

The Reception of Sumerian Literature in the Western Periphery

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9 The Sumerian Literary Tradition at Emar and Ugarit

The recovery of the same compositions at Emar and Ugarit necessarily lead us to present a synthesis of the Sumerian literary tradition in the two cities in a single chapter.

9.1 Literary Texts

The corpus of the Sumerian or bilingual literary texts unearthed at Emar and Ugarit is limited to ten compositions and a few additional unidentified fragments. As with the documentation from the Hittite capital, not a single composition belonging to the Tetrad, Decad or House F Fourteen is documented at Emar or Ugarit. The only texts attested in an OB literary catalogue are *SI-Utu* and perhaps *LI-LN*. Comparison with the contemporaneous sources from Mesopotamia shows that none of the Sumerian literary texts found at Emar and Ugarit is known in the Middle Babylonian and Middle Assyrian documentation with the partial exclusion of the fable *The Fowler*, as an extract of the closely related composition *The Fowler and his Wife* is attested on a Kassite tablet.²⁰¹⁸

The only attestation of popular OB texts in Syria is an Akkado-Hurrian bilingual recension of *The Instructions of Šuruppak*, a composition included in the so called House F Fourteen.²⁰¹⁹ This unique recension²⁰²⁰ is inscribed on a fragment of unknown provenance housed in a private collection in Munich that was identified by Civil as part of *The Instructions of Šuruppak* after its publication by Krebern timer (1996). Hence, it is the only literary composition from the OB Sumerian corpus attested in LBA manuscripts from both Mesopotamia and the Western periphery. As discussed earlier, a monolingual Akkadian version of *The Instructions of Šuruppak* is preserved in MB and MA copies,²⁰²¹ but according to Alster the Akkado-Hurrian version is independent from the extant Mesopotamian sources.

Composition	Provenance	OB Tablet Format	OB	First Millennium
BeR	Emar – Ugarit	I	+	+ Catalogue
EaN	Emar – Ugarit	I/II/III	+	Catalogue
MLM	Ugarit	III	+	-
SI-Utu	Emar	III/IV/P	+	+
LI-LN	Ugarit	-	Catalogue(?)	+
Proverbs from Ugarit	Ugarit	I	+	(+)
The Fowler	Emar	-	-	Catalogue (?) Akkadian (?)
The Fox and the Hyena	Ugarit	II/III	(+)	?
Hymn to Enki(?)	Ugarit	-	-	-
PfK	Emar – Ugarit	-	-	-

2018 § 1.1.6.5.

2019 § 1.1.6.1.

2020 Another Akkado-Hurrian bilingual is documented at Ugarit in RS 15.10 = AuOrS 23 46.

2021 A monolingual Akkadian recension of *Lugal-e* is also known, see Seminara 2001, 40.

As with the documentation from Hattuša, the texts from Emar and Ugarit do not represent the core of the Old Babylonian Sumerian literary corpus. A selection of minor compositions from the Old Babylonian literature rather than long epics or poems, such as *Lugal-e* and *Angim*, reached the Syrian scribal schools. Nevertheless, some compositions from the Western periphery served an educational purpose in the Old Babylonian scribal schools. As far as *MLM* and *LI-LN* are concerned, their pedagogical function has already been underlined.²⁰²² The curricular setting of other compositions can be determined on the basis of the type of tablet on which they were written in the Old Babylonian period. Literary texts were not usually written on Type II tablets, which conversely were used for elementary compositions, namely lexical lists, model contracts and proverbs. Nevertheless, a limited number of literary compositions are found on Type II literary tablets²⁰²³ representing the Intermediary Phase in the curriculum.²⁰²⁴ One of the texts attested on Type II tablets is the vanity theme composition *EaN*. Out of seven OB manuscripts of *EaN*, three are Type II tablets. An additional text possibly belonging here is *The Fox and the Hyena*²⁰²⁵ because the Uruk manuscript²⁰²⁶ containing *The Fox and Enlil as Merchant*, a composition closely related to, or possibly even a forerunner of our text, is a Type II tablet.²⁰²⁷ The pedagogic nature of fables is well known in many cultures and Fox tales were incorporated in proverb collections that were commonly used in scribal education.²⁰²⁸ A further composition likely used in schooling is the fable *The Fowler* from Emar because the related text *The Fowler and his Wife* is also attested on a Type II tablet and exists as a part of proverb collections.²⁰²⁹ The Royal Correspondence of Larsa, of which one exemplar, *SI-Utu*, is attested at Emar, was utilized in the education of scribes probably in the Intermediary Phase.²⁰³⁰ Indeed, this text is attested on a lentil-shaped tablet from Nippur²⁰³¹ (Type IV). Another OB manuscript of *SI-Utu* is a prism of unknown provenance,²⁰³² another tablet format often used in schooling. The same prism contains the *Letter of Ininm-Inana to Lugal-ibila* which represents the model of *LI-LN*.²⁰³³ This entails that these two compositions belonged to the same phase of the curriculum because texts inscribed on compilation tablets were learned at the same stage.²⁰³⁴ An additional link between *SI-Utu* and *LI-LN* derives from their possible quotation in the same catalogue from Uruk. These connections counter Kleinerman's conclusion²⁰³⁵ that 'there is no unambiguous evidence to place the Sumerian Epistolary Miscellany (SEpM) – to which *LI-LN* is related as the *Letter of Ininm-Inana to Lugal-ibila* belongs to this group – either before or after the Decad.'²⁰³⁶ Moreover, the presence of *LI-LN* in the

2022 See § 8.1.

2023 See Veldhuis 1997, 65-66, Tinney 1999, 167. An updated list of compositions inscribed on Type II tablets has been provided by the writer in the paper 'The Fortune of Wisdom Literature in the Ancient Near East: the Case of the Vanity Theme' presented at the 60th Rencontre d'Assyriologique International held in Warsaw: *Lipit-Ishtar B*, *Lipit-Ištar A*, *Enlil and Namzitarra*, *Lisina A*, *Fable of the Goose and the Raven*, *Edubba A*, *Emesal Lament me-e i-li ga-am₂-du₁₁*, *Akkadian Sargon letter*, *The Fox and a Dog*, *The Fox and Enlil as Merchant*, *The Fowler and his Wife* and four unidentified texts.

2024 Kleinerman 2011, 75-81.

2025 § 7.3.6.

2026 This tablet also contains *The Fox and the Dog*.

2027 See description in Cavigneaux 1982, 22.

2028 Veldhuis 2000b, 384-385; see also Cohen 2013, 57-59, with previous bibliography for a survey of the role of proverbs in Mesopotamian education.

2029 § 1.1.6.5.

2030 Brisch 2007, 87-89.

2031 CBS 4078; for lentil-shaped tablets from Nippur see Falkowitz 1983/1984.

2032 See § 6.2.4.

2033 Kleinerman 2011, 85-86 n. 38.

2034 See Kleinerman 2011, 71-74.

2035 Kleinerman 2011, 81-94.

2036 The data and analysis provided by Kleinerman herself, in my opinion, indicate that SEpM, which shares features with compositions of the Intermediary Phase as well as the Decad, was studied at a certain point between these two groups as a way of making the transition towards longer and more complex texts.

Syro-Anatolian documentation, where no Decad compositions were recovered, strongly suggests that SEpM was learned in the Intermediary Phase. Furthermore, *SI-Utu* and *LI-LN* are the only literary letters that survive in the first-millennium documentation.

The curricular context of *BeR* and *Proverbs from Ugarit* can be established on the basis of their connection as a group of texts. These compositions all manifest the so called vanity theme, as do *EaN* and *Nothing is of Value (N-V)* a text attested in four different versions in OB manuscripts only.

Vanity Theme

Nothing is of Value
Ballad of Early Rulers
Enlil and Namzitarra
Proverbs from Ugarit

These short wisdom compositions reflect on the limits of mortal life and express the concept that material things are worthless and have no lasting value. According to Alster²⁰³⁷ the vanity theme literature falls into the category of critical wisdom, which rejects the perpetuation of existing values expressed in the traditional conservative outlook of father-to-son instructions such as *The Instructions of Šuruppak*. Besides the Type II tablets mentioned above, the composition *EaN* was also inscribed on Old Babylonian *Sammeltafeln* containing four additional literary works which form the so called Lisina Group.²⁰³⁸ This also includes *Nothing is of Value* Version D. It is worth noting that *Lisina A* was an elementary composition inscribed on Type II and Type IV tablets,²⁰³⁹ hence belonging to the same stage in the curriculum as *EaN*. Moreover, *Nothing is of Value* is attested on Type IV tablets.²⁰⁴⁰ This text provides the link with *BeR*. Indeed *Nothing is of Value* Version C was inscribed on the same Old Babylonian *Sammeltafeln* containing *BeR* which comprise four literary texts.²⁰⁴¹ In addition, *Nothing is of Value* Version B is written on another *Sammeltafel*, CBS 13777, which is the only OB preserved manuscript of *Proverbs from Ugarit*. The strong interconnection of these compositions is not limited to the Old Babylonian period but extends to later times. One of the manuscripts of *BeR* from Ugarit is the Babylonian script tablet RS 25.130, either imported or written *in loco* by a foreigner scribe, which also contains *Proverbs from Ugarit*. In the first millennium the NA fragment of *BeR* contains a collection of sayings recalling *Proverbs from Ugarit*.

Lisina Group

Lisina A
Letter or Edubba Text (?)
Nothing is of Value D
Enlil and Namzitarra
nam-dub-sar-ra

Ballad Sammeltafeln

Hymn to Marduk
Abī-Ešuh B6
Nothing is of Value C
Ballad of Early Rulers

CBS 13777

Proverbs of Ugarit
Nothing of Value B

RS 25.130 (MB manuscript)

Ballad of Early Rulers
Proverbs from Ugarit

2037 Alster 2005, 25-28.

2038 Only 3NT 326+ and UM 29-16-79A contain the full Lisina Group, whereas N 3097 has the Lisina Group letter and *EaN*, and CBS 4605, the only Type III tablet of these manuscripts, includes *EaN* and nam-dub-sar-ra.

2039 Tinney 1999, 167.

2040 Ni 2192, YBC 7283. In addition to the Tetrad and proverbs, Type IV tablets include: *Nothing is of Value*, *Codex of Lipit-Ištar*, *Lisina A*, *An Elegy on the death of Nanaya*, *Letter of Šin-iddinam to Utu*, *Šū-ilīšu A*, *Enlil A*, *Lipit-Ištar A*, a royal hymn and a hymn or list of names.

2041	BM 80091 (A):	BM 80184 (B):	CBS 1208 (D)
	Hymn to Marduk	[Hymn to Marduk]	Hymn to Marduk
	Abī-Ešuh B	Abī-Ešuh B	Abī-Ešuh B
	[NV-C]	NV-C	NV-C
	BeR	BeR	BeR

A further connection between *BeR* and *Nothing is of Value* can be seen in a few parallel lines:²⁰⁴²

BeR 6	an-ta e ₂ -ur ₃ -ra-ke ₄ -ne-ne ki-ta e ₂ -da-ri-ke ₄ -ne-ne
NV-C 5	an-ta e ₂ -ur ₃ -ra-ni ki-ta e ₂ da-ri ₂ -ka-ni

Above are/is their/his elevated house(s), below are/is their/his everlasting house

BeR 21	niĝ ₂ -sa ₆ (?)-ga diĝir-re-e-ne bi ₂ -in-šum ₂ -ma-am
NV-C 8	niĝ ₂ -sa ₆ (?)-ga diĝir-re-e-ne bi ₂ -in-šum ₂ -ma-(re)

(for him) who gives the good stuff of the gods (life is found)

To sum up, two vanity theme compositions, *EaN* and *N-V*, appear to have been used in schooling along with other texts in the Intermediary Phase of the curriculum on the basis of their attestation on Type II and Type IV tablets. The presence of the vanity theme compositions on tablets and together with other compositions attested on Type II and Type IV tablets, namely *Lisina A*, indicates that all of them belong to the same stage of the curriculum: the Intermediary Phase. The transmission and preservation of vanity theme compositions from the Old Babylonian period until the first millennium is strongly tied to their function in the scribal education.

The royal hymn *PfK* was not a curricular text, and it is not excluded that it was composed for the cultic sphere. Nevertheless it was adopted in scribal circles, at least at Emar and Ugarit. On the basis of its similarity to the *Hymn to Marduk for a King* inscribed on the same *Sammeltafeln* as *BeR*²⁰⁴³ as well as its length we may also assign *PfK* to the Intermediary Phase.

One may conclude that most of the Sumerian literary texts from Emar and Ugarit were connected with the education of scribes in the Old Babylonian period. It becomes clear that it was not by accident that such Sumerian literary texts were transmitted to LBA Syria. They are not a random assortment of texts but members of a group of compositions learned at the same stage of the curriculum in the Old Babylonian period, namely in the Intermediary Phase. Some texts are also thematically related such as the vanity theme compositions.

All the identified Sumerian literary texts from Emar and Ugarit have come to us in bilingual format,²⁰⁴⁴ which reflects the post-Old Babylonian stage of Sumerian literature when Akkadian translations were added to monolingual texts. Several compositions were transmitted to the first millennium and are preserved either in copies or attested in literary catalogues. Due to the fragmentary nature of either LBA or first-millennium manuscripts, comparison with late duplicates is possible only for *LI-LN* which, as noted above, is very close to the late sources. Some similarities have also been pointed out between LBA manuscripts and the NA fragment of *BeR* but the late duplicate is too badly preserved. Comparison with earlier sources is easier and shows that the Emar-Ugarit recensions usually diverge from the extant OB manuscripts because they reflect a later stage. The Emar-Ugarit recensions of several texts, including vanity theme compositions, *BeR*, *EaN* and *Proverbs from Ugarit*, and *The Fox and the Hyena*, result from the reworking and adaptation of OB texts by Middle Babylonian scribal schools. Throughout this study it has been demonstrated that there is no evidence for the alleged Syrian reworking of Sumero-Akkadian compositions on Mesopotamian models. Modification and adaptation of OB monolingual texts occurred within the Mesopotamian stream of tradition through the work of the Middle Babylonian scribes as part of the process of the selection and transmission of Sumerian literary material. Even the incorporation of an Akkadian wisdom text in the same tablet as *EaN* (E 771+) had a precedent in OB school practices and was also motivated by thematic relations between the two compositions.

²⁰⁴² Cf. Alster 2005, 274.

²⁰⁴³ See § 6.1.1.

²⁰⁴⁴ It is likely that the fragments (from both Emar and Ugarit) containing unidentified texts were also bilingual.

9.2 Incantations

The number of Sumerian incantations discovered in the Syrian archives is impossible to ascertain due to the fragmentary nature of the Emar manuscripts. Several Emar fragments may indeed belong to the same tablets.

Excavation Number	Edition	Script	Language	Old Babylonian	First Millennium
Emar					
Msk 74102a + Msk 74107ai + Msk 74114l	E 729	SH	S	a) (+) b) + c) +	a) + b) + c) +
Msk 74232i	E 790	?	S	+	+
-	Tsukimoto (1999)	SH	a) Abracadabra b) PhS	a) - b) (+)	a) + b) +
Msk 74102o	E 730	?	S	+?	+?
Msk 74107ak	E 732	?	S	-	(+)
Msk 74199q	E 731	?	S	?	?
Msk 74228a	E 733	?	S	?	?
Msk 74107q	-	?	S	?	?
Msk 74183	E 740	?	S	?	?
Msk 74107t	E 744	?	S	?	?
Msk 7499b	E 744	?	S	?	?
Msk 74122t	E 743	SH	S	?	?
Msk 74107p	E 745	?	S	?	?
Msk 74199r	E 751	?	S	?	?
Msk 74234h	E 752	?	S	?	?
Msk 74107n	E 746	?	S	?	?
Msk 74107m	E 746	?	S	?	?
Msk 74114b	E 756	SH	S	?	?
Msk 74165g	E 757	SH	SA	?	?
Msk 74101a	E 763	?	SA	?	?
Msk 7485e	E 764	SH	SA	?	?
Msk 74173e	E 734	SH	PhS	?	?
Msk 74148f	-	?	Ph(?)S	?	?
Msk 74238t	E 747	?	S	?	?
Msk 74122bb	E 748	?	S	?	?
Msk 74109d	E 749	?	S	?	?
Msk 74135b	E 753	?	S	?	?
Msk 74107ac	E 759	?	S	?	?
Msk 74117l	E 761	?	S	?	?
Msk 74200f	E 762	?	S	?	?
Msk 74122ar	-	?	S	?	?
Msk 74143e	E 777	?	S	?	?
Ugarit					
RS 25.129 + RS 25.456B	AuOrS 23 25	MB	a) PhS b) PhS c) Abracadabra d) S	a) - b) - c) - d) -	a) - b) - c) - d) -
RS 16.416	AuOrS 23 13	Ug	PhS	-	-

Excavation Number	Edition	Script	Language	Old Babylonian	First Millennium
RS 17.155	AuOrS 23 21	Ug	a-§6) PhS b-§8) PhS	a-§6) - b-§8) -	a-§6) - b-§8) +
RS 25.418	AuOrS 23 27	?	a) S b) S	a) - b) -	a) - b) -

The majority of the incantations from Emar and all those from Ugarit are monolingual. One may notice, however, that several texts from Ugarit show a mixture of Sumerian and Akkadian.²⁰⁴⁵ This is also the case of the incantation on the reverse of E 729.

Only the incantations from *Udug-ḫul* III and IV, contained in E 729 and E 790, are known to have OB duplicates, which are preserved in tablets from Nippur and Sippar respectively. Possibly also the *Tsukimoto Incantation* (b) and E 730 containing an incantation from *Udug-ḫul* I have OB duplicates but no manuscript is preserved. The number of first-millennium duplicates, all of which are part of canonical series, is more consistent:

Canonical Series	Source	Format	Script
Udug-ḫul I / Muššu'u IX/b	Tsukimoto Incantation (b) E 730	Monolingual	SH ?
Udug-ḫul III	E 729	Monolingual	SH
Udug-ḫul IV	E 790	Monolingual	?
Muššu'u VIII/q	Tsukimoto Incantation (a)	Monolingual	SH
Saġ-geg I / Muššu'u I (?)	E 732	Monolingual	?
Saġ-geg VI	AuOrS 23 21(b-§8)	Monolingual	Ug

The Emar and Ugarit sources reflect a very different textual tradition from the late manuscripts.

Two Marduk-Ea incantations are known: AuOrS 23 25(d) and AuOrS 23 21(b-§8). Despite the difference in script – the first is a Babylonian tablet while the latter is written by an Ugaritic scribe – both present the full Marduk-Ea formula as typical of the OB tradition. Conversely, they report the short form of the rubric, en₂. The rubric is preserved both in full and in abbreviated form, showing that there was not yet a standardized form at that time.²⁰⁴⁶

Source	Script	Language	Rubric
E 729	SH	S	Full
E 730	?	S	Full
Tsukimoto Incantation	SH	a) S b) PhS	a) Abbreviated b) Abbreviated
AuOrS 23 25	MB	a) PhS b) PhS c) Abracadabra d) S	a) - b) Abbreviated c) Abbreviated d) Abbreviated
AuOrS 23 13	Ug	PhS	Full
AuOrS 23 21	Ug	a-§6) PhS b-§8) PhS	a-§6) Abbreviated b-§8) Abbreviated
AuOrS 23 27	?	a) S b) S	a) Full b) -

²⁰⁴⁵ See AuOrS 23 21 §§ 1, 3; AuOr 23: 25, 12-14, 22-24. To this group may be added RS 94.2178 = AuOrS 23 14 and RS 94.2964 = AuOrS 23 15, not included in the present work because they are clearly Akkadian incantations that make much use of Sumerograms.

²⁰⁴⁶ Note that the Akkadian incantation E 758 also reports the full rubric.

Incantations are mostly preserved on tablets written by local scribes; only two manuscripts are Babylonian script tablets.²⁰⁴⁷ With a few exceptions, Emar tablets contain incantations in standard orthography whereas at Ugarit the use of phonetic orthography for magical texts is more widespread. Unorthographic writings are also attested in the Babylonian tablet AuOrS 23 25 but they present a very limited set of phonetic alterations.²⁰⁴⁸

Almost all incantations from Emar are preserved in single copies. However, some fragments are probably duplicates of the same text: E 730 has been identified as a possible duplicate of the *Tsukimoto Incantation* (b). As Y. Cohen has observed,²⁰⁴⁹ the lack of duplicates probably signifies that incantations were kept as library copies. At Ugarit multiple copies are documented at least for AuOrS 23 21 (RS 17.155, RS 17.152) found in different archives, viz. the Bibliothèque du Lettré and the Royal Palace.

To sum up, Sumerian incantations from Emar and Ugarit represent an early phase in the process of the selection and transmission of magical texts from the second to the first millennium, very close to the OB stage. Indeed, serialization as attested in the later MA texts is unknown in the Emar and Ugarit sources. Moreover division of texts into lines is removed from late duplicates. Nevertheless, they reflect a different textual tradition from the extant OB manuscripts. This tradition deviates from the mainstream of the Sumerian incantation tradition and probably represents the product of local workshops likely situated in Northern Babylonia. Contrary to literary texts, no Sumerian incantation is preserved in duplicates from both Emar and Ugarit whereas *Saġ-geg* VI, documented at Ugarit, is also attested in a tablet from Ḫattuša that is unfortunately poorly preserved.²⁰⁵⁰

9.3 Bilingual Texts

As seen above, almost all the bilingual texts are literary compositions; only three fragments from Emar, possibly all belonging to the same tablet, contain bilingual incantations. Both interlinear and parallel column formats are attested but the latter is far more common. However, the three bilingual fragments of incantations are in interlinear format. Both formats are attested in each city even though the interlinear format seems more popular at Emar (four out eleven) than among the tablets in Ugarit script (two out nine), but the quantity of data is too limited to draw any conclusions.

Source	Composition	Archive	Script	Language	Format	OB	First Millennium
E 767	BeR	TM ₁	SH	S PhSA	Columns	+	+
RS 25.130	a) BeR b) Proverbs from Ugarit	Lamaštu	MB	SA	Interlinear	a) + b) +	a) + b) (+)
RS 25.424	BeR	Lamaštu	Ug	(PhS) A	Interlinear(?) <i>Glossenkeil</i>	+	+
RS 23.34+	BeR	MaT	Ug	PhSA	Columns	+	+
E 771+	EaN	TM ₁	SH	SA	Columns	+	(+)
AuOrS 23 47	EaN	MaT	Ug	(S) A	Columns	+	(+)
AuOrS 23 50	MLM	Lamaštu	NS	S PhSA H	Columns	+	-
RS 25?.135A	MLM	Lamaštu	Ug	Ph(?)SA	Interlinear	+	-
TBR 101	SI-Utu	?	SH	(S) PhS (A)	Columns	+	+
RS 17.10	LI-LN	Lettré	Ug	PhS (A)	Columns	(+)	+
RS 17.80	LI-LN	Lettré	Ug	(S) A	Columns	(+)	+
E 768A	The Fowler	TM ₁	SH	S PhS (A)	Columns	-	(+)

²⁰⁴⁷ AuOrS 23 25, AuOrS 23 27.

²⁰⁴⁸ Compare the many alterations in AuOrS 23 21.

²⁰⁴⁹ Cohen 2009, 216.

²⁰⁵⁰ § 5.1.5.

E 768B	The Fowler	TM ₁	SH	(S) (PhS) A	Columns	-	(+)
E 769	The Fowler	TM ₁	SH	S (PhS) (A)	Columns	-	(+)
E 770	The Fowler	TM ₁	?	(S) PhS A	Columns	-	(+)
RS 86.2210	The Fox and the Hyena	Urtenu	Ug	S PhS (A)	Columns	?	?
E 775	PfK	TM ₁	S	SA	Interlinear	-	-
RS 79.25	PfK	Maison A	Ug	PhS (A)	Columns	-	-
RS 79.25C	PfK	Maison A	Ug	(S) A	?	-	-
AuOrS 23 28	Hymn to Enki (?)	Lamaštu	MB	SA	Interlinear	-	-
E 757	Incantation	TM ₁	SH	SA	Interlinear	?	?
E 763	Incantation	TM ₁	SH	SA	Interlinear	?	?
E 764	Incantation	TM ₁	SH	SA	Interlinear	?	?

As is clear from the manuscripts of *BeR* the same composition may occur on different tablet formats even within the same city. Unexpectedly, texts inscribed on parallel column format tablets from Emar and Ugarit occur more frequently in the first-millennium documentation. However, this proportion may be skewed by the smaller quantity of interlinear format tablets that have been recovered at Emar and Ugarit; moreover, we do not know the original format of the Mesopotamian tablets that served as models for texts written on multicolumn tablets containing versions in standard Sumerian, phonetic orthography and Akkadian. As already argued, phonetic versions were composed by local scribes upon bilingual texts. Perhaps the fact that the two bilingual Babylonian script tablets from Ugarit are both written in interlinear format would indicate that this was the most common format among the tablets transmitted to the Western periphery. The dearth of data does not allow us to see any relevant difference in the distribution of tablet formats across the archives of Ugarit. However, it is worth noting that the local editions of *BeR* are written on different tablet formats in the Lamaštu archive and in the Maison-aux-tablettes.

At Ugarit standard and unorthographic Sumerian could be written on different tablets as shown by the manuscripts of *BeR*, *LI-LN* and *PfK*. This practice, which is a clear indication that the tablets were used in schooling, is unknown at Ḫattuša and Emar.

9.4 Tradition and Reception

The majority of the Sumerian literary texts recovered at Emar and Ugarit can be attributed to the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition.

Composition	Provenance	OB Tablets	Nippur Tablets	First Millennium
BeR	Emar – Ugarit	3	0	+ Catalogue
EaN	Emar – Ugarit	7	7	Catalogue
MLM	Ugarit	5	1	-
SI-Utu	Emar	6	3	+
LI-LN	Ugarit	Catalogue (?)	0	+
Proverbs from Ugarit	Ugarit	1	1	(+)
The Fowler	Emar	-	-	Catalogue (?) Akkadian (?)
The Fox and the Hyena	Ugarit	2(?)	0	?
Hymn to Enki(?)	Ugarit	-	-	-
PfK	Emar – Ugarit	-	-	-

Into this category fall the vanity theme compositions. The Nippur tradition is clearly evident for *EaN* not only because all the OB manuscripts stem from that city, but also because of the protago-

nists of the tale: Enlil, the god of Nippur, and Namzitarra, a temple administrator of Nippur. The only OB manuscript preserving *Proverbs from Ugarit* is the aforementioned *Sammeltafel* from Nippur CBS 13777. This tablet also contains *Nothing is of Value* which is mostly preserved on Nippur sources. Moreover, as argued above²⁰⁵¹ *EaN* and *Nothing is of Value* are attested on *Sammeltafeln* containing *Lisina A* which is only known from Nippur sources. We can therefore state that *EaN* and *Proverbs from Ugarit* were well known in the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition represented by the Nippur scribal milieu. The identification of the tradition of *BeR* is more problematic. On account of the provenance of the OB manuscripts – probably Sippar – one might be tempted to attribute this composition to the Northern Babylonian tradition. However, the strong relationship among the vanity theme compositions – both thematic and with regard to their position in the curriculum – as a group of texts transmitted together over time, supports the claim that *BeR* also belongs to the same stream of tradition.²⁰⁵² The connection of *BeR* with the Nippur scribal milieu was also recognized in antiquity. *BeR* is mentioned in the NA catalogue of the series of Sidu, a collection of thirty-five wisdom compositions, so called after its supposed compiler. According to the so-called ‘Catalogue of Texts and Authors’,²⁰⁵³ Sidu was a lamentation-priest and chief-scholar of Nippur.²⁰⁵⁴ Even though the attribution of texts to this author may be pseudepigraphic, a fiction elaborated in late times in the attempt to confer prestige and antiquity on a collection of literary works, the association of Sidu with the city of Nippur appears to be clear. Furthermore this is evidenced by the attestation of the name Sidu in the *Sylbenalphabet B*, a list of ancient names known only from Nippur.²⁰⁵⁵

Although connections between *BeR* and the Nippur tradition are evident, it is not fully clear whether or not it was actually attested in Nippur. Possibly, as suggested by Alster, *BeR* was inscribed on the unpreserved part of the aforementioned *Sammeltafel* CBS 13777. I would like to suggest another explanation that takes into account the date of the Ballad *Sammeltafel*. The kingdom of Abī-ešuh can be considered the *terminus post quem* for the drafting of the three tablets, as one of the compositions is a hymn dedicated to this king. In the latter part of the reign of Samsu-iluna (1749-1712), the father of Abī-ešuh, southern Babylonian cities were abandoned or drastically reduced in size due to an ecological breakdown and the rise of the Sealand dynasty. This led priests, scribes and scholars to leave the southern cities and relocate in the North from the time of Samsu-iluna²⁰⁵⁶ down to the end of the Old Babylonian period.²⁰⁵⁷ The scribes of Nippur, even though the city did not completely collapse, as recent studies have demonstrated²⁰⁵⁸ pursued new careers in the North, notably in Babylon.²⁰⁵⁹ In this context southern Babylonian scholars disseminated their repertoire of texts and their tradition,²⁰⁶⁰ establishing a mixed scribal environment in the Northern Babylonian centers.²⁰⁶¹ *BeR* may be a product of this scribal milieu,²⁰⁶² composed upon the vanity theme which

2051 § 9.1.

2052 In this regard see the earlier discussion of the parallel lines in *BeR* and *Nothing is of Value*.

2053 Lambert 1962, 66: VI 13.

2054 For the identification see Frahm 2010, 168-176.

2055 Frahm 2010, 174.

2056 Charpin 1986, 402-415.

2057 Pientka 1998, 195-196.

2058 George 2009, 136-142. The last document from Nippur dates to the thirtieth year of Samsu-iluna’s reign (1720 B.C.), Cole 1996, 12 n. 42.

2059 Pientka 1998, 190-195, Charpin 1999-2000, 324.

2060 Cf. Michalowski 2003, 112.

2061 In this regard see Charpin 2004, 345-346. Perhaps it is in this context that the northern locations, Kiš, Kutha and Dilbat, were integrated into the sequence of cities mentioned in Enlil *Balaġs*, see Gabbay 2014a, 153, § 1.1.9.2.

2062 The presence of southern (Alulu, Gilgameš) and northern (Etana) kings may be an expression of this cultural environment.

was well known in Nippur.²⁰⁶³ The *Sammeltafel*n themselves combine a mainstream composition such as *Nothing is of Value* with texts that do not reflect the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition such as the hymn *Abī-ešuḫ B* and the *Hymn to Marduk for a King*. Regardless of where it was actually composed, *BeR* was not the product of a local scribal circle but results from a tradition widespread throughout Mesopotamia that has been here termed the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition.²⁰⁶⁴

Another composition possibly belonging to the same stream of tradition as *BeR* is *The Fowler* because it is perhaps cited in the catalogue of the series of Sidu. Moreover, the related composition *The Fowler and his Wife* was well known in the OB period as a learning tool, notably in Nippur. As argued above, *MLM*,²⁰⁶⁵ *LI-LN*²⁰⁶⁶ and *SI-Utu*²⁰⁶⁷ are also products of the Nippur scribal milieu.

The tradition of *PfK* cannot be clearly identified, but it does not seem to belong to the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition.

All the compositions belonging to the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition attested at Emar – *BeR*, *EaN*, *SI-Utu*, *The Fowler* – are written on Syro-Hittite tablets. Direct interconnections between Kassite Nippur and Emar have been demonstrated by J. Peterson²⁰⁶⁸ for the ḡeš-list of *Urra* III-Va and Va-VII. Two MB Nippur tablets, N 6044 and CBS 4598 = PBS 12/1 17, show a high degree of correspondence with the Emar manuscripts. However, the distinction drawn between Syrian and Syro-Hittite scholarly texts by Y. Cohen²⁰⁶⁹ allows us to improve on Peterson's observation: only Syro-Hittite sources are close to the Nippur recension of *Urra*. Unfortunately, the ḡeš-list section contained in N 6044 is only preserved on Syro-Hittite manuscripts²⁰⁷⁰ but the section inscribed on PBS 12/1 17 is known to us from both Syrian and Syro-Hittite tablets.²⁰⁷¹ While the Syro-Hittite manuscript (Msk 731048) duplicates the MB tablet from Nippur,²⁰⁷² the Syrian tablet strongly diverges, reflecting a non-Nippur tradition. The same section of *Urra* is preserved in a source from Ḥattuša, the MS prism KBo 26 5B, which presents yet another textual tradition different from both Nippur and Syro-Hittite tablets.

Nippur	Emar Syro-Hittite	Emar Syrian	Ḥattuša	Canonical Urra IV
PBS 12/1 17	Msk 731048	Msk 731030 Obv. V	KBo 26 5B III	MSL 5
14 ḡeš min (gu-za) para ₁₀	1 ḡiš gu-za para ₁₀	26 ḡeš gu-za lugal	x	87 ḡeš gu-za para ₁₀
15 ḡeš min im-ma-la ₂	2 ḡeš gu-za im-[ma-la ₂]	27 ḡiš gu-za šaḡ-šum-ma	1 [ḡeš gu-za im-m]a-[a ₂]	88 ḡeš gu-za lugal
16 ḡeš min ki-uš	3 ḡeš gu-za ki-ba[la]	28 ḡeš gu-za ma ₂ -gan-na	2 [ḡe]š gu-za ki-g[al']	89 ḡeš gu-za ku ₃ -an
17 ḡeš min gidim	4 ḡeš gu-za gidim	29 ḡeš gu-za ma ₂ -laḡ ₅	3 ḡeš gu-za gidim	90 ḡeš gu-za im-ma-la ₂
18 ḡeš min ša ₃ -ḡul ₂ -la	5 ḡeš gu-za ša ₃ -ḡul ₂ -la	30 ḡeš gu-za ki-bala	4 ḡeš gu-za anše	91 ḡeš gu-za ki-uš
19 ḡeš min anše	6 ḡeš gu-za anše	31 ḡeš gu-za gidim-ma	5 ḡeš gu-za l[ugal]	92 ḡeš gu-za ḡeš-gar ₃

2063 It should also be taken into account that the documentation of Sippar shows closer similarity to the Nippur tradition than the texts from Diyala do.

2064 It is to recall that the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition does not coincide *tout court* with the Nippur repertoire although it is mainly known from the Nippur documentation; see Introduction and fn. 58.

2065 § 5.3.2.

2066 § 5.3.4.

2067 § 6.2.4.

2068 Peterson 2006.

2069 Cohen 2009.

2070 Peterson 2006, 580 n. 17, *Urra* V-VIIb = E 545: Msk 74233b (+) Msk 74103w (+) Msk 7498m (+) Msk 74107w + Msk 74201e, scribe = Šaggar-abu son of Ba'al-qarrād; Msk 74209a + Msk 7526, scribe = Ba'al-mālik son of Ba'al-qarrād, see Rutz 2013, 497.

2071 Peterson 2006, 584, *Urra* III-Va, Syrian: Msk 731030, scribe = Ribi-Dagan; Msk 74163b, scribe = unpreserved; Syro-Hittite: Msk 731048, scribe = Ba'al-mālik son of Ba'al-qarrād, see Rutz 2013, 496.

2072 Peterson 2006, 585-586.

Nippur	Emar Syro-Hittite	Emar Syrian	Ḫattuša	Canonical Urra IV
PBS 12/1 17	Msk 731048	Msk 731030 Obv. V	KBo 26 5B III	MSL 5
20 ġeš min lugal	7 ġeš gu-za lugal	32 ġeš gu-za ša ₃ -ġešgal'-la	6 ġeš gu-za [(šaḫ-šum-ma)]	93 ġeš gu-za gidim
21 ġeš min šaḫ ₂ -šum-ma	8 ġeš gu-za šaḫ ₂ -šum-ma	33 ġeš gu-za niġ ₂ -unken'-na	7 ġeš gu-za ^ē [^{es} k]in-ti	94 ġeš gu-za ša ₃ -ḫul ₂ -la
22 ġeš min kin-ti	9 ġeš gu-za ^ē kin-ti	34 ġeš gu-za kaskal	8 ġeš gu-za na.MES	95 ġeš gu-za anše
23 ġeš min ma ₂ -gan	10 ġeš gu-za ma ₂ -gan-na	35 ġeš gu-za anše	9 ġeš gu-za [x x t] ⁱ⁷	96 ġeš gu-za šaḫ-šum-ma
24 ġeš min ma ₂ -lah ₅	11 ġeš gu-za ma ₂ -lah ₅	36 ġeš gu-za ^ē kin-ti	10 ġeš gu-za ḫ[ar]-ḫ[a] ^{r7}	97 ġeš gu-za ^ē kin-ti
25 ġeš min niġ ₂ -niġen ₂ -na	12 ġeš gu-za niġ ₂ -unken-na	37 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba	11 ġeš gu-za m[a ₂ ?-(?)]	98 ġeš gu-za ma ₂ -gan-na
26 ġeš min gar ₃ -ba	13 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba	38 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba ku ₃ -si ₂₂ ġar-ra	12 ġeš gu-za kask[al]	99 ġeš gu-za me-luḫ-ḫa
27 ġeš min gar ₃ -ba urudu ġar-ra	14 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba urudu ġar-ra	39 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba ku ₃ -babbar ġar-ra	13 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -[ba]	100 ġeš gu-za ma ₂ -lah ₅
28 ġeš min gar ₃ -ba [za] bar ġar-ra	15 ġeš min gar ₃ -ba za[bar ġar-ra]	40 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba zabar ġ[ar-ra]	14 ġeš gar ₃ -[ba] ku ₃ -s[i ₂₂ -ġar-ra]	101 ġeš gu-za niġ ₂ -niġen-na
29 ġeš min gar ₃ -ba ku ₃ -babbar ġar-ra	16. ġeš gu-za ga[r ₃ -ba ku ₃ -babbar ġar-ra]	41 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba urudu [ġar-ra]	15 ġeš gu-za g[ar ₃]-b[a] k[u ₃]-b[abbar]	102 ġeš gu-za di-ku ₅
				103 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba
				104 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba ku ₃ -si ₂₂ ġar-ra
				105 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba ku ₃ -babbar ġar-ra
				106 ġeš gu-za gar ₃ -ba urudu ġar-ra
				107 ġeš gu-za-gar ₃ -ba zabar ġar-ra

That the Nippur and Syro-Hittite manuscripts reflect a late stage is evident from their similarities to the canonical recension. Entries in canonical *Urra* IV 90-95 present the same sequence as PBS 12/1 17, 15-19 and Msk 731048, 2, 4-6 – only line 92 is added in the canonical recension; canonical *Urra* IV 96-103 correspond to PBS 12/1 17, 21-26 and Msk 731048, 8-13 except for the insertion of ll. 99 and 102. Conversely, the Syrian and Ḫattuša sources diverge from the first-millennium recension – they reflect an older stage in the standardization process and are at some distance from the Nippur tradition.

An examination of the *Sag-tablet* may provide further evidence. This lexical list is preserved at Emar on a tablet written by the Syrian scholarly scribe Ba'al-bārû son of Mašru-ḫamiš,²⁰⁷³ but is virtually unknown at Nippur. The OB manuscripts stem in fact from Northern Babylonia, Sippar and Kiš.²⁰⁷⁴ The only possible Nippur tablet is a fragment of the pre-OB recension,²⁰⁷⁵ but its provenance is uncertain.²⁰⁷⁶ Thus, the *Sag-tablet* was likely transmitted to Emar from a Northern Babylonian scribal school. Another indication of the different traditions reflected in the two Emar schools is provided by the incantation *man(m) lušpur* which is preserved on the reverse of the Syrian tablet of *Urra* III-Va written by Ribi-Dagan (E 737) and on a Syro-Hittite fragment (E 738). Although badly preserved, the Syro-Hittite source seems to diverge from the Syrian text.²⁰⁷⁷

2073 For this scribe see Cohen 2009, 121-126.

2074 MSLSS1, 7.

2075 MSLSS1, 15, further pre-OB fragments stem from Susa and Ebla.

2076 The fragment may be from Fara, see MSL SS 1, 15 n. 1.

2077 See Cohen 2009, 216.

It is clear that the Sumerian literary and lexical texts from Emar written on Syro-Hittite tablets are associated with the Nippur tradition. Conversely, the Syrian lexical lists and the only Sumerian literary composition inscribed on a Syrian tablet (*PfK*) seem to have little connection with the Nippur tradition. The dating of the Emar tablets and the historical context of Babylonia in the post-Old Babylonian period are elements that should be taken into account for understanding this dichotomy. Syrian and Syro-Hittite tablets from Emar cover different time spans.²⁰⁷⁸ Syrian tablets are the oldest and can be dated to a period from the 14th to the mid-13th century. The Syro-Hittite school replaced the Syrian format from approximately the second quarter of the 13th century and continued until the early 12th century. As mentioned above, southern Babylonia and Nippur faced a long period of decadence that began in the latter part of Samsu-iluna's reign. Even though scholarly activities did not completely fall off in southern Babylonia, as demonstrated by the recovery of literary texts dated to the Sealand dynasty,²⁰⁷⁹ the Nippur scribal schools flourished once again only after the demise of the Sealand dynasty around the beginning of the 14th century, under the sponsorship of the Kassite kings.²⁰⁸⁰ However, it is only in the second half of the 13th century that major reconstructions were carried out in Nippur, under the kings Kudur-Enlil (1254-1246 B.C.) and Šagarakti-Šuriaš (1245-1233 B.C.).²⁰⁸¹ The Middle Babylonian tablets from Nippur can mostly be dated to the 13th century and likely to the second half.²⁰⁸² Therefore the time frame of the Nippur renaissance suits the span of the Syro-Hittite documentation. It is probably within this context that the Nippur tradition found its way into the Syro-Hittite scholarly texts.

A small archive or cache discovered in House 5 in Chantier A²⁰⁸³ at Emar includes some nine documents, originally stored in a jar, that display paleographic and linguistic traits typical of Kassite tablets. One of these documents, the promissory note E 26, is dated to the 2nd year of the Babylonian king Meli-Šipak/ḫu, which is equivalent to the absolute date of 1185/1175.²⁰⁸⁴ This document quotes a certain Kidin-Gula who was a Babylonian scribe working as a teacher in Zū-Ba'la's school in Temple M₁.²⁰⁸⁵ According to a colophon found on a copy of the list *Izi*, Kidin-Gula was the teacher of one of Ba'al-qarrād's sons, either Ba'al-malik or Šaggar-abu – the latter is the scribe of *BeR* and *The Fowler*. We can surmise that Kidin-Gula, serving as a teacher at the Emar school, imported lexical and literary compositions and transferred his knowledge to the local students. He may have been one of the primary sources of the scholarly material from Emar, which indeed can be mostly dated to the third generation of Zū-Ba'la's family, namely Ba'al-qarrād's sons. The Syro-Hittite Sumerian literary texts can therefore be dated to the late 13th or early 12th century.

The scholarly texts from Ugarit can be dated to approximately the same period. A valuable synchronism between the Maison d'Urtenu at Ugarit and House 5 in Chantier A at Emar has been established by Cohen, Singer (2006).²⁰⁸⁶ The tablets from the Maison d'Urtenu indeed date to the last thirty years before the destruction of Ugarit.²⁰⁸⁷ Internal synchronisms allow us to date the rest of the private archives where scholarly tablets were found to the same period, namely the end of

2078 On the chronology of the Emar texts see Cohen, D'Alfonso 2008.

2079 George 2007a, George 2013, 129-131.

2080 Hallo 1989.

2081 OIP 111, 8-9.

2082 Tablets from regularly excavated Kassite levels date to the 13th century, see OIP 111, 93.

2083 See Cohen 2004, 89-93.

2084 Cf. Arnaud 1975.

2085 For this teacher see Cohen 2004, Cohen 2009, 183-189.

2086 Note that two manuscripts of *Šimā Milka* were found in the Maison d'Urtenu, see Malbran-Labat 2008, 37.

2087 Malbran-Labat 2000, 241.

the 13th and the beginning of the 12th century.²⁰⁸⁸ Indeed the Lamaštu archive and the Maison-aux-tablettes remained in use until the destruction of Ugarit in 1175 B.C.²⁰⁸⁹ The central archive of the Royal Palace is slightly older, as it dates to Amittamru II (1260-1235 B.C.).²⁰⁹⁰

The presence of Babylonian scribes is also documented at Ugarit. However, contrary to Emar where all the tablets were drafted by local scribes, at Ugarit Babylonian script tablets were found in the Lamaštu archive. Due to the high number of manuscripts and some local colorings it is probable that these tablets were drafted at Ugarit by Babylonian scribe(s) working as teacher(s). The Babylonian script tablets represent the largest portion of texts in the Lamaštu archive while only a few manuscripts are written in Ugarit script.²⁰⁹¹ No scribe name is preserved on any of the Babylonian tablets, and the only scribe mentioned in the Lamaštu archive is Gamir-ḥaddu, son of the scribe Nu'me-rašap who worked under the king Ibīranu (1235-1225 B.C.). Gamir-ḥaddu's activities, therefore, have to be placed at the time of Ibīranu and his successors,²⁰⁹² i.e. at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 12th century. Assuming that this archive did not serve as a repository for older texts, the Babylonian script tablets should be dated to the same period.²⁰⁹³ As a consequence, because this archive yielded two manuscripts of *BeR*, for the time being, we have to assume that two different versions of the text – one closer to the OB tablets from Sippar inscribed on the Babylonian script tablet RS 25.130 and the other written on the Ugarit script tablet RS 25.424, presenting the same text as the Emar manuscript – were known and copied at the same time in the same archive. Any possible chronological difference between these two manuscripts is not appreciable for us. Even their respective relationship and origin cannot be accurately ascertained. This further implies that between the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 12th century two different versions of *BeR* circulated in Mesopotamia, and both were transmitted to the Western periphery.

Scribal schools of Babylon likely took part in the dissemination of the mainstream of the Sumerian tradition to the Western periphery witnessed in the Syro-Hittite scholarly texts. This role can be seen in the MB tablet from Babylon VAT 13372 that contains a recension of *Urra* Tablet VII close to the Syro-Hittite and Ugarit manuscripts on the list.²⁰⁹⁴

Another line of transmission initiated toward the end of the 13th century that opened up a path to the North for the Babylonian scholarly material was perhaps the conquest of Babylon by Tukulti-Ninurta I. As I argued earlier,²⁰⁹⁵ the MA material relies on the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition. A piece of evidence for the impulse given by Assyrian mediation to the transmission of Mesopotamian material in the late 13th – early 12th century can be detected in the possible identification of the Tukulti-Ninurta epic in a fragment from Ugarit.²⁰⁹⁶ The Akkadian version of *The Debate between the Date Palm and the Tamarisk* is known in manuscripts

2088 See Cohen 2013, 31-33.

2089 van Soldt 1991, 191, 210; the Bibliothèque du Lettré is not clearly datable, see van Soldt 1991, 164-165.

2090 van Soldt 1991, 92.

2091 van Soldt 1991, 373-374.

2092 van Soldt 1991, 27.

2093 The birth incantation *A Cow of Šin* is preserved on a Babylonian fragment from the Lamaštu archive (RS 25.436 = AuOrS 23 20) and on sources from Ḥattuša (KUB 4 13), Nineveh, and on a MA tablet from Assur. Unfortunately the Ugarit fragment is too badly preserved to determine its relation to the other manuscripts and to attempt to reconstruct a chronological sequence. Notably, the relation between the Ugarit fragment and the two MA manuscripts would be relevant here, but one must note that they contain two different recensions. All the sources present a high degree of variation and the Ugarit fragment seems to be different from both the Ḥattuša and MA tablets, which also diverge from each other. See Röllig 1985, Veldhuis 1991.

2094 van Soldt 2011, 209-211.

2095 § 2.2.

2096 RS 25.435 = AuOrS 23 36; although the identification of this fragment as part of the Tukulti-Ninurta epic is not fully certain and the MA manuscripts are badly preserved (see Machinist 1978, 124-127), according to Stefan Jakob (personal communication at 60th Rencontre d'Assyriologique International in Warsaw) there are sufficient grounds to attribute the fragment from Ugarit to the epic.

from Emar and Assur, but one should note that the two sources exhibit several differences.²⁰⁹⁷ Additionally, the presence of an Assyrian scribe at Ugarit is documented in the Southern Palace.²⁰⁹⁸

As for the dissemination of texts associated with the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition, another factor to be considered is the widespread nature of this tradition since the Old Babylonian period – a nature that was likely reinforced by the Nippur renaissance during the Kassite period. Indeed, texts used in the scribal curriculum were part of a common Mesopotamian body of knowledge. As already noted with respect to the documentation of Ḫattuša, texts reflecting the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition might have been transmitted to the Western periphery in variant forms that developed in minor centers, perhaps in Northern Babylonia. Direct interconnections with the Nippur tradition illustrated so far would suggest that these texts were transmitted from the main centers of Mesopotamian scholarship, i.e. Nippur and Babylon. Such interconnections, however, can be only detected for the lexical lists of the Syro-Hittite tradition. Conversely, there is no clear evidence for literary texts, simply because no duplicates from contemporaneous Mesopotamian sources are preserved. Unfortunately, the provenance of the Babylonian script tablet from Ugarit containing *BeR* is unknown. Therefore, it cannot be understood whether the Syrian recensions of *BeR* and the other literary texts diverging from the extant OB sources were produced in Nippur or in Babylon as a consequence of the revival of scholarship in these centers or whether they reflect local variants composed in Northern Babylonian scribal circles. That texts from the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition may have been disseminated from minor centers is perhaps suggested by the possible Northern Babylonian origin of *Kidin-Gula* or, as proposed by Y. Cohen, the land of Suḫu.²⁰⁹⁹ At any rate, one must take into account that at the time when *Kidin-Gula* moved to Emar, Nippur scribal schools had regained their importance and their influence had spread to the North, possibly prompted by the Assyrian conquest of Babylon. *Kidin-Gula* was therefore part of a widespread and common scribal tradition.²¹⁰⁰

To sum up, the Syro-Hittite material and the scholarly texts from Ugarit are contemporary to the second flourishing of the Nippur scribal schools in the mid-13th century that clearly played a role in the dissemination of texts associated with the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition both in Mesopotamia and in the Western periphery. The Syrian scholarly material, which relies on a different tradition from the Syro-Hittite school, is conversely older. As mentioned above, the only Sumerian literary text preserved on a Syrian school tablet, *PfK*, does not reflect the mainstream Sumerian literary tradition. At Ugarit this composition is inscribed on a tablet stemming from Maison A, whose epigraphic findings are distinguished from the remainder of the scholarly material by the fact that they were found in a secondary context.²¹⁰¹ Hence, tablets from Maison A perhaps date to an earlier phase. This date would fit the period of textual production of the Syrian school at Emar. It is perhaps not a coincidence that a composition that does not belong to the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition is documented at Emar and Ugarit in manuscripts dated to a period when the revitalized Nippur tradition had probably not yet been disseminated in the Western periphery.

Transmission of scholarly material occurred in several waves by means of Mesopotamian scribes and scholars traveling to the West. This is reflected in the circulation of different *Vorlagen* of the same compositions in the Western periphery as shown by variances between Emar and Ugarit sources.²¹⁰² Dissemination of this material in Syria did not occur by the direct transmission of knowledge from Emar to Ugarit following the East-West route but through a

2097 Wilcke 1989, 168-169.

2098 van Soldt 2001; note also the Assyrian tablet, possibly from Emar, RE 19, dated to Ninurta-apil-Ekur (1181-1169), see Cohen, D'Alfonso 2008, 14-15.

2099 Cohen 2004, 92.

2100 As seen earlier, the main centers of Northern Babylonia, Sippar, Kiš and Babylon, had been influenced by the southern tradition since the Old Babylonian period.

2101 van Soldt 1991, 224.

2102 See Hoskisson 1991, 24.

more complex path, and it is not excluded that other Syrian centers were involved. In the case of Ugarit, texts such as *LI-LN* and *MLM* reached the city by way of a detour through Ḫattuša.²¹⁰³

Incantations seem to provide a different picture. Contrary to literary texts, they are mostly monolingual and rely on literary and textual traditions far removed from the extant OB Nippur sources and first-millennium duplicates.²¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, they are preserved on Syro-Hittite tablets at Emar, and on manuscripts contemporary with the literary texts at Ugarit, among which is a Babylonian script tablet. Several reasons can be adduced for this state of affairs. (1) First of all, if, as argued above, Northern Babylonian scribal schools were involved in the transmission of the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition, such a mixed scribal environment may have disseminated texts of different traditions. (2) It is not precluded that texts such as incantations that arrived in the Western periphery before the late 13th – early 12th century continued to be copied according to the current scribal convention, viz. Syro-Hittite. (3) We also have to take into account that tablets from Emar are very fragmentary, and our comprehension is obviously partial. (4) Most of the incantations, notably all of those from Ugarit, do not have known OB duplicates, therefore we are entirely unaware of how, and if, these texts were written in earlier times. (5) It is not certain that incantations were transmitted by the same foreign specialists who conveyed literary texts. Although interconnected, scribal schooling and magic belong to two different branches of Mesopotamian knowledge. Indeed, it is difficult to attribute the poorly written collection of incantations in Babylonian script AuOrS 23 25 to the same scribe who made a fine copy of one of the manuscripts of *BeR* (RS 25.130). (6) Lastly, the tradition of *abracadabra* spells attested in the *Tsukimoto Incantation* is not clearly identifiable. The most likely scenario is that incantations reflect an older tradition than literary texts but, whether they were transmitted at an earlier date and continued to be copied at Emar and Ugarit until their destruction, or whether they arrived together with literary texts, cannot be ascertained. Some incantations were probably copied at an earlier date than literary texts – the scribe of the *Tsukimoto Incantation*²¹⁰⁵ dates to a generation earlier than that of the copyist of *BeR* and *The Fowler*.²¹⁰⁶ However, the hypothesis of a joint arrival of literary texts and incantations cannot be discarded because in the Late Bronze Age older and later traditions coexisted and standardization had not yet been accomplished. The impossibility of dating the Babylonian script tablets from the Lamaštu archive to a different period than that of the Ugarit script tablets leads us to attribute the incantations from that archive to the same line of transmission as the other magical texts.

The *Tsukimoto Incantation* and the Akkado-Hurrian version of *The Instructions of Šuruppak* show that Hurrians played a role in the transmission of this material even though its limits are not easy to define.²¹⁰⁷ Contrary to Arnaud's assumption²¹⁰⁸ we cannot speak of an Assyrian tradition disseminated to the Western periphery, but as noted above the conquest of Babylon by Tukulti-Ninurta may have spurred the transmission of this material.

To conclude, different traditions can be detected in the Sumerian corpora from Emar and Ugarit. Dissemination of the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition was prompted by the flourishing of scribal activity in Nippur and Babylon during the late Kassite period as well as by the fact that some compositions were widespread throughout Mesopotamia for their association with the Intermediary phase of the curriculum. Northern Babylonian centers were also involved in the transmission of Sumerian literary and magical texts to Emar and Ugarit. The role of the OB Syrian scribal schools, notably Mari and Ebla, cannot be investigated at the present state of research.

2103 §§ 5.3.2, 5.3.4.

2104 They do not simply represent the MB reworking and adaptation of known OB compositions as literary texts, but rather preserve a very different tradition from the OB corpus.

2105 As stated above the transmission of this text probably occurred earlier than the moment when the actual copy was written down.

2106 See § 9.5.1.

2107 Cf. Cohen 2013, 210-211.

2108 Arnaud 1980, 250-251.

9.5 Archival Distribution and Scribes

9.5.1 Emar

All the Sumerian texts stem from a single building, the so-called Temple M₁. The reconstruction of find-spots made by Rutz allows us to know where Sumerian texts were located in the building. The majority of lexical, literary and magical texts were found in the west corner of Locus 1, the so-called 'cella'.²¹⁰⁹ Joins made between fragments found in different rooms²¹¹⁰ clearly show that the LBA building was highly disturbed by the Islamic layers. With the sole exception of *PfK* found in Locus 1 Central, all the Sumerian literary and magical texts were discovered in Locus 1 West. Syrian scholarly texts are found in Locus 1 West – see for instance *Urra* XI-XII²¹¹¹ – but many of them stem from Locus 1 Central or the former R trench that most probably corresponds, at least in part, with Locus 1 Central or Locus 3.²¹¹² Taking into consideration that scholarly texts were not found in their original place of storage, partially because they were shifted around according to educational needs and because the old material was surely used for reference, hence moved from one place to another, and also due to the aforementioned archaeological disturbance of the LBA layers, it is not precluded that Syrian tablets were deliberately stored in a different area from the Syro-Hittite texts.²¹¹³

The so called Temple M₁ was a private house, the residence of the Zū-Ba'la family of diviners, and the venue of a scribal school. Consequently, scribal teaching in LBA Emar took place in a private building in accord with the OB educational system. Members of the Zū-Ba'la family are mentioned in Syro-Hittite scholarly texts as scribes, either as students or teachers. The family archive spans over four generations but most of the documentation, as mentioned above, dates to the third generation. Only one member of this family, Šaggar-abu son of Ba'al-qarrād, is attested as a scribe of literary compositions, both of which are Sumerian texts: *BeR* and *The Fowler*.²¹¹⁴ In their colophons, written in a cryptographic style, he bears the title of lu₂-azu, 'diviner', indicating that at the time when he copied these tablets he was the diviner of Emar and likely had already completed his scribal education. In the colophon of a celestial omen Šaggar-abu is attested as a student, gab₂-zu-zu, while in a fragmentary colophon he is possibly identified as a teacher.²¹¹⁵ As seen above, the Babylonian scribe Kidin-Gula worked in Zū-Ba'la's school and was a teacher of one of Ba'al-qarrād's sons.

Another Syro-Hittite scribe attested in our corpus is Madi-Dagan who was active in the period of Ba'al-qarrād, hence one generation before Šaggar-abu.²¹¹⁶ He bears the title of Chief Scribe and he was probably an Emarite in the service of the Hittite bureaucracy. The only Sumerian text drafted on a Syrian school tablet, *PfK*, was written by Tuku-^dE₂-ḫur-saĝ who is otherwise unknown.²¹¹⁷

The majority of the Sumerian texts from Emar are attested in single copies that were probably used as master copies. Nevertheless, remains were found of multiple copies of *BeR*,²¹¹⁸ *The Fowler* and possibly the *Tsukimoto Incantation*. The corpus of Sumerian texts from Temple M₁ was a library collection housed for educational purposes and academic-cultural interest.

2109 Rutz 2013, 122-123.

2110 Rutz 2013, 128.

2111 Rutz 2013, 500.

2112 Rutz 2013, 113.

2113 Note that all the Syrian legal documents involving the royal family from Temple M₁ were found in the former R trench, Rutz 2013, 291.

2114 Cohen 2009, 169-170.

2115 Cohen 2009, 69.

2116 See Cohen 2009, 189-194.

2117 Cohen 2009, 135-136.

2118 Fragment Msk 74159j.

9.5.2 Ugarit

Similarly to Emar, scribal education at Ugarit took place in private houses which were often the residences of important officials. However, contrary to Emar, Sumerian texts from Ugarit were found in several locations.

Excavation Number	Composition	Edition	Script	Language
Lamaštu				
RS 25.130	a) The Ballad of Early Rulers b) Proverbs from Ugarit	Ugaritica V 164	MB	S A
RS 25.424	The Ballad of Early Rulers	Ugaritica V 166	Ug	(PhS) A
RS 25.421+	The Message of Lu-diġira to his Mother	AuOrS 23 50	NS	S PhS A H
RS 25?.135A	The Message of Lu-diġira to his Mother	AuOrS 23 50	Ug	S A
RS 26.141	Hymn to Enki (?)	AuOrS 23 28	MB	S A
RS 25.129+	Collection of Incantations	AuOrS 23 25	MB	S
RS 25.418	Collection of Incantations	AuOrS 23 27	MB?	S
RS 25.517	Unidentified Text	AuOrS 23 58	MB	S
RS 26.143	Unidentified Text	AuOrS 23 59	Bab	S
RS 25.462	Unidentified Text	AuOrS 23 67	Ug	S?
Bibliothèque du Lettré				
RS 17.10	Letter of Lugal-ibila to Lugal-nesaġ	Ugaritica V 15	Ug	PhS (A)
RS 17.80	Letter of Lugal-ibila to Lugal-nesaġ	Ugaritica V 15	Ug	(Ph?S) A
RS 17.155	Collection of Incantations	AuOrS 23 21	Ug	S
Maison-aux-tablettes				
RS 23.34+	The Ballad of Early Rulers	Ugaritica V 165	Ug	PhS A
RS 22.341+	Enlil and Namzitarra	AuOrS 23 47	Ug	(S) A
RS 28.053	Unidentified Text	AuOrS 23 61	MB?	S
Maison A				
RS 79.25	A Prayer for a King	Arnaud (1982a), 209-216	Ug	PhS (A)
RS 79.25C	A Prayer for a King	Arnaud (1982a), 209-216	Ug	A
Maison d'Urtenu				
RS 86.2210	The Fox and the Hyena	Arnaud (2001)	Ug	S PhS (A)
RS 94.2372	Unidentified Text	AuOrS 23 68	Ug	S
Royal Palace				
RS 16.416	Incantation	AuOrS 23 13	Ug	S
RS 15.152	Collection of Incantations	AuOrS 23 21	Ug	S

As mentioned above, the collection of the Lamaštu archive, which yielded the largest number of Sumerian literary and religious texts, mostly comprises tablets written in Babylonian script that are the product of foreign scribe(s). The tablet imported from the Hittite capital containing *MLM* was found in this archive as well as the local recension preserved on a tiny fragment. Sumerian texts found in the other archives are written in Ugarit script.²¹¹⁹

²¹¹⁹ The only possible exception is AuOS 23: 61, but its paleographic categorization is uncertain. Note that the possible Babylonian script tablet RS 20.121+ = Ugaritica V 119, inscribed with the Weidner God List, stems from the House of Rap'ānu, see van Soldt 1995, 175 n. 30.

The Lamaštu archive, the Bibliothèque du Lettré and the Maison-aux-tablettes mainly contained scholarly material – lexical, religious and literary texts – and probably housed libraries.²¹²⁰ The recovery of many letters and administrative documents in the Maison d'Urtenu, in addition to scholarly texts, shows that this building served as an archive where part of the state bureaucracy was kept. In the Royal Palace administrative documents represent the majority, whereas only a scanty number of scholarly texts were found.²¹²¹ This indicates that scribal education did not take place in the Royal Palace. As stated above the tablets found in Maison A come from a secondary context. The distribution of Sumerian texts among the archives does not display any appreciable difference in terms of text typology, likely because of the small size of the corpus. Texts are preserved in several copies often stemming from different archives, such as the manuscripts of *BeR* and the collection of incantations AuOrS 23 21. This is evidence that tablets of Sumerian texts from Ugarit derive from school activities. Indeed, the scribe of one manuscript of *BeR* (Ub) is explicitly labeled as a student in the colophon. However, tablets in Babylonian and Hittite (i.e. *MLM*) scripts from the Lamaštu archive should be regarded as library copies. The presence of the same compositions in different archives indicates that scholarly texts circulated among scribal schools. Tablets that only contain phonetic Sumerian versions of texts that were transmitted to Ugarit in standard orthography clearly reveal their pedagogical nature. It is not a coincidence that the two copies of *LI-LN* – containing the phonetic Sumerian version and the Akkadian translation respectively – stem from the Bibliothèque du Lettré where several extract tablets were found.

None of the Sumerian literary and religious texts preserve a colophon with the name of either a scribe or a teacher.²¹²² The only literary texts preserving scribe names are two Akkadian compositions found in the Maison-aux-tablettes: a copy of *Atraḫasis*²¹²³ written by Nu'me-Rašap and *Šimā Milka*²¹²⁴ written by Šiptia.²¹²⁵ Several teachers are attested: four in the Maison-aux-tablettes, five in the House of Rap'ānu, and only one in the Lamaštu archive.²¹²⁶ The latter is the aforementioned Gamir-Ḥaddu who is also attested in colophons from the Maison-aux-tablettes and the House of Rap'ānu. This indicates that not only the same literary texts were known in different archives within the city but also that scribes were teaching in various schools. Names of teachers preserved in colophon are indigenous²¹²⁷ with the exception of the aforementioned Assyrian scribe working in the so called Southern Palace, Naḫiš-šalmu.²¹²⁸ According to van Soldt,²¹²⁹ owners of private houses where archives and libraries were found were possibly scribes themselves and ran scribal schools. Urtenu was perhaps a scribe²¹³⁰ but unfortunately no scribe names are preserved on the tablets from his archive. In some schools such as in the Maison-aux-tablettes, whose owner is unknown,²¹³¹ the Ugaritic language was taught in addition to Akkadian.

2120 Note that no extract tablets were found in the Lamaštu archive (van Soldt 1991, 751-753), whereas the Bibliothèque du Lettré is rich in this type of tablet, see van Soldt 1991, 163-165, van Soldt 2000, 232.

2121 van Soldt 1991, 74.

2122 The copy of *BeR* RS 23.24+ does not preserve the name of the scribe, see § 6.2.1.

2123 RS 22.421.

2124 RS 22.439.

2125 See Arnaud 2007, 178-179.

2126 van Soldt 1995, 221.

2127 According to Arnaud's reading, the teacher of Šiptia may bear a Babylonian name: Arad-Nergal.

2128 van Soldt 2001.

2129 van Soldt 2000.

2130 van Soldt 2000, 242.

2131 van Soldt 1991, 190, suggests the identification of ^{LU2}UGULA.KALAM.MA, who is the addressee of a letter, with the owner of the house.

9.6 Concluding Remarks

Although Sumerian literary and religious texts from Emar and Ugarit can collectively be placed in the post-Old Babylonian stage, they reflect different phases in the process of standardization of the scholarly material. Transmission of this material occurred in several waves and different traditions can be identified. At Emar two waves can be clearly recognized in the Syrian and Syro-Hittite tablets. The former reflect an older stage and are removed from the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition. The latter, to be dated to the late 13th and early 12th century, are closer to the MB Nippur tradition. This dichotomy is very clear when comparing the lexical lists from MB Nippur and Emar: only the Syro-Hittite texts are close to the Nippur manuscripts. Such a distinction is less evident in the texts from Ugarit, but they seem to reflect the same tradition as the Syro-Hittite tablets from Emar.²¹³² The dating of the tablets from Ugarit further supports this picture as they are contemporaneous with the Syro-Hittite texts. Probably to be dated to an earlier phase are the fragments found, out of context, in Maison A and containing *PfK* which not coincidentally is the only Sumerian literary composition attested on a Syrian school tablet at Emar.

In the late 13th century, the revival of the scribal schools in Nippur and Babylon promoted by the Kassite kings was an important factor for the transmission of the mainstream of the Sumerian literary tradition to the Western periphery, possibly further supported by Tukulti-Ninurta's conquest of Babylon.²¹³³ A line of transmission involving the mediation of the Hittite empire brought *MLM*, *LI-LN* and perhaps the *Saġ-geg* incantation inscribed on AuOrS 23 21 to Ugarit. Dissemination of Sumerian material from the Hittite empire to Syria occurred in the direction of Ugarit but not between Ḫattuša and Emar. Variances between sources from Emar and Ugarit indicate that the transmission of Sumerian literary and religious texts to the Western periphery was not limited to the above described waves but probably included other phases. It is also not excluded that other Syrian centers such as Karkemiš and Aleppo were involved. Incantations seem to reflect an older tradition than literary texts and possibly arrived at an earlier date.

Contrary to Ḫattuša, at Emar and Ugarit scribal schooling took place in private houses within family circles according to the Old Babylonian system of education. While at Emar the majority of the preserved tablets containing Sumerian texts probably represent master copies, Sumerian compositions from Ugarit have come to us in multiple copies, drafted by students as exercises. All the literary texts and most of the incantations were transmitted to Emar and Ugarit in standard orthography format. Only later did local scribes add phonetic versions as exercises. Variation between phonetic versions in the Emar and Ugarit sources indicates that they were independently created by indigenous scribes. Only a limited number of incantations are written in phonetic orthography.

The alleged Syrian reworking of Sumerian compositions according to local themes, argued by some scholars for *BeR*, *PfK* and *EaN*, must be rejected based on Mesopotamian parallels. Analysis of grammar and orthography has shown that the majority of mistakes were not produced locally but are common to the diachronic development of Sumerian. Because texts from the Western periphery depend on Mesopotamian models, variances between Emar and Ugarit manuscripts tell us that the process of standardization was still in a fluid phase and different versions of the same compositions coexisted in Babylonia. The Sumerian literary texts transmitted to Emar and Ugarit are strongly related thematically and represent the Intermediary Phase of the OB curriculum. On the basis of the present evidence it is unclear whether incantations were actually performed at Emar and Ugarit. Even though two *azû* are known from the documentation of Emar, and Madi-Dagan, the copyist of the *Tsukimoto Incantation*, calls himself an *apakallu* priest,²¹³⁴ no *āšipu* (incantation-priest) is attested at Emar or Ugarit. Therefore it is not precluded that incantations were limited to the realm of the school. On the other hand their 'textualization' in a predominantly monolingual version may suggest that incantations were associated with oral practices in which the Akkadian translation was not perceived as necessary because the magical power was encoded in the recitation of Sumerian formulas.

2132 Note that most of the lexical lists from Ugarit are still unpublished.

2133 If we could assign the Babylonian script tablets from the Lamaštu archive to an earlier date, then the recension of *BeR* closer to the OB Sippar tablets, RS 25.130, could reflect an older tradition, whereas the Emar-Ugarit recension would represent the (renewed) MB Nippur tradition.

2134 Cohen 2009, 193 and n. 116.

