CHAPTER TWO

A SURVEY OF THE LOWER STRATUM FAMILIES

This chapter briefly surveys all 447 Lower Stratum families in the Neo-Assyrian period. The study of each family opens with citation of the text in which it is attested, followed by a short commentary. Occasionally the operative section of the text is newly restored. Each entry for every family also includes a study of the formulation of the text and terminology; family type and size, personal names, and professions; marriage pattern and children’s age. Other aspects of the texts examined are the prices and the identity of the parties engaged in legal transactions.

The chapter is divided into seven main parts as follows: A. Slaves; B. Pledged Persons; C. Persons enumerated in sales and lists of “Land and People”; D. Royal Grants; E. The “Harran Census”; F. Deportees and Displaced Persons; G. Recipients of Rations. In each part the families are presented chronologically: the undated texts are arranged by their archives, and are followed by the unassigned texts.

The conclusions of this chapter are presented in Appendix A: tables 1–17.

A. Slaves

Family no. 1: “Emūqīt-ʿAṣšū, his wife, his 3 sons (and) his daughter, a total of 6 persons of Nabû-ahu-iddina son of Nabû-šumu-ibni, the scribe” (ND 673 = BaM 24 (1993), p. 247 = Text no. 1). This large nuclear family of six persons, a couple and four children, was sold in Calah in 800 B.C. The age of the children is not mentioned, and only the name of the father is attested. The family is sold to Nabû-tuklatu’a by the scribe, Nabû-

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1 For a previous study of this text see Deller—Fadhil, 1993, pp. 247, 265. See also Radner, 1997, pp. 135, 233; PNA, pp. 96a(1), 799, 898a(1).
2 For the name Emūqīt-ʿAṣšū see PNA, p. 396a.
ahu-iddina,\(^3\) for 185 minas of bronze (an average price per soul of 30.8 minas of bronze).\(^4\) Nabû-tuklatš’a was a “palace scribe” in Calah in the reigns of Adad-nârâri III and Shalmaneser IV.\(^5\) He bought at least 32 slaves in the course of 12 years (800–788 B.C.), including groups of seven, six, five and two slaves (two texts), but only one family.\(^6\) Since no sons or grandsons are mentioned in the clauses of penalties for litigation in any of his legal transactions, it is reasonable to suppose that he was a eunuch, and his large group of slaves (including the family of Emûqî-Aššûr) were a kind of substitute for a family of his own.\(^7\)

**Family no. 2: “[PN], (and) his mother... a total of 13 persons of Bêl-nâšîr” (A 962 = StAT 2 101 = Text no. 2).**\(^8\) This small nuclear family consists only of a man and his anonymous mother. The son, whose name is lost, is presented as the “head” of the family. They are attested in a settlement sealed between two persons from Aššûr, dated to the beginning of the reign of Tiglath-pilesêr III (744 B.C.). It is not clear whether Bêl-nâšîr and Abu-tâba are former partners who are dividing their property or relatives who are dividing a paternal inheritance.\(^9\) The property includes

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\(^3\) Perhaps the same Nabû-ahu-iddina is mentioned in a wine list (NWI 2 iv 5 = CTN I, p. 130). See also PNA, p. 799a(1).

\(^4\) For the prices of slaves in the Neo-Assyrian Period see Fales, 1996, pp. 30, 12*-13*; Radner, 1997, pp. 230-248. The average price of a slave sold with a group of slaves or with his family in the Neo-Assyrian period is 32.18 shekels of silver, see Galil, forthcoming (a). For the suggestion that one mina of copper corresponded roughly in value to one shekel of silver see Fales, 1996, p. 20.

\(^5\) The archive of Nabû-tuklatš’a was discovered in Room 57 of the North-West Palace at Calah in 1989. See Deller—Fadhil, 1993, p. 243; Pedersen, 1998, p. 150 (= “Calah 9”). For the families of Nabû-tuklatš’a’s father and grandfather see vol. II of my study.

\(^6\) The 32 slaves (22 men and 10 women) were bought in ten legal transactions for at least 572 minas of bronze (or copper) and two minas of silver. See PNA, p. 898a(1).

\(^7\) For eunuchs in the Neo-Assyrian Period see Grayson, 1995; Deller, 1999; Watanabe, 1999a; Tadmor, 2002. Watanabe points out that “The omission of the person’s sons or grandsons [from the clause of penalties for litigation] may, therefore, enable one to identify the person as a eunuch, even if the title ša rši is not added” (1999a, p. 319). See also Hawkins, 2002.

\(^8\) For previous studies and notes on this text see Radner, 1997, p. 104; Pedersen, 1986, p. 118, archive N 25(1); PNA, pp. 19a(2), 158b(3), 174b(9), 324a(3-4), 477a(1), 746a(1).

\(^9\) Bêl-nâšîr is the name of two different persons (a priest and a scribe) mentioned as witnesses in a text from the reign of Tiglath-pilesêr III, dated to 742 B.C. (VAT 9749 = SIAH 9 136 r 11, e 1). One of them may be identified with Bêl-nâšîr attested in StAT 2 101, but it is not clear which one. Åkerman and Radner identify him with the priest (PNA, p. 324a [3-4]), but it is not certain. Out of the six witnesses enumer-