

## RAŞAPPU AND HATALLU

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The location of the Neo-Assyrian province of Raşappu has been a problem since long and until recently. The widely accepted location on the southern and eastern slopes of the Jebel Sinjar<sup>1</sup> had been suggested with positive arguments by Forrer<sup>2</sup>. Yet the identification with modern and Roman Reşafa (south of Raqqa) has always been considered a possible alternative: it was accepted e.g. by Unger<sup>3</sup>, and discussed at length by Musil<sup>4</sup>. Quite recently this identification has been accepted by Parpola<sup>5</sup>, and I have (rather simplistically, I confess) accepted it in a map of Nergal-ereš' domains<sup>6</sup>.

The arguments put forth by Forrer are the following: a governor of Raşappu (namely, Nergal-ereš) is attested already in 803 B.C., and it is difficult to imagine that the conquest of Bīt-Adini left this important site unmentioned. Moreover, the context provided by lists of provinces points to a location between the Sinjar and the Tigris, south of Tille. These arguments are acceptable on a general level: the evidence of the lists, and also the fact that the governor of Raşappu is the first provincial governor to serve as eponym in the standard sequence, after the king and the central officials, point to a

<sup>1</sup>) Cf. recently D. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, London 1968, p. 55 fn. 1; J.N. Postgate, *The Assyrian Countryside*, JESHO 17 (1974), p. 239; J. Reade, *Studies in Assyrian Geography*, RA 72 (1978), pp. 175-177; M. Stol, *On Trees, Mountains, and Millstones in the Ancient Near East*, Leiden 1979, p. 78 fn. 298; K. Kessler, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Topographie Nordmesopotamiens*, Wiesbaden 1980, pp. 128 fn. 453, 142-143, 228 fn. 838; S. Ponchia, *L'Assiria e gli stati transeufratici*, Padova 1991, pp. 17-18 with fn. 16.

<sup>2</sup>) E. Forrer, *Die Provinzeinteilung des assyrischen Reiches*, Leipzig 1920, pp. 12-16.

<sup>3</sup>) E. Unger, *Reliefstele Adadniraris III. aus Saba'a und Semiramis* (PKOM 2), Konstantinopel 1916, pp. 24-25. The identification goes back at least to F. Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?*, Leipzig 1881, p. 297.

<sup>4</sup>) A. Musil, *The Middle Euphrates*, New York 1927, pp. 210-211; *Palmyrena*, New York 1929, pp. 260-272.

<sup>5</sup>) Cf. his Chart 4 in F.M. Fales, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons*, Roma 1981, p. 142; and SAA I, Helsinki 1987, p. 238; SAA V, Helsinki 1990, p. 248; SAA VI, Helsinki 1991, p. 342.

<sup>6</sup>) M. Liverani, *Antico Oriente. Storia società economia*, Roma-Bari 1988, fig. 144 on p. 791.

location much closer to Assyria proper than the far-away Reşafa beyond the Euphrates. Yet these arguments lack the final and detailed proof, and some doubt remains still possible, after all<sup>7</sup>.

Quite apart from the Raşappu problem, the Aramaic tribe of Hatallu, mentioned by Tiglath-pileser III (in the sequence Itu', Rubu', Hamaranu, Luhuat, Hatallu)<sup>8</sup>, has not been precisely located—the context providing only a general horizon in the middle Tigris area, between Assyria and Babylonia<sup>9</sup>.

Fresh evidence has been recently published, linking the two toponyms together and making a reasonable location possible for both of them. The purpose of this article is to discuss the new evidence, and to demonstrate that a doubt is no longer possible.

In the so-called “Annals of Suhu”, one of the most important episodes is the “Aramäerbericht”<sup>10</sup>, the account of the victory won by Ninurta-kudurri-uşur, governor of Suhu, over an army of 2,000 Hatallu plundering the Laqu area. The governor of Laqu addressed to his colleague of Suhu for help; but we are told (in order to underline Ninurta-kudurri-uşur's success and bravery) that also the governor of Raşappu (Şin-şallimani) had tried to face the invading army, but retreated for fear in seeing the Aramean troops<sup>11</sup>.

Now, an Aramaic raid from the “desert” into the middle-Euphrates valley (the scenario of the fight is a steppe-land with “wells”<sup>12</sup> and “corrals”<sup>13</sup>) can in principle come from two opposed sides: either from the steppe on the right (i.e., south-western) side of the river, or from the steppe on the left (i.e., north-eastern) side. In the first case, the front built up of the three Assyrian provinces of Suhu, Laqu, and Raşappu would point to a location of Raşappu in the area of modern Reşafa. In the second case, it would point to its location in the area of the Jebel Sinjar.

But the first, hypothetical case is ruled out by the location of the Hatallu tribe (or

<sup>7</sup>) A third solution, i.e. a location north of Naşibina (A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Locust Valley 1975, p. 262; followed by the authoritative RGTC 8, p. 253) remains ununderstandable to me.

<sup>8</sup>) ARAB I, 788. The name was generally read Harilu instead of Hatallu in the older literature; but see S. Parpola, *Neo-Assyrian Toponyms*, Neukirchen 1970, pp. 140-142 s.v. Hadallu; and already M. Streck, MVAG 11/3 (1906), pp. 23-24.

<sup>9</sup>) M. Streck, *Keilinschriftliche Beiträge zur Geographie Vorderasiens, I*, MVAG 11/3 (1906), pp. 1-44; J.A. Brinkman, *A Political History of Post-Kassite Babylonia*, Roma 1968, p. 271 fn. 1740; cf. pp. 268-277 on Tiglath-pileser's text and the Aramean coalition.

<sup>10</sup>) A. Cavigneaux-B.Kh. Ismail, *Die Statthalter von Suhu und Mari im 8. Jh. v. Chr.*, BaM 21 (1990), p. 336 (table of the pertinent texts and lines), pp. 343-344 and 347-348 (transcription and translation of the main passage).

<sup>11</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 344 (Text 2, I, 33-35).

<sup>12</sup>) *Ibid.*, pp. 344 (Text 2, II, 9-10), 368 (Text 7, I, 6'-7'), 373 (Text 10, Vs. I, 12-13); cf. also the “thirst” motif in Text 2, II, 18-19.

<sup>13</sup>) *ha-at-ra-a-nu, ibid.*, p. 373 (Text 10, Vs. I, 14).

better: confederacy of tribes)<sup>14</sup>. Now, already on the basis of the Annals of Tiglath-pileser, a location of Hatallu west of the Euphrates would be very difficult and almost impossible, and a location around the middle Tigris much more convenient. An even more precise indication comes from a letter from Fort-Shalmaneser<sup>15</sup>, where Hatallu is clearly occupying the area between Assur and Suhu: i.e., the area of the Wadi Tharthar, perfectly fitting as the abode of a nomadic tribe<sup>16</sup>.

From the Wadi Tharthar and the steppe-land around it, the Hatallu confederacy was threatening—in the mid-eighth century B.C.—on the one side the middle Euphrates valley (Laqu, Suhu) and on the other side the Tigris valley and the communications between Assyria and Babylonia. The episode narrated in the “Annals of Suhu” is to be dated around 747 (because of the mention of Šîn-šallimani, who was eponym in that year), i.e. immediately before the enthronization of Tiglath-pileser. It explains why the Assyrian king considered so urgent to beat the Aramean confederacy at the very beginning of his reign<sup>17</sup>. Notice that the first mention of Hatallu (in the sequence Utu’, Rubu’, Hatallu, Labdudu) can be found in the Til Barsip inscription of Šamši-ilu<sup>18</sup>, vaguely referring to the period ca. 790-770; and that its last mention (again in the sequence Utu’, Rubu’, Hatallu, Labdudu) can be found in Sargon’s display inscription<sup>19</sup>, perhaps referring to his years 12th and 13th, ca. 710. So the period during which Hatallu has been a threat—or at least a problem—to Assyria is strictly limited to the 8th century<sup>20</sup>.

With Hatallu occupying the Wadi Tharthar area, Rašappu can only be located in the southern and eastern slopes of the Jebel Sinjar. At this point the topographical aspects of the texts mentioned so far become clear. We have therefore drawn two maps, one for the extent of Nergal-ereš’ domains, showing the progressive addition of more territories to the original Rašappu province; and one for the episode of the “Suhu Annals”. The list of Aramean tribes defeated by Tiglath-pileser could be mapped only in part, at the present state of knowledge: but it seems clear that Hatallu is (with Utu’,

<sup>14</sup> In the “Suhu Annals” a coalition is clearly described (Text 2, I, 11); among the tribal sub-groups, the Sarugu (I, 9, 12, 17), the Luhua (I, 10), and the Amatu (I, 17) are mentioned, cf. the Luhuatu and Amatu in Tiglath-pileser’s texts.

<sup>15</sup> J.N. Postgate, *The Governor’s Palace Archive* (CTN 2), London 1973, pp. 187-188 (no. 188); republished by F.M. Fales, *Lettere dalla corte assira*, Venezia 1992, pp. 60-61 (no. 8).

<sup>16</sup> Fales, *cit.*, p. 142, quotes the Tiglath-pileser text, but not the “Suhu Annals”; and does not discuss the topographical problems. But see R. Zadok, *RGTC* 8 (1985), p. 314 bottom, on the connection of Hatallu and Suhu, presumably based on CTN 2, 188.

<sup>17</sup> The first (and paramount) war against the Arameans took place in 745; cf. Brinkman, *cit.*, pp. 275-276.

<sup>18</sup> F. Thureau-Dangin, *L’inscription des lions de Til-Barsip*, *RA* 27 (1930), pp. 16-17 (ll. 10-11) = *Til-Barsip*, Paris 1936, p. 146.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *ARAB* II, 54.

<sup>20</sup> Sennacherib’s lists of the rebel Aramaic tribes do not include Hatallu and the other northernmost tribes, completely subdued at that time. Cf. also *ABL* 721 and 1175 (Hatallāiu mentioned together with Luhuāiu).

Rubu', Hamaranu and Luhuatu) among the northernmost tribes, those closer to Assyria itself, while the other toponyms mostly extend toward Babylonia and Elam.

An additional observation can be made on the list of toponyms belonging to Nergal-ereš' domains, as recorded in the Saba'a stela<sup>21</sup>. Clearly they are listed in a consistent order, in anti-clockwise direction, a direction probably following not only a geographical pattern, but also the progressive addition of more distant territories to the original kernel of the Rašappu province. It seems also clear to me that the URU toponyms precede (and belong to) the KUR toponyms in the respective areas, i.e. the five districts building up the whole extent of Nergal-ereš' domains:

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1. URU *Nimid-Ištar*
  2. URU *Apqu*
  3. URU *Marê*
  4. KUR RAŠAPPU
- 
5. KUR QATNU
- 
6. URU *Dur-katlimmu*
  7. URU *Kar-Ashurnasirpal*
  8. URU *Sirqu*
  9. KUR LAQU
- 
10. KUR HINDANU
- 
11. URU *Anat*
  12. KUR SUHU
- 

This is an additional proof that the Rašappu province is the area including such cities as Nimid-Ištar (= Tell 'Afar) and Apqu (= Tell Abu Mariya), well located on the slopes of the Jebel Sinjar. As to Marê, it cannot be Mari = Tell Hariri<sup>22</sup> (a proposal hardly acceptable, and only in the case of Rašappu = Rešafa), must be an otherwise unknown site south of the Jebel Sinjar, perhaps west of Nimid-Ištar, and therefore in the general location of modern Beled Sinjar<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Unger, *cit.*, pp. 10-12 (ll. 23-25). The Rimah stela (S. Page, *Stela of Adad-nirari III and Nergal-ereš from Tell al Rimah*, Iraq 30 [1968], p. 142, ll. 13-14) has a more abridged list, following the same order (cf. W. Schramm, *Einleitung in die assyrischen Königsinschriften*, II, Leiden 1973, p. 115 on the reading KUR.*hi-en-da-nu* instead of KUR.*sir-qu*). I have discussed most of these toponyms in my *Studies on the Annals of Ashurnasirpal II. 2: Topographical Analysis*, Roma 1992, *passim*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. e.g. Page, *cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>23</sup> Beled Sinjar is obviously the candidate for Assyrian Singaru, not necessarily the capital of Rašappu (Kessler, *cit.*, p. 155).

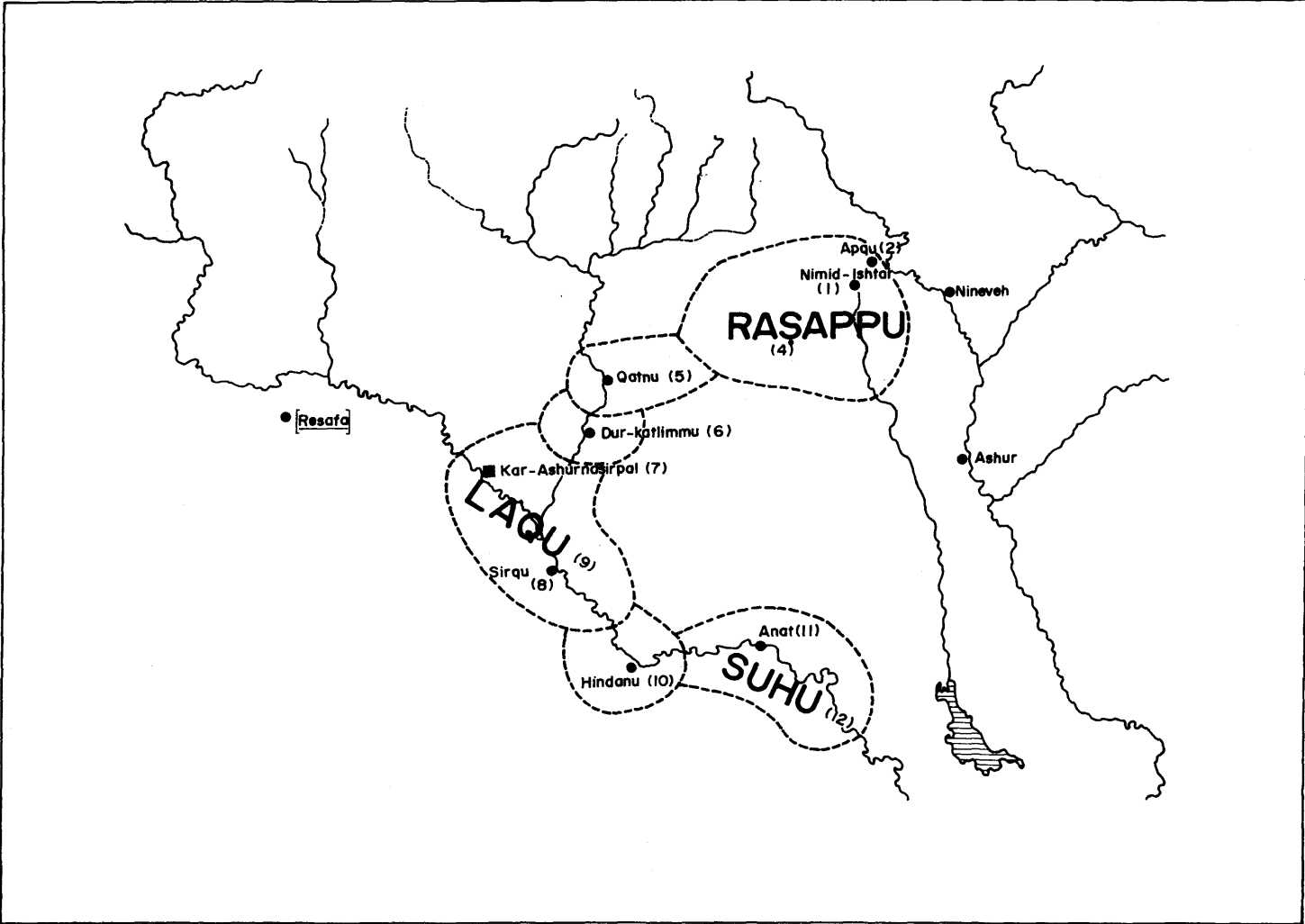


Fig. 1: Nergal-eresh' domains according to the Saba'a stela.

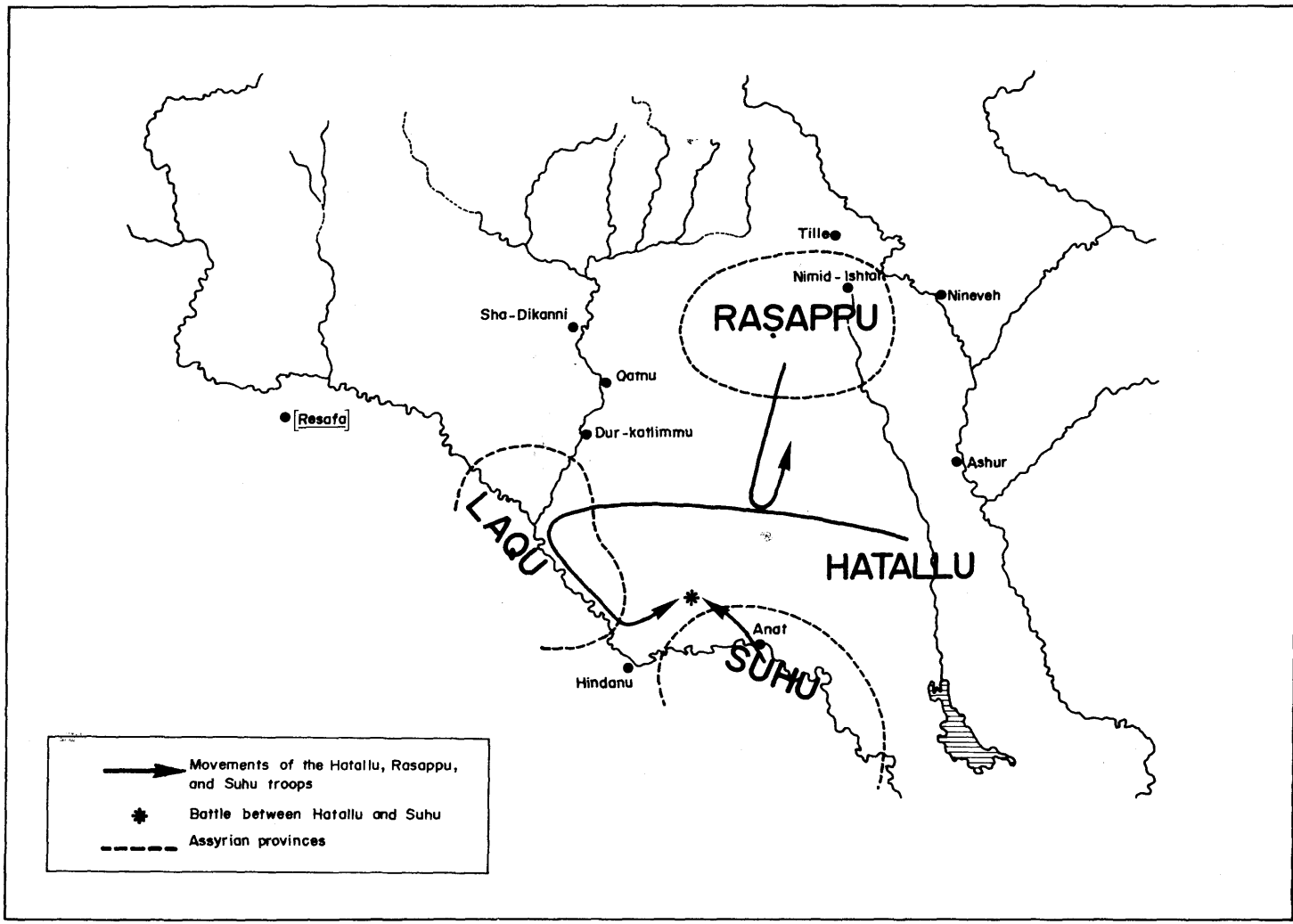


Fig. 2: Hatallu and Raşappu in the "Suhu Annals".