these paradigms are completely inefficient in order to explain the complexity of intercultural relations; so then, postcolonial thinkers like E. Said and H. Bhabha established new ways and concepts in order to explain intercultural relationships.<sup>17</sup> These authors understood the complete artificiality of the concept “unitary cul-

ture”, concluding that inside each “culture” there was a great heterogeneity, being internally different including social identities, political interests and economic and intellectual levels.<sup>18</sup> In addition, they considered that cultural exchange was not spontaneous but deliberate, according to personal, social, economic and cultural interests, which shape a network of objects, ideas, and agents who carry out the cultural exchange.<sup>19</sup>

From the 90’s onwards, we count on innovative approaches that emerged from the archaeology and the anthropology. These have proposed new methodologies that support that cultural exchange is double: top-down relationships where the culture travelled through political, economic and social networks; and the bottom-up relationships, where distinct social and cultural environments accepted, re-contextualized and manipulated those transmitted motifs according to their own interests.<sup>20</sup> In relation to the latter, these new perspectives understand that exchange and reception of knowledge is intrinsic to the society and to interests and necessities of individuals and institutions.<sup>21</sup> Fortunately, in the Ancient Near East we count on the advantage of studying Babylonian scholarly texts in their archaeological context together with other sort of texts (administrative, economic, letters, etc.).<sup>22</sup> Therefore, our task may consist in explaining the economic, social, political and ideological context where social groups received foreign cultural motifs.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Ugaritic commerce and diplomacy: international contacts with Assyria and Babylon in the Late Bronze Age

While some scholars see the arrival of this culture via Hurrian intermediaries, others consider that the main corpus of Babylonian literature and

<sup>13</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2013, pp. 89-92.

<sup>14</sup> STEIN 2002, pp. 903-905.

<sup>15</sup> SCHORTMAN, URBAN 1998, pp. 103-106.

<sup>16</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2016b, p. 259.

<sup>17</sup> VAN DE MIEROOP 2016b, p. 261.

<sup>18</sup> WELSCH 1999, p. 197.

<sup>19</sup> BHABHA 2006, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> STEIN 2002, pp. 906-908.

<sup>21</sup> VELDHUIS 2014, pp. 22-23.

<sup>22</sup> DELNERO, LAUNGER 2015, pp. 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> VELDHUIS 2014, pp. 22-23.

scholarly texts reached Ugarit directly<sup>24</sup> from Babylon and Assyria.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the Akkadian taht was used at Ugarit is very similar to Middle Babylonian<sup>26</sup> as well as the presence of assyrianisms in several texts reveals the Assyrian influence.<sup>27</sup> Possibly, we should accept different routes of transmission. Firstly, Ugarit belonged to the Mitanni Empire at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age;<sup>28</sup> besides, the presence of ugaritians at Ta'udu texts (in the heart of Mitannian Empire) proves contacts between Mitanni and Ugarit. So, that could be one way of transmission.<sup>29</sup>

In relation to direct contacts with Babylonians, there were merchants from Babylon at Ugarit as we can see in the letter of Hattusili III, king of Hatti, sent to Kadeshman-Enlil II, king of Babylon. In this document, the former quoted the complaint of the second: «[Furthermore, my brother: Because] you wrote to me as follows “My merchants are being killed in the land of Amurru, the land of Ugarit...”».<sup>30</sup> Also, there are evidences of direct contacts between Ugaritians and Babylonians in Emar. In this city on the west mid-Euphrates riverbank, Ugaritians were involved together with Emariot merchants in commercial enterprises, as we can see in documents from the House of Urtenu at Ugarit and from the House 5 of Emar.<sup>31</sup> Here, there was a colony of Babylonian merchants,<sup>32</sup> who carried out contacts with Ugaritians as we can see in private letters like RS 34.152: «Thus to my lord. Regarding you had furnished compensation. Sin-Šumati-ušabši and Eriba-Marduk (Babylonian) went to meet with you».<sup>33</sup> As well as in the document RS 23.025 where someone called Ili-Hamadi from Dur Hadad, informed about the survival of the Babylonian king Kaštilias IV, probably after being defeated by Tukulti Ninurta I of Assyria, so we

can talk about information channels between Babylonian and Ugaritic territories.<sup>34</sup>

It is evident that Babylonia saw in Emar and Ugarit gateways for its merchandises like lapis-lazuli.<sup>35</sup> However, the most important goods were those highly demanded by Great Empires of the Late Bronze Age: horses and metals. Babylonia was a great intermediary in the commerce of horses<sup>36</sup> as well as of tin,<sup>37</sup> both imported from Central Asia and Iran and also commercialised by Ugaritic merchants.

With respect to contacts between Ugaritians and Assyria, also Emariot merchants linked Syrian trade routes with Assyria.<sup>38</sup> However, the letter that Tukulti Ninurta I sent to Ibiranu VI of Ugarit telling him his victory against Tudhaliya IV in the battle of Nihriya is an interesting proof of direct relationships between both kingdoms.<sup>39</sup> For presence of Assyrian merchants in Ugarit, we count on the trade embargo against Assyrians commanded by Tudhaliya IV, which we can see in the treaty signed with Amurru and, surely, extended to the rest of vassal kingdoms: «Since the King of Assyria is My Majesty enemy; he shall be your enemy. Your merchant shall not go to Assyria and you shall not allow his merchant into your land».<sup>40</sup>

### 3. Texts in their contexts: Babylonian libraries and private owners at Ugarit

Almost all of Babylonian scholarly texts from Ugarit have been unearthed in private contexts and the majority were written in the last stage of Ugarit history (ca. 1300-1200 BC). We are talking about the so-called houses of Yabninu, Rap'anu, Rašap'abu, Urtenu, the house “literary tablets” and the house of Magician-Priest. Fortunately, administrative texts found in these houses allow to identify their owners.

<sup>24</sup> MONROE 2009, p. 142.

<sup>25</sup> ARNAUD 2007, pp. 7-10.

<sup>26</sup> VERMAAK 2009, p. 517.

<sup>27</sup> VAN SOLDT 1999, p. 43.

<sup>28</sup> FREU 2006, p. 26.

<sup>29</sup> KESSLER 2014, p. 39.

<sup>30</sup> BECKMAN 1996, p. 136.

<sup>31</sup> COHEN, SINGER 2006, p. 123.

<sup>32</sup> PRUZSINSZKY, SOLANS 2015, pp. 326-328.

<sup>33</sup> LACKENBACHER 1991, p. 86.

<sup>34</sup> ARNAUD 2003, pp. 9-12.

<sup>35</sup> VERMAAK 2009, pp. 516-520.

<sup>36</sup> VERMAAK 2009, p. 521.

<sup>37</sup> MONTERO FENOLLÓS 1994-1995, pp. 191-193.

<sup>38</sup> PRUZSINSZKY, SOLANS 2015, p. 325.

<sup>39</sup> LACKENBACHER 1991, pp. 90-100.

<sup>40</sup> BECKMAN 1996, p. 106.

On the other hand, the Royal palace archive contained some scholarly texts, just like religious compositions (almost all in Hurrian) and lexical tablets, but we cannot say that this space functioned as a space of Babylonian studies.<sup>41</sup>

The first owner mentioned, Yabninu, was involved in palatial administration: he controlled issues like censuses, the merchant record or the supply of the city of Ugarit.<sup>42</sup> He could be one of the most important heads of palatial administration<sup>43</sup> with the control of people movements, importation of raw materials and agricultural products as well as the control over maritime activities.<sup>44</sup> In addition, he managed diplomatic affairs like different negotiations with the nearby kingdom of Amurru.<sup>45</sup> He combined this public function with private commercial business in Egypt, Hatti and several cities of Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>46</sup> In fact, the name of Yabninu appears taking part in two commercial firms.<sup>47</sup> In spite of being an important man of the city and the Kingdom, the house of Yabninu has given us few scholarly tablets, and they are not enough to place it among one of the most important sites of Babylonian knowledge reception.<sup>48</sup>

On the contrary, the house of Rap'anu contains one of the most important libraries of Babylonian texts in Ugarit and it was possibly the main school of the city.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, in the house of Rašap'abu only four Sumero-Akkadian texts were found;<sup>50</sup> however, recent studies have interpreted that the adjoined house called *du lettré*, whose texts consist in ten lexical lists, two literary letters and two incantations, really could belong to the house of Rašap'abu.<sup>51</sup> Like Yabninu, these two individuals combined public responsibilities with personal

business.<sup>52</sup> Rap'anu alternated his work as administrator of diplomatic correspondence, in the light of international letters found in his archive,<sup>53</sup> with private commercial activities carried out in Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and other cities of the Levant.<sup>54</sup> On the contrary, Rašap'abu held the charge of port manager and the position of *wakil tamkari* (chief of merchants), so he had a special link with commercial activities and the administration.<sup>55</sup>

On the south of the city lies the House of Urtenu, probably one of the most interesting archive of the city because of the high number and variety of texts unearthed here. His archives have provided documents that involved Urtenu with the administration.<sup>56</sup> In addition, he directed the international diplomacy because of the high number of international letters discovered in his house.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, he carried out his own business as participant in a lucrative firm that managed commercial activities between Ugarit, Emar and Tyre.<sup>58</sup> Regarding his importance and authority inside of Ugaritian society, he belonged (as well as Yabninu) to "the greats and elders of Ugarit" mentioned in RS 88.2009.<sup>59</sup> "Elders" represented the most prominent families of the city and, in the case of Ugarit, they performed an important international role<sup>60</sup> and the "greatest" were those which assumed positions of maximum responsibility.<sup>61</sup>

We have to highlight that the majority of these private houses are near to the Royal Palace; this implies a special closeness with the centre of power.<sup>62</sup> Definitely, these four individuals accumulated a huge fortune as important traders; besides, they took part in diplomatic relationships.<sup>63</sup> Unlike other merchants, they did not owe their position to

<sup>41</sup> COHEN 2013, pp. 43-50.

<sup>42</sup> COURTOIS 1990, pp. 113-133.

<sup>43</sup> BELL 2012, p. 182.

<sup>44</sup> COURTOIS 1990, pp. 140-142.

<sup>45</sup> MCGEOUGH 2015, p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> BELL 2012, p. 182.

<sup>47</sup> COURTOIS 1990, p. 107.

<sup>48</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, pp. 230-231.

<sup>49</sup> MONROE 2009, p. 142.

<sup>50</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, pp. 231-232.

<sup>51</sup> MATOÏAN 2013, pp. 180-181.

<sup>52</sup> BELL 2012, p. 182.

<sup>53</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, p. 233.

<sup>54</sup> BELL 2012, p. 55.

<sup>55</sup> MONROE 2009, p. 69.

<sup>56</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, pp. 240-241.

<sup>57</sup> BELL 2012, p. 183.

<sup>58</sup> MCGEOUGH 2015, p. 92.

<sup>59</sup> SOLANS 2015, p. 377.

<sup>60</sup> SOLANS 2015, pp. 233-235.

<sup>61</sup> SOLANS 2015, pp. 267-268.

<sup>62</sup> MONROE 2009, p. 32.

<sup>63</sup> MCGEOUGH 2015, p. 91.

palace concessions; mainly the way of funding was the entrepreneurial association among them and with foreign merchants.<sup>64</sup> These important magnates were associated with the most lucrative trade, the trade of metals:<sup>65</sup> on the one hand, the purchase of gold in Egypt and its sale in other places of the Eastern Mediterranean;<sup>66</sup> on the other hand, the exchange of strategic metals which fed the weaponry of great armies of the Late Bronze Age: copper and tin.<sup>67</sup> Also, some of these merchants were involved in the commerce of horses, like Urtenu, to whom is probably sent a letter talking about a commercial operation regarding horses with a tradesman from the “land of Mari” and probably part of the Babylonian kingdom.<sup>68</sup>

Outside of great ones individual merchants, two other important places of Babylonian intellectual heritage reception were “The House of Literary Tablets” and the “House of the Magician-Priest”. The first one contained a collection of Babylonian scholarly and literary texts whose authors were members of an important family of local scribes (the patriarch was someone called Nume-Rašap).<sup>69</sup> In this house appeared some documents that linked this family with other magnates seen before, such as Yabninu and Urtenu.<sup>70</sup> Besides, some letters sent to the king, the queen and other officials of Ugarit relates them with high palatial circles,<sup>71</sup> and the owners of this house were important oil producers and traders.<sup>72</sup> The second one, the House of the Magician-Priest, has given us an important library of ritual texts in a specific part of the house, the so-called Lamaštu archive.<sup>73</sup> His owner should be an important man in the Ugaritian society too, not a merchant or high official, but a diviner or a priest. Nevertheless, a list of herdsmen, whose names appear in some lists of

personnel in the palace, joined him with the administration as well.<sup>74</sup>

Summing up, the owners of these libraries were important administrators of the kingdom, diplomats, rich merchants and/or religious-moral authorities as well as visible heads of the society.

#### 4. Transmission and Reception: Scribal Babylonian education and foreign teachers in Ugarit

The presence of Babylonian school texts in private houses at Ugarit means, of course, that they were schools or places of scribal activity. This is not abnormal, because modern researchers have demonstrated that education from the Old Babylonian Period onwards belonged to private contexts.<sup>75</sup> While previous studies about schooling focused in literary texts which describe the school institution of É.DUB.BA.A (tablet house), new archaeological approaches consider, on the contrary the private and familiar nature of teaching along the second millennium.<sup>76</sup> In Ugarit, the evidence assures that education was a practice completely decentralised and teaching was organised around individual scribes in those private houses described above.<sup>77</sup> On this matter, Babylonian texts unearthed in Ugarit correspond to schooling materials<sup>78</sup> and students signed their works and, sometimes, they added the name of their masters in the colophons.<sup>79</sup>

The family (probable) owner of the House of Literary Tablets is a good example of local scribes well trained in Babylonian *belles-lettres*, and they were able to do true innovations on that subject just like the Babylonian Deluge Poem written by Nume-Rašap. Other members of the family were involved in scholarly and teaching activities, names like Ur-Teššub, ‘Ili-Šapšu, TIL.IŠKUR, Ewri-Mudu,

<sup>64</sup> MONROE 2009, pp. 106-108.

<sup>65</sup> BELL 2012, p. 181.

<sup>66</sup> CASTLE 1992, pp. 254-255.

<sup>67</sup> BELL 2012, pp. 180-183.

<sup>68</sup> LACKENBACHER 1991, pp. 101-104.

<sup>69</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY 2013, p. 421.

<sup>70</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY 2013, p. 415.

<sup>71</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, pp. 234-235.

<sup>72</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY 2013, pp. 425-426.

<sup>73</sup> YON 1997 (2006<sup>2</sup>), pp. 100-101.

<sup>74</sup> VAN SOLDT 2000, pp. 235-236.

<sup>75</sup> GEORGE, 2005, p. 131.

<sup>76</sup> ROBSON 2001, pp. 39-40.

<sup>77</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY, HAWLEY, PARDEE 2016, p. 246.

<sup>78</sup> MÁRQUEZ ROWE 2006, pp. 105-120.

<sup>79</sup> VAN SOLDT 2015, pp. 567-568.

or 'Ahi-Rašap signed colophons of several tablets.<sup>80</sup> For example, at the houses of Rap'anu and Urtenu, the scribe Ur-Teššub, from Nume-Rašap's family, practised its labour as teacher.<sup>81</sup> However, among all the scribes identified one of them stands out, Aššur-reši-išši, an Assyrian teacher settled at Ugarit and whose name was written by a student in the colophon of the wisdom composition *Šima Milka* ("Hear the advice").<sup>82</sup> It looks like that a native Babylonian worked as scribe and teacher in the so-called Lamaštu archive: the cuneiform signs used in the text point to the presence of a native Babylonian writer.<sup>83</sup> This typical Babylonian writing appears in several scholarly texts<sup>84</sup> and, we can see that, in two Marduk-Ea incantations, one of them has a typical Babylonian writing, and the other has an Ugaritian one.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, we can infer a possible relationship between Babylonian teacher and Ugaritian trainee.

On the other side of the city, in the House of Yabninu, W. van Soldt has identified an Assyrian scribe with the name of Nahis-Šalmu, because this name stands out for its foreign origin and the palaeography and grammar of his documents presents Assyrian features.<sup>86</sup> Despite the House of Yabninu could not be a teaching centre; it does not deny that Nahis-Šalmu could taught in another house.<sup>87</sup>

These foreign scribes could reach the city by diplomatic contacts. Several scholars assure that one of the most important diplomatic practices was the exchange of professionals<sup>88</sup> just like that mentioned in the letter CTH 172 that Hattusili III of Hatti sent to Kadasman-Enlil II of Babylon where it is discussed the delivery of some professionals like physicians and incantation priests.<sup>89</sup> Another example is the figure of Marduk-nadin-ahhe, a Babylonian scribe and teacher in Assur and a royal scribe in the court of Aššur-uballit

I of Assyria.<sup>90</sup> Of course, the presence of foreign professionals provided prestige to royal courts as well as material advantages, just like the possibility of keeping in contact with intellectual and artistic trends and innovations.<sup>91</sup> Although this practice is more usual between great kings, we know by other letters that Ugarit did not have problems in asking for specialised personnel to great kings as we can see in the letter EA 49 that Niqmaddu III sent to Pharaoh asking for a physician.<sup>92</sup>

However, their presence in private context points out that these scribes travelled in commercial rather than diplomatic environments. Despite some authors established the impossibility of exchange of professionals in private channels,<sup>93</sup> others argued that the scribal culture was not accessible exclusively to scribes, and the knowledge was extended to wide social sectors of urban elites, including merchants, in the second millennium BC thanks to the decentralization of scribal education.<sup>94</sup>

In this sense, we count on parallels about the practice of hiring foreign teachers in private contexts and involved in commercial business, for example in Emar. In the House 5 of Emar, a Babylonian called Kidin-Gula signs several texts.<sup>95</sup> This individual also looks like involved in commercial or financial activities with other compatriots attested in this House 5. Nevertheless, the most interesting information around Kidin-Gula is his presence as teacher in the House of the Zu-Ba'la family.<sup>96</sup> On the other hand, Emar also counted on an Assyrian teacher whose name was Mar-Šeru'a, and he was involved in trade as well.<sup>97</sup> Emar and Ugarit also shared similar scholarly corpora, just like Sumerian compositions found in each place.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, we can deduce that private individuals of Ugarit also employed foreign teachers at their homes.

<sup>80</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY, HAWLEY 2013, pp. 244-248.

<sup>81</sup> MALBRAN-LABAT, ROCHE-HAWLEY 2007, pp. 88-89.

<sup>82</sup> COHEN 2017, p. 274.

<sup>83</sup> VAN SOLDT 2012, pp. 173-177.

<sup>84</sup> VIANO 2016, pp. 325-330.

<sup>85</sup> VIANO 2016, p. 366.

<sup>86</sup> VAN SOLDT 2001, pp. 443-444.

<sup>87</sup> ROCHE-HAWLEY, HAWLEY, PARDEE 2016, pp. 238-239.

<sup>88</sup> ZACCAGNINI 1983, pp. 249-256.

<sup>89</sup> BECKMAN 1983, p. 106.

<sup>90</sup> WIGGERMAN 2008, p. 203.

<sup>91</sup> LIVERANI 1990 (2003<sup>2</sup>), pp. 116-117.

<sup>92</sup> MORAN 1992, p. 120.

<sup>93</sup> ZACCAGNINI 1983, pp. 257-264.

<sup>94</sup> CHARPIN 2008, pp. 39-40.

<sup>95</sup> COHEN 2004, p. 90.

<sup>96</sup> COHEN, SINGER 2006, p. 130.

<sup>97</sup> COHEN 2009, p. 117.

<sup>98</sup> VIANO 2016, p. 361.

## 5. Conclusion

Thanks to new methodologies, we can see the intellectual production and transmission as a phenomenon inserted in social structures and ideologies and we can make new questions to data we have. In relation to Babylonian knowledge transmission to Ugarit, this intellectual heritage circulated along commerce and diplomatic contacts, which linked Mesopotamia and Yazira with Ugarit. However, commerce and diplomacy by themselves do not explain the cultural transmission, so we must understand the context where Ugaritic Babylonian texts appeared.

These libraries were proprieties of elite men and families who were in close contact with trends of their current culture, where the Babylonian knowledge was the brand of high culture. For this reason, they were eager to fill their archives and libraries with Babylonian literary and scholarly texts. These magnates supported as patrons scribal schools at their home, providing them with a huge staff of scribes and instructed people who could serve them in administrative duties and private business. They played an important role in the sponsorship of foreign teachers from Babylon or Assyria (places where the ancient and powerful cuneiform tradition came from) who provided these elites the prestige of foreigners at royal courts, as well as commercial partners.



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