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# БАВИЛОНСКИЕ ПИСЦЫ



ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО «НАУКА»  
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## ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

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Исследуются проблемы клинописной писцовой культуры древней Месопотамии (архивное дело, библиотеки, школы и т. д.). Освещаются социальное и экономическое положение писцов и писцов-переводчиков, а также их роль в храмовом, государственном управлении и на службе у частных лиц. Даны наиболее типичные биографии писцов, выяснены продолжительность их жизни и юридический статус.

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На территории древней Месопотамии раскопано несколько миллионов клинописных табличек, из которых к настоящему времени опубликовано около 500 тысяч. Вплоть до позднего средневековья ни из одной страны мы не имеем столь массовой и разнообразной информации. Первые клинописные тексты появляются уже на заре цивилизации, когда люди еще только начинали учиться выражать свои мысли при помощи письма и увековечивать факты. Последние из клинописных текстов относятся к I в. н. э.

Вавилонская клинописная литература I тысячелетия до н. э. богата по содержанию и насчитывает десятки тысяч текстов. Это деловые документы, научная, художественная и религиозная литература, частная и служебная переписка и т. д.

Шумеро-вавилонская и ассирийская литература, существовавшая в течение нескольких тысячелетий, была создана многими поколениями писцов или благодаря им сохранилась до нашего времени. На древнем Востоке обычно лишь писцы были образованными людьми. По выражению известного ассириолога А. Л. Оппенгейма, именно писец был центральной фигурой месопотамской цивилизации [164, с. 253]. От услуг писцов зависели правители, храмы и частные лица. Писцы составляли все тексты, с их помощью велись дипломатические переговоры. Поэтому образ писца, несомненно, поможет нам понять месопотамскую цивилизацию.

Однако до сих пор мы мало знаем о вавилонских писцах. Как отметил Оппенгейм, пока почти ничего не известно о социальном положении месопотамских писцов [159, с. 242]. Особенно это относится к Вавилонии I тысячелетия до н. э. Если не считать отдельных замечаний, сделанных попутно в работах некоторых ассириологов (прежде всего М. Сан-Николо), о писцах в указанный период имеются только две статьи. Одна из них, принадлежащая перу Р. Ф. Доуэрти, посвящена терминологическому различению двух категорий писцов (на глине и коже) [52]. Во второй статье, автором которой является У. Г. Ламберт, прослеживаются писцовые традиции в некоторых вавилонских семьях [126]. В ценном исследовании Г. М. Кюммеля о просопографии Урука VI в. до н. э. много внимания уделено и писцам [120].

В работах С. Н. Крамера, А. Фалькенштейна, Б. Ландсбергера, С. Дж. Гэдда, Х. Ветцольдта и других ассириологов рассматриваются вопросы образования и обучения писцов в школах, а также терминологии писцового дела в ранние периоды истории Месопотамии (главным образом конца III и II тысячелетий) (см. библиографию в [135, с. 101 и сл.; 159, с. 377, примеч. 17]).

Ценные статьи о писцах опубликовал также А. Л. Оппенгейм. Указывая на почти полную неизученность материала, он обращает внимание на необходимость исследования роли писца на службе у общины для составления контрактов, деятельности писца-чиновника и писца-ученого и поэта. В своих работах Оппенгейм приводит интересные сведения о жизни вавилонских писцов II тысячелетия и ассирийских писцов I тысячелетия (в частности, об их деятельности на царской службе) [164; 165].

В отличие от шумерского и старовавилонского времени мы не располагаем почти никакими сведениями о школах I тысячелетия, в которых обучались вавилонские писцы. Нет также прямых данных об имущественном положении и социальном происхождении писцов. Кроме того, неизвестно, была ли профессиональная деятельность писцов основным источником их существования, или же они занимались ею наряду с другими видами работы. Мало или вообще ничего не известно о социальном статусе писца в нововавилонском обществе и о его экономическом положении, о его функциях в управлении общинными делами и на службе у частных лиц. Эти вопросы применительно к рассматриваемому периоду в литературе не ставились до сих пор вообще. Однако на них и на многие другие вопросы можно попытаться ответить, исходя из многих тысяч документов. Но эта информация не лежит на поверхности. В частнопроводных документах почти всегда приводятся имена писцов, составивших тот или иной текст. Поскольку в документах содержатся не только личные имена писцов, но также их патронимия и фамильные имена (начиная с ранневавилонского времени обычно по профессии предка), а в других текстах эти же лица упоминаются в качестве контрагентов, свидетелей и т. д., сравнивая и сопоставляя различные источники, можно получить ценные, а иногда и совершенно неожиданные сведения о жизни и деятельности писцов. Таким образом, настоящая работа прежде всего является просопографической, и автор ставит перед собой цель попытаться собрать сведения о писцах по крупным из многих тысяч текстов и выяснить положение писцов в вавилонском обществе. Попутно отметим, что в этом отношении история нововавилонского общества находится в более выгодном положении, чем специалисты по ранним периодам Месопотамии, в текстах которых обычно указываются собственные имена писцов, реже и их отчества, но никогда не приво-

дятся фамильные имена, вследствие чего уверенное отождествление писцов часто просто невозможно.

Автор в конце этой книги намеревался дать в виде приложения полную просопографию вавилонских писцов I тысячелетия с ссылками на документы, в которых они упоминаются, а также с указанием городов, в которых эти писцы функционировали, и датами их деятельности (с учетом также текстов, где писцы выступают контрагентами, свидетелями, поручителями и т. д.). Необходимость такой публикации очевидна, поскольку тысячи нововавилонских документов были изданы без именных указателей, а в тех случаях, когда публикации сопровождаются такими индексами, в них нередко приводятся лишь имена упомянутых в текстах лиц без выделения их профессий. К тому же в некоторых индексах есть много неточностей. Однако от публикации такой просопографии с именами более 3 тыс. писцов пришлось воздержаться, так как она увеличила бы объем настоящей работы в несколько раз. Основные данные, вытекающие из этой просопографии, будут приведены ниже в нескольких таблицах.

Часто употребляемое в данной работе выражение «нововавилонское время» является условным и охватывает все I тысячелетие до н. э. (обычно нововавилонским периодом считаются IX—VI вв., а VI—IV вв. — поздневавилонским, или ахеменидским, последующее же время до исчезновения клинописи — эллинистическим и аршакидским).

Ссылки на источники и литературу в основном тексте монографии даны в сокращенной форме, а полные названия приведены в Библиографии. Переводы документов находятся в конце соответствующих глав, а транслитерация — отдельно в Приложении I в хронологическом порядке текстов. В квадратные скобки взяты разрушенные тексты или их восстановления, в ломаные — пропуски писцов, в фигурные — повторения одних и тех же слов по недосмотру писца и в круглые — дополнения при переводе на русский язык, сделанные для большей ясности. Через косую обозначены дубликаты текстов, буквой h везде передается h.

При обсуждении рукописи данной работы сотрудники Сектора древнего Востока Ленинградского отделения Института востоковедения высказали ценные замечания. Советы и консультации ответственного редактора И. М. Дьяконова позволили уточнить многие факты, изложенные в работе. Е. С. Богословский обратил внимание автора на некоторые публикации о египетских писцах. Указатели составлены Н. О. Чехович. Работа над рукописью была завершена в 1978 г., но позднее были учтены издания текстов и литература, вышедшие в свет до конца 1980 г.

## SUMMARY

Until the late Middle Ages we have from no country so many and so various records as we have from ancient Mesopotamia. The earliest cuneiform documents were written at the dawn of civilization, and the latest of them belong to the first century A. D. Cuneiform literature, which had existed for several millennia, was created by many generations of scribes. To use A. Leo Oppenheim's words, the scribe was the central figure of cuneiform civilization. Kings, temples and private persons depended on the service of scribes. But our information about the social position of the Mesopotamian scribe, his activity as bureaucrat and in the service of the community for the recording of contracts is very scanty. We do not have any direct data on the economic situation and social origin of scribes. Also, we do not know if the scribal profession was the chief source of income or if the scribes combined their craft with handicraft, tilling of land and so on. However, one may elucidate these questions though our information is not obvious at first sight. Data on scribes are to be collected little by little from many thousand records. In the Neo-Babylonian period, almost always the personal names as well as the patronymics of scribes are indicated in the documents compiled by a scribe. And in other documents the same persons are mentioned as contracting parties, witnesses and so on. This makes it possible to compare the various sources with each other and get valuable and in some cases quite unexpected information on the life and activity of the scribes. Unfortunately, it was impossible to give as a supplement to this book the full prosopography of the Babylonian scribes in the first millennium B. C. since such a prosopography, including personal names and patronymics of more than 3000 scribes and with references to the records, would require several hundred pages.

The following groups of scribes existed in the Neo-Babylonian society:

- 1) *Sepīru* («scribe-interpreter»)
- 2) Royal and state scribes
- 3) Temple scribes
- 4) Scribes employed by private persons for the recording of contracts and letters.

The *sepīru* wrote upon parchment and papyrus in Aramaic. They were officials of the state and temple administration. Some of them were employed in the service of private persons, too.

The *sepīru* attached to the temples, in particular, dealt out tools, raw material and food-rations to the temple craftsmen and slaves. The *sepīru* were also concerned with administrative tasks and bookkeeping, collected rental payments from the temple fields, and sometimes they were tenants themselves. One *sepīru* was in the service of the Ebabbara temple in Sippar for, at least, 22 years.

The *sepīru* as well as other temple officials received payment for their service in barley, dates and so on, in some cases also in money. Usually their payment was about 1 *kur* of barley or dates a month.

The palace administration sent royal *sepīru* for the inspection of the temple cattle and other property. During the reign of Cambyses royal *sepīru* were included in the administration of the Eanna temple in Uruk to control the accounting in the temple.

In the fifth century B. C. in Nippur and its neighbourhood royal *sepīru* were organized as a special association (*ḥaṭru*). In the documents from Nippur «*sepīru* of the army» are referred to. Evidently, these persons acted as interpreters for the numerous Achaemenian soldiers who were settled on royal land. The *sepīru* were also attached to the *garda*, workers belonging to the king and the members of the royal family. To judge by their personal names, some *sepīru* were of Iranian origin (for instance Rušun-pati, a *sepīru* in the service of a Persian noble, Artarēma). It is quite natural that the Persian administration in Babylonia widely used the services of the interpreters to communicate with the native population.

Sometimes royal *sepīru* were tenants of temple fields.

The royal *sepīru* naturally acted also as the king's agents. For instance, a «*sepīru*, royal agent» declared in the city of Dilbat that a certain field belonged to the king Darius I. Another royal official, whose title was «*sepīru* of the palace heads», was ordered

by the satrap of Babylonia to receive 316 *kurs* of dates from the business house of Egibi.

According to one document, several *sepīru* were sent together with high state officials from Susa, the administrative capital of the Achaemenid Empire, to Borsippa to carry out an important mission. These *sepīru* were paid dates and barley as well as meat, wine, beer, fish and money.

Babylonian documents refer also to the *sepīru* of the king's sons. They rented fields and houses of their masters to other persons, lent money, recovered debts from debtors etc. For instance, a member of the group of the *sepīru* of Marduk-šuma-ušur, son of Nebuchadnezzar II, paid the temple tithe on behalf of his master.

There were also *sepīru* who were in the service of private persons. Four *sepīru* of the Murašû business house are referred to in one single document. They acted as agents of their employers.

Sometimes the *sepīru* acted as independent contracting parties selling their fields, renting houses etc. Some *sepīru* had other persons in their service.

In the administrative records *sepīru* are usually mentioned together with the *ṭupšarru*, scribes writing upon clay tablets, and their functions were similar or even identical.

Let us now turn to the *ṭupšarru*. 3060 scribes are mentioned in the records of the first millennium B. C. 2681 of them were employed in writing contracts on behalf of private persons, 11 scribes were in the palace service and 368 acted as temple scribes. As to the chronological distribution of these scribes, 146 of them lived before the rise of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom, 72 during the reign of Nabopalasar, 548 — of Nebuchadnezzar II, 557 — of Nabonidus, 226 — of Cyrus, 272 — of Cambyses, 464 — of Darius I etc. 85 scribes lived during the Seleucid and Parthian periods. 247 scribes worked in Borsippa, 1289 in Babylon, 29 in Dilbat, 67 in Larsa, 195 in Nippur, 165 in Sippar, 380 in Uruk etc. Some Babylonian scribes are referred to even in the documents compiled at Ecbatana, the capital of Media, in the Phoenician city of Tyre, in Susa, the capital of Elam, etc.

As to the social and ethnic origin of scribes, the following data may be given. 5 scribes were descendants of Assyrians, 17 of Egyptians, 190 of priests, 35 of herdsmen, 23 of potters, 19 of basketweavers, 21 of blacksmiths, 5 of physicians, 50 of builders, 12 of wood-workers, 13 of washermen, 8 of doorkeepers, 7 of

weavers, 7 of merchants, 32 of fishermen, 17 of saltpeddlers, 3 of temple slaves etc.

Royal scribes held leading posts in the state administration, and some of them were influential persons at court. Some records mention «the royal scribes in the city» and «the scribe of the harbour district».

The position of temple scribes can be illustrated by the *curriculum vitae* of Nādinu son of Bēl-aḥḥē-iqīša, descendant of Egibi, scribe of the Eanna temple. He is referred to in 169 administrative documents and letters from the archive of Eanna, of which 64 are written by him himself. He acted as a scribe during the reigns of Nergal-šar-ušur, Nabonidus, Cyrus and Cambyses, at least for 35 years. The majority of the records where he is mentioned are compiled at Uruk, but some of them were written in Babylon, Larsa and some other cities in which Mādinu was on official business.

Several documents concerning plunder of the temple property, renting out temple fields and dedication of slaves to Eanna were written in the presence of high temple officials and some other persons, including Nādinu. He is mentioned also among the citizens (*mār-bani*), that is, members of the Popular Assembly of the temple community which was invested with jurisdiction in judging cases involving property and family law. In one document Nādinu appears among the *ērib bitī*, «enterers of the temple», i. e. those qualified to enter the sanctuaries.

Often Nādinu made estimates of the rental payments from the temple fields, handed out sheep for sacrifices during the temple festivals, food-rations for the temple workers, recovered debts from temple debtors and so on.

Many times Nādinu left for Babylon, Larsa and some other cities in pursuance of his official duties. Sometimes he bought barley in Babylon to send it to the Eanna temple. To the latter he sent also alum bought from a certain place, called Kašabba. In the neighbourhood of Uruk he checked the work on the temple fields. Besides, he saw to the payments of state taxes and the performances of obligatory labour by the Eanna temple.

For his work Nādinu received payment in barley and dates (usually about 1.5 *kur* a month) and rarely in money. It seems that from year to year Nādinu's salary was increasing. Thus, in the 15th year of Nabonidus he was given 7 *kurs* 2 *pānu* 3 *sūtu*

of barley and 3 *kurs* 5 *sūtu* of dates for the period of three months, though some years before his salary was much lesser. By the way, as a rule the amount of the temple scribes' salary did not exceed the payments to craftsmen or agricultural labourers, and in some cases was even less.

The question arises, how many scribes were simultaneously employed in the Eanna temple? Together with Nādinu five more scribes are referred to in the same documents. Nādinu acted in the Eanna temple from the 3rd year of Nergal-šar-ušur until the 8th year of Cambyses. Within the same period more than 30 scribes were employed in the Eanna temple. Considering that there every year new scribes were introduced into office, we can be sure that in the Eanna temple at least about 20 scribes worked simultaneously. In all probability, approximately the same number of scribes was employed also in the other main temples of the country (first of all, in Esagila in Babylon and Ebabbarra in Sippar). Their functions were not of a cultic character, and had nothing to do with the work of the priests. In other words, the temple scribes were bureaucrats and accountants of the temple administration. One of the Eanna scribes, together with the head of the temple, his deputy and the royal commissioner, jointly constituted the highest administrative board of the temple.

The question arises, whether temple scribes could leave their office? Many of them were in the service of the temples for thirty, forty or even more years, that is, practically all their lives. In such cases their professional work was usually their chief source of income. But the temple scribes could give up their job if they wished to. At least this was the case of Aplā, son of Bēl-iddina, descendant of Egibi. He belonged to the famous business house of the name, and is mentioned for the first time as a scribe in a promissory note written in Babylon in 577 B. C. This document comes from the Egibi archive. For the last time he acted as a scribe in 555 B. C., that is 22 years later, in two documents of the Eanna archive. But both of them were compiled in Larsa, not in Uruk. According to the first document, officials of the Eanna temple were informed, in the presence of certain persons including Aplā, of a decree of the king Nabonidus about temple sacrifices. The second document recording a lease of fields belonging to the Eanna temple is written by Aplā himself. In 546 B. C. Aplā is again in Babylon from where also the other records of his activity

as a private person come. For the last time he is mentioned as a witness in 509 B. C. in a promissory note. By that time he was a very old man, since he started his career as a scribe 68 years before.

Could the scribes hold any other offices except those connected with their scribal profession? Adad-ušēzib, son of Sāmiku, is referred to as a scribe of the Eanna temple in two documents dated in the 17th year of Nabonidus. But four years later his position was quite different: by that time he was an overseer over the temple herdsmen (*nāqīdu*). However, there is no evidence that any scribe of Eanna or other temples was at the same time the holder of any other offices, though by giving up his scribal work he could hold various offices.

A scribe who was not attached to the palace or temple administration acted as an independent expert. Such scribes wrote contracts for private persons. According to A. Leo Oppenheim, «there is no evidence... that the scribes who wrote contracts and letters for private persons actually received any compensation. However, since persons who made a nail mark on a tablet (instead of using a seal) were paid for this, it is reasonable to assume that a fee was paid to the scribe». However, there are two documents from the Murašû archive containing a clear indication of a fee being paid to a scribe. According to the first text, a tenant of a field who was a member of the Murašû house, paid 39 *kurs* of barley: 36 *kurs* as a rental payment, and 3 *kurs* as a fee for the scribe who wrote the document. The second text contains a stipulation that a certain amount of rental payment and the scribe's fee be paid by the tenant of a field. Both of these transactions were written by Ninurta-ab-ušur, son of Ellil-šumaidina, who wrote 171 contracts of the Murašû archive within 9 years. Only in three records he appears as a witness but is in no text referred to as a contracting party. Evidently this Ninurta-ab-ušur lived on the income from his scribal profession.

Some scribes had to go from one city to another to write a contract, and it is natural to assume that their services were paid. For instance, Marduk-iqīšanni, son of Bēl-ušallim, descendant of Ātamar-ilussu, wrote a contract in Dilbat in 511 B. C. and only four days later he compiled another contract in Babylon.

S. Weingart and A. Ungnad noted that disinherited younger sons and adopted sons of the Egibi house were taught scribal

craft so that they could earn their living. Besides, many scribes were in the service of merchants and other wealthy persons, recording contracts and writing business letters, acting as agents of their employers and so on. It is natural that the services of such scribes were also paid.

Scholarly opinion has been divided on the question if scribes who wrote contracts had the functions of a notary. M. San Nicolò and A. Leo Oppenheim were of the opinion that scribes did not have notarial functions but G. Cardascia, on the contrary, believes that the scribes were notaries. In any case, the scribe was responsible for the contracts he wrote. For instance, according to one document, dated in the reign of Nabonidus, a scribe who wrote a false promissory note was sentenced by the judges to be put in irons.

Usually it is believed that the scribal profession was hereditary, and passed on from generation to generation in the so-called scribal families. It is true that many cases are known when father and his son or brothers acted as scribes, and in some families (for instance, Sīn-leqe-unninni and Ekur-zākir) scribal profession was hereditary over the centuries. But the author does not believe that in the first millennium B. C. the scribal profession was exclusively hereditary, and it seems that there were no closed corporations of scribes. At least there were among the scribes not only persons of high rank by birth, not only descendants of scribes and priests but also descendants of various craftsmen, herdsmen, fishermen and so on.

What was the social position and economic situation of the scribes? Quite rare cases are known when persons who by birth and social status were temple slaves appear among temple scribes. As a rule temple scribes were citizens. There were no slaves among the scribes who wrote contracts for private persons, and it seems that all of them were citizens, too. It is quite natural that private persons could not afford a scribal education for their slaves to derive profit from their profession, perhaps, in ten years. But temples possessed many slaves, and therefore could sometimes afford to teach their slaves scribal craft. There were also some slaves among the *sepiru* who were in the service of the temples and of the sons of king, but as a rule the *sepiru* were also citizens by their social status.

Though the bulk of the scribes belonged to the estate of ci-

tizens (*mār-bani*) their economic situation was not identical. Among the scribes we can discern rich persons as well as poor ones. Let us give some instances.

Itti-Marduk-balāṭu, son of Nabû-aḥḥē-iddin, descendant of Egi-bi, is referred to in 260 documents written within 33 years (554—521 B. C.). His father was a scribe, a famous business man and a judge of king Nabonidus for 43 years (590—547 B. C.). Though Itti-Marduk-balāṭu wrote many legal transactions, he did not consider scribal activity as an important business or a considerable source of his income. He was a representative of those Babylonian scribes who used their professional knowledge and skill in order to be engaged in commerce in Babylon, Borsippa, Dilbat, Kutû, Sippar, Kiš, Opis, Uruk as well as in Elam, Persia and Media. According to the document on the division of Itti-Marduk-balāṭu's property between his three sons, he possessed more than one hundred slaves, 16 houses located in Babylon and Borsippa, 12 minas of silver, fields, cattle, sheep etc. Besides, Itti-Marduk-balāṭu gave his sister and three daughters in marriage with a total dowry of 22 slaves and slave women, 30 minas of silver, fields etc.

Nabû-ēreš, son of Tabnēa, descendant of Aḥu-bāni, started his scribal career being a rather wealthy man. He possessed at least ten slaves and a field. He could live comfortably on his income, study cuneiform literature and even become a scholar-scribe. But he was seized with the lust for profit, and little by little he lost his property, and died in poverty.

A scribe Bēl-riḫa by name, son of Kalbā, was in such a desperate situation that he had to rent the slave room on top of a house in Babylon and lived there with a slave girl belonging to another person.

## ADDENDA

### Новые издания текстов:

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**СОДЕРЖАНИЕ**

Предисловие	3
Глава I. Терминология	6
1. Писцы, переводчики и ученые	6
2. Материалы для письма	16
3. Типы документов	18
4. Школы, архивы и библиотеки	27
Глава II. Писцовое искусство	30
Тексты	64
Глава III. Писцы-переводчики	67
Тексты	76
Глава IV. Государственные писцы	78
Тексты	84
Глава V. Храмовые писцы	85
Тексты	96
Глава VI. Надни, писец храма Эанны	101
Глава VII. Писцы частноправовых документов	122
Тексты	146
Глава VIII. Писцы-предприниматели	148
1. Набу-аххе-иддин, глава дома Эгиби	148
2. Итти-Мардук-балату из дома Эгиби	152
3. Мардук-нацир-апли, глава дома Эгиби	159
4. Табия, сын Набу-апли-иддина, потомка Син-или	168
Заключение	171
Примечания	178
Приложение I Транслитерация избранных текстов	188
Приложение II. Календарь и таблицы мер	196
Библиография	197
Индекс транслитерированных и переведенных документов	212
Индекс переведенных (без транслитерации) документов	213
Общий индекс использованных источников (тексты вавилонские, ново-ассирийские, арамейские, древнееврейские, демотические, эламские и древнегреческие)	214
Summary	235
Addenda	243

**CONTENTS**

**Babylonian Scribes  
in the First Millennium B. C.  
by M. A. Dandamayev**

Preface	3
Chapter I. Scribal Terminology	6
1. Scribes, Interpreters and Scholars	6
2. Materials for Writing	16
3. Types of Documents	18
4. Schools, Archives and Libraries	27
Chapter II. Scribal Art	30
Тексты	64
Chapter III. Scribes as Interpreters	67
Тексты	76
Chapter IV. State Scribes	78
Тексты	84
Chapter V. Temple Scribes	85
Тексты	96
Chapter VI. Nādinu, a Scribe of the Temple Eanna	101
Chapter VII. Scribes of Private Legal Transactions	122
Тексты	146
Chapter VIII. Scribes as Business Men	148
1. Nabû-aḫḫē-iddin, Head of the House of Egibi	148
2. Itti-Marduk-balātu, Descendant of Egibi	152
3. Marduk-nāšir-apli, Head of the House of Egibi	159
4. Ṭābiya, Son of Nabû-apla-iddina, Descendant of Sin-ili	168
Conclusion	171
Notes	178
Supplement I. Selected Documents in Transliteration	188
Supplement II. Calender and Measures	196
Bibliography (Sources and Literature)	197
Index of Transliterated and Translated Texts	212
Index of Translated Texts (without Transliteration)	213
General Index of Sources Used (Babylonian, Neo-Assyrian, Aramaic, Biblical, Demotic, Elamite and Greek Texts)	214
Summary	235
Addenda	243