

## SANEM 3

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STUDIES ON THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND THE MEDITERRANEAN



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SANEM

STUDIES ON THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE EDITORIAL SERIES

The SANEM editorial series, 'Studies on the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean', is the official channel for the scientific monographic studies of CAMNES, Center for Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies, created with the support of the publishing house Arbor Sapientiae of Rome.

The logo of the series, a chimera with wings, was chosen as a symbolic embodiment of the close connections and merging traits of Eastern and Western cultures. Indeed, the iconography of the chimera was born within the Classical ambit, but its roots are to be found in the Near East as the examples found in Ebla (18<sup>th</sup> century BCE) and in Carchemish (11-9<sup>th</sup> century BCE) demonstrate.

Works of significant scientific value are published in the SANEM series regarding the broad fields of archaeology, anthropology, history, philology and art history of the ancient past of the Near Eastern and Mediterranean cultural areas. Particular attention is devoted to modern methods of investigation for the reconstruction and the interpretation of these cultures in a time span that stretches from prehistory to the Classical period.

According to the principles of CAMNES, the SANEM series is ideal not only for established scholars but also for the publication of the works of young researchers at the beginning of their academic careers and their research projects.

Given the international context in which CAMNES operates, the works of the series are predominantly published in English, and subjected to double-blind peer review by the SANEM Scientific Committee, created specifically for the editorial series. In special cases CAMNES may also rely on a peer review outside the Scientific Committee.

All volumes in the series are published following an irregular chronological sequence and are issued in paper and in digital editions.

#### INTRODUZIONE ALLA SERIE EDITORIALE

La serie editoriale SANEM, *Studies on the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean*, nasce come sede ufficiale delle pubblicazioni scientifiche monografiche del CAMNES, *Center for Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies*, per iniziativa del centro studi e grazie al supporto della casa editrice Arbor Sapientiae di Roma.

Il logo della serie, una chimera alata, è stato scelto come incarnazione simbolica delle strette connessioni e delle reciproche influenze tra le culture d'Oriente e quelle d'Occidente. Infatti, l'iconografia della chimera nasce in ambito Classico, ma le sue radici sono da ricercare nel Vicino Oriente come dimostrano gli esempi ritrovati a Ebla (XVIII secolo a.C.) e a Karkemish (XI-IX secolo a.C.).

Nei SANEM sono pubblicate opere di significativo valore scientifico inerenti l'archeologia, l'antropologia, la storia, la filologia e la storia dell'arte, con particolare attenzione ai moderni metodi di indagine volti alla ricostruzione e all'interpretazione dell'antico passato delle grandi aree culturali del Vicino Oriente e del Mediterraneo, in un arco cronologico che si estende dalla preistoria, passando per la protostoria, fino al periodo classico.

Secondo i principi ispiratori del CAMNES, i SANEM sono la sede editoriale ideale non solo per studiosi affermati, ma anche per la pubblicazione del lavoro dei giovani ricercatori all'inizio delle loro carriere accademiche e dei loro progetti di ricerca.

Dato il contesto internazionale nel quale opera CAMNES, salvo eccezioni, le opere della serie sono pubblicate in inglese, e sottoposte a *double-blind peer review* (autore e revisore saranno anonimi) dal Comitato Scientifico del SANEM, creato appositamente per la serie editoriale. In casi particolari CAMNES può avvalersi anche di un referaggio esterno al Comitato Scientifico.

Tutti i volumi della serie, che sono pubblicati senza una cadenza cronologica regolare, hanno un'edizione cartacea e un'edizione digitale.

*Guido Guarducci, Stefano Valentini*  
(Direzione CAMNES)

# BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE HIGHLANDS

*STUDIES IN HONOR OF  
GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI*

STEFANO VALENTINI - GUIDO GUARDUCCI  
(*editors*)



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Thank you all!

*Stefano Valentini & Guido Guarducci*

## FOREWORD

STEFANO VALENTINI - GUIDO GUARDUCCI

Since the first time I met them at Tell Mozan in Syria, I think it was the Summer 1993, Marilyn and Giorgio have been a constant presence for me, not only in the field of archaeology, but also, and perhaps above all, from a human point of view. When I worked at Tell Barri under the direction of Paolo Emilio Pecorella, until 2005, we always met in Jezirah, every summer, during the excavation campaigns. It was precisely that year, on the tragic death of my Professor, that my relationship with Marilyn and Giorgio became elective. In those dramatic days, I was able to appreciate their affection, their great friendship, their human depth. In the following years, despite the physical distance and the vicissitudes of life, which unfortunately brought us elsewhere from Syria, I always felt them close to me. Whenever I asked them for advice, an opinion, they have always shown me their sincere closeness, with those manners that are so courteous and affable. Of Marilyn and Giorgio, I have always appreciated their empathy and their intellectual honesty, supported by an innate ability to communicate, share and involve the scientific community with the ultimate goal of giving life to an archeology full of humanity: made up of people and of faces, not only of pottery and of dust. Thanks to them, I gained the awareness that the archaeologist, wherever he is working, must also fulfill his task as cultural mediator: between the cultures of the past and those of the present, and between our Western culture and that of the countries that we host.

Long life to both!

*Stefano*

It is for me a great honor to have curated together with Stefano this volume dedicated to Giorgio and Marilyn. I had the pleasure to meet them during the tragic event that took place at Tell Barri in 2005. Not only they were the first to visit us after the loss of our *Müdür*, Pamî, they stood next to us, consoling and cheering us up. Last but not least, we receive a huge crate of ice-cold beer from Tell Mozan. It may not appear as so, but that was a very special gift coming after a month of hard work and the loss of our professor, besides the rarity of such a commodity! Trust me when I say that all of us who were there, still remember that crate, almost as a symbol of solidarity for our grief, and the words of comfort expressed by Giorgio and Marilyn. That same year we went to visit their site and I was amazed by the welcoming atmosphere of the Mission House and greatly fascinated by the site of Urkesh that Giorgio, Federico and Marilyn thoroughly illustrated us. Thank you very much for your kind and fundamental support during those days. Finally, I would also like to deeply thank Giorgio for accepting since the very first day, back in 2010, to become a member of Scientific Committee of the newborn Center for Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies, CAMNES, as well as his and Marilyn's constant support in the following events that we organized. Thank you Giorgio, thank you Marilyn, for your remarkable academic and scientific effort and for your precious friendship.

Con affetto e stima,

*Guido*



## GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI

Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati have worked for many years in the Near East, especially in Syria, Iraq and Turkey. They are at present co-directors of the archaeological expedition to Tell Mozan/Urkish in North-Eastern Syria. They work closely together both in the field and on the publication reports from their excavations, of which five volumes, plus audio-visual presentations, have appeared so far. They lead an international staff comprising colleagues and students from the US, Europe, the Near East and Asia and have given joint lectures on the excavations, and workshops on methods used, at major archaeological centers around the world as well as holding positions as visiting professors in various European universities.

### GIORGIO BUCCELLATI

Giorgio Buccellati studied at the Catholic University (Milan, Italy), Fordham University and received his Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. He is Research Professor in the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, and Professor Emeritus in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and in the Department of History at UCLA. He founded the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, of which he served as first director from 1973 until 1983 and where he is now Director of the Mesopotamian Lab. He is currently the Co-Director of the Urkish/Mozan Archaeological Project as well as Director of IIMAS – The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies and Director of AVASA – Associazione per la Valorizzazione dell’Archeologia e della Storia Antica.

His research interests include the ancient languages, the literature, the religion, the archaeology and the history of Mesopotamia, as well as the theory of archaeology. His publications include site reports, text editions, linguistic and literary studies as well as on archaeological theory, historical monographs and essays on philosophy and spirituality. He has published a structural grammar of ancient Babylonian, two volumes on Mesopotamian civilization (on religion and politics; two more are forthcoming on literature as well as on art and architecture), a volume on archaeological theory dealing with the structural, digital and philosophical aspects of the archaeological record. He has authored two major scholarly websites on the archaeology of Urkish and on archaeological theory. As a Guggenheim Fellow, he has traveled to Syria to study modern ethnography and geography for a better understanding of the history of the ancient Amorites. In his field work, he has developed new approaches to the preservation and presentation of archaeological sites and to community archaeology. He has spearheaded the Urkish Extended Project, responding to the crisis of the war in Syria by maintaining a very active presence at the site.

### MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI

Professor Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati has been excavating and conducting research on the archaeology and art history of the ancient Near East for over 50 years. Her Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago was on the third millennium B.C. in the Caucasus. She taught archaeology and art history in California State University, Los Angeles and is now Visiting Professor at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA.

She is Director of the Urkish/Mozan Archaeological Project, a site spanning the fourth to the second millennia BC which has provided crucial to our understanding of the history, art and architecture of northern Mesopotamia.

Her research interests include Syro-Mesopotamian seal iconography, ceramics, ancient identification markers, pre-history in the southern Caucasus. She has published many site reports based on work in Terqa and especially Mozan/Urkish, and is currently finishing a digital volume on the excavated ceramics from Urkish, to be published within the Urkish Global Record website. One of her important publications was on the function of the necromantic pit excavated in Urkish, unique in its monumentality and significance; her research on the seal impressions of the AP Palace has brought to light the artistic value of these objects as well as the complex royal court to which they give witness.

With the cessation of excavations in Syria due to the war she has returned to the Republic of Georgia to work with the Italian team from the Ca’ Foscari University, Venice. This fieldwork activity lead her to curate an exhibit entitled “Georgia Paese d’oro e di fede. Identità e alterità nella storia di un popolo” on the archaeological and artistic heritage of the Republic of Georgia.

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One of his specific research programs is dedicated to the region called in the Hittite texts "Kizzuwatna country", that is today's flat Cilicia. She also carries out specific studies of onomastics, lexicography and toponymy, as well as on important deities such as Hebat, Šarrumma or Haldi.

She collaborated on the Hethitische Forschungen project of the Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur of Mainz, with the publication of two volumes of copies of tablets from Boghazköy (the ancient Hittite capital Hattusa)

She was acting director of the Institute of studies on the Civilizations of the Aegean and the Near East (ICEVO) of the CNR; today she is a member of ISMEO.

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# BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE HIGHLANDS

*STUDIES IN HONOR OF  
GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI*



# SYMBOL OF WISDOM, DECORATED WITH EARRINGS: THE EAR IN THE EBLA TEXTS

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## Abstract

For Marilyn and Giorgio I have chosen to present a study showing that a discussion of how the ear is referred to in the Ebla Palace G texts can lead on to topics that over the years have sparked their curiosity, before and after Tell Mozan, such as eye-catching earrings and longed-for wisdom.

### 1. THE BASIC EBLA TERMINOLOGY CONCERNING “EAR”, “WISDOM” AND “EARRING”

The sense of hearing appears in the Ebla bilingual lexical equivalence *giš-ba-tuku*<sup>1</sup>(*ĤÚB*) = *sa-ma-um* (*VE* 393), unanimously interpreted as “to hear, listen”, with Ebla *šamā’um* corresponding to Akk. *šemū(m)*.<sup>1</sup> If one searches instead for the organ of hearing (i.e. the ear) in the Ebla texts, the resulting picture reveals complexities akin to those observed in the Mesopotamian cuneiform texts.<sup>2</sup>

One initial point seems clear: the Ebla bilingual lexical equivalence *giš-geštug*<sup>3</sup> = *ha-zi-zu-um*, *ha-zi-zú* (*VE* 389), does not refer to the hearing organ, but rather means “comprehension; wisdom”, with Ebla *hasīsum* corresponding to Akk. *hasīsu(m)*.<sup>3</sup> However, the term for “ear” occurs in the *Ebla List with Body Parts*, where it is spelled *PI*,<sup>4</sup> again most probably to be read *geštug*, which is the only entry in the section

devoted to the organ of hearing.<sup>5</sup> To my knowledge, in the Palace G texts there is no positive evidence of the occurrence of the local Semitic equivalent of the Akk. *uznu(m)* < \**’uḏn-*, but one can speculate that *’uḏnum* was probably the Ebla Semitic term for “ear”.

Occurrences of the terms for “wisdom” in the Ebla texts are very rare, but nonetheless they are interesting. In the manuscript of the Pre-Sargonic Akkadian literary text *Hymn to Šamaš of Sippar* found in the archive L.2769 of Palace G (i.e. *ARET* V 6), the following passage occurs (obv. V:6): *ra-ba-šum* *kisal en-na-ri munus:peš* (*ŠA<sub>x</sub>GAL<sub>4</sub>*) *tál-geštug*<sup>1</sup>. It corresponds to *’dagal’* *kisal nigin* / *’tu’-da gizzal* (*NU<sub>11</sub>.AN*)<sup>2a1</sup> of the older Abu Salabikh manuscript *IAS* 326 (obv. III 12-13). Both these passages should mean “Wide is the courtyard of (Šamaš’) night chamber, (just as wide is the womb of) a wise woman who has just given birth (Abu Salabikh) / pregnant woman (Ebla)!”.<sup>6</sup> The spelling *PI-PI* of the Ebla manuscript may be read *tál-geštug* or *geštug-*

<sup>1</sup> See Hajouz 2013, 702 f., with literature. There are further occurrences of *giš-ba-tuku* in unilingual acrographic (*éš-bar-kin*,) lexical lists (*MEE* 15 23 rev. III 3, *MEE* 15 26 obv. VII 9) and chancery texts (*ARET* XIII 1, *ARET* XIII 5, *ARET* XIII 20, *ARET* XIII 21, *ARET* XVI 1, *ARET* XVI 26, *ARET* XVI 27), see Fronzaroli 2003, 262; Catagnoti, Fronzaroli 2010, 233. Forms of *šamā’um* occur e.g. in the Ebla onomastic elements *Iš-má-* and *Daš-má-* (Pagan 1998, 174f., with literature).

<sup>2</sup> See Civil 2008, 56f.; Goodnick Westenholz 2014.

<sup>3</sup> See Hajouz 2013, 339-341, with literature. Further occurrences of the Sumerogram written *GIŠ.PI.TÚG* (on this spelling see Klein 1979, 155, n. 35; Goodnick Westenholz 2014, 291) or *GIŠ.TÚG.PI* are found in the unilingual acrographic (*éš-bar-kin*,) lexical lists *MEE* 15 25 rev. V 10’, *MEE* 15 26 obv. V’ 30, and *MEE* 15 39 rev. VI’ 11’ (*giš-túg-geštug*); furthermore, in the excerpt of bilingual lexical list *MEE* 4 78 obv. V 1-3 there is the sequence *giš-geštug*<sup>3</sup> / *GIŠ-LAK459* / *ha-zi-zú* (Krebernik 2003, 176 n. 43, suggests a value *tu(g)*<sub>x</sub> for *LAK459*), having the same meaning as *VE* 389.

<sup>4</sup> See Bonechi, Catagnoti forthcoming on *MEE* 3 68 rev. II 3 and *MEE* 3 71 obv. II 1. An indication that *PI* alone may refer to the “ear” should be found in the sequence *PI* / *ŠIR* in the Fara excerpt of “word list” *SF* 32 obv. I 3-4, which may be interpreted as *geštug* / *šir*, “ear” / “testicle”; alternatively, one can read *PI* / *LAK24*, and see below.

<sup>5</sup> The later Mesopotamian lexical sources provide a much more analytical terminology, including: *an-ta-geštug*, *za-na-geštug* = *elū uzni*, “upper part of the ear”; *ki-ta-geštug* = *šapilti uzni*, “lower part of the ear”; *za-na-geštug-2*, *za-na-geštug*, = *harḥazinnu*, also *kidānu*, “outer part of the ear”; *būr-geštug*, *būr-geštug*, *za-na-geštug* = *piliš uzni*, “hole of the ear”; *ša-geštug*, *ša-geštug* = *libbi uzni*, also *karaš uzni*, *qerbēnu*, “inner part of the ear”; *egir-geštug*, *egir-geštug* = *warqat uzni*, also *kutal uzni*, “back of the ear”, see Goodnick Westenholz 2014, 292-294 and Couto-Ferreira 2009, 189-194.

<sup>6</sup> On this passage see Krebernik 1992, 75, 83 and 117 (who reads *GEŠTUG.GEŠTUG*<sup>1</sup>, translated “full of understanding (?)”, and discusses *gizzal* (*NU<sub>11</sub>.AN.ZAL*) of Abu Salabikh, thinking of *ḥassu*); Wu 2007, 81f. (who reads *geštug-geštug*<sup>1</sup> and translates “wisdom”, *hasīsum*); Bonechi 2016, 148f. (who reads *tál-geštug* and avoids forms of \**ḥss*). A further passage in *ARET* V 6, without Abu Salabikh parallel, reads (rev. III 2f.) *gú-ra-tum* <sup>4</sup>*Utu UD(-)BU dingir-dingir ti-da-ḥu-ru<sub>12</sub>* / *TIM-TIM PI-PI*, interpreted as “Šamaš the hero, ..., the gods met each other <sub>2</sub> the land listened” in Krebernik 1992, 78f., 85 and 117 (who reads *GEŠTUG.GEŠTUG*), and as “The warrior, the Sun god, radiates rays and the gods kept retreating before him. All countries listened to him” in Wu 2007, 85f. (who reads *geštug-geštug*).



geštug and interpreted as an expression corresponding to later Akkadian *pīt ḥasīsi*, *pīt uzni*, *rapša uzni* etc. or *ḥassu(m)*, “vast in intelligence, wise” or “clever, wise” (grammatically feminine). This adjective is spelled using a Sumerogram also attested in the very short section PI of the Ebla bilingual lexical list (VE 1252 and VE 1253). Because of the above-mentioned spelling PI in the *Ebla List with Body Parts*, the entry in VE 1252, PI, untranslated, is probably to be read geštug, “ear”. The equivalence in VE 1253, PI-PI = ḪAL-zu-um 2-PI, is very probably to be read tál-geštug = ḫa<sub>x</sub>-zu-um 2-geštug. The first term in the Semitic translation should be ḥassum, “wise”,<sup>7</sup> while 2-geštug may be traced back to a nominative dual \*uḏnān, “the two ears”.<sup>8</sup> In this case, VE 1253 includes two translations: “vast in intelligence (tál-geštug) = wise (ḥassum)” and “the two ears (2-PI = geštug-geštug, i.e. \*uḏnān)”. Comparable to the pair of Sumerian terms in VE 1252 and VE 1253 (i.e. PI / PI-PI) are the pairs found in the Ebla “word lists” MEE 3 53 = MEE 15 80 obv. V 8-9, i.e. PI-PI-PI / PI-PI, and MEE 15 41 rev. I’ 3’-4’, i.e. PI-PI-PI / PI. If in the latter PI is a scribal mistake for PI<PI>, these spellings may be read geštug-tál-tál / tál-geštug and possibly interpreted respectively as “great intelligence, insight” (cf. Mesopotamian géštug-dagal = *uznu rapaštu*)<sup>9</sup> and again “vast in intelligence, wise”.

From all the occurrences so far discussed, the following picture emerges: PI alone can be read geštug, meaning “ear” (probably = \*uḏnum); 2-PI can indicate the dual “the two ears” (probably = \*uḏnān); PI-PI can be read tál-geštug, meaning “vast in intelligence, wise” (= ḥassum); PI-PI-PI can be read geštug-tál-tál, meaning “great intelligence, insight”; and GIŠ-PI-TÚG can be read <sup>ges</sup>geštug<sup>tug</sup>, meaning “comprehension; wisdom” (= ḥasīsum). In other words, PI has the readings geštug and tál,<sup>10</sup> referring to the notions of ear, wisdom and width.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Krebernik 1992, 117.

<sup>8</sup> Peculiar Ebla spellings such as those in which the numeral 2 occurs before an anatomical term (e.g. see 2-gir.(DU), 2-igi, 2-geštug, 2-sag, 2-šu in Pettinato 1982, 427; Fronzaroli 2003, 298; Catagnoli, Fronzaroli 2010, 267f.; MEE 12 35 XXIII 29) deserve to be comprehensively studied.

<sup>9</sup> CAD R, pp. 161, 166.

<sup>10</sup> The syllabograms *wa*, *wi* and *wu* are of course well attested, e.g. in the Ebla spelling for the local Semitic conjunction *wa*, “and”, variant spelling *wa<sup>a</sup>* (Catagnoli 2012, 99f.).

<sup>11</sup> Further Ebla Sumerian spellings including PI – and thus relevant here – are: (a) GAR-PI, attested in the *Early Dynastic Practical Vocabulary D* MEE 3 44 (on this text see Civil 2008, 3) obv. VIII 4; a reading *nig-tál* and a meaning “width, breadth” could be suggested, but cf. *nig-PI.LAK24tenū* ak in SF 30 obv. I:11’, mentioned in Civil 2008, 58 n. 100; (b) PI.PI<sup>sar</sup> and PI-2<sup>sar</sup>, attested respectively in MEE 15 54 rev. II’ 4’ and MEE 15 26 rev. V 10, both unilingual acrographic (éš-bar-kin<sub>3</sub>) lexical lists;

With regard to the spellings that refer to “earrings”, this meaning is usually attributed to the Sumerogram GIŠ-PI-LÁ, probably to be read <sup>gis</sup>geštug-lá.<sup>12</sup> It occurs in the bilingual lexical list (VE 387) – where it is untranslated, so that its Semitic counterpart is unknown – and in administrative texts, where it is attested many times (see below). The meaning “pendants” should be attributed to another entry of the bilingual lexical list (VE 388), in which the Semitic spelling *sa-ḫa-wa-tum*, to be interpreted as a plural noun *šah(ḫa)wātum* < \*šḫw, corresponds to the Sumerogram GIŠ-PI-LÁ-KA, probably to be read <sup>gis</sup>geštug-lá-zú.<sup>13</sup> While these spellings do not occur in the Ebla administrative texts, in these documents we do find a form deriving from \*šḫw is *sa-ḫa-wa(-2)* (variant *sa-ḫa-2*), attested in connection with “bracelets”, *kulilum (gú-li-lum)*.<sup>14</sup>

One can observe that the main difference between the Ebla Sumerian spellings for “ear” and “wisdom” on the one hand and “earring” on the other is that the element -lá only occurs when earrings are meant. This latter meaning is also to be attributed to a Sumerian entry with Semitic counterpart attested in a lexical

a comparison with the plant name written GIŠ.PI.PI<sup>sar</sup> in Fara and Abu Salabikh lexical lists as SF 20 rev. IX ‘24’ // SF 22 rev. XI ‘12’; SF 58 obv. V 14 // SF 67 rev. V 10 // LAS 23 obv. VIII 9 (and cf. perhaps DUG×PI(LAK567) of SF 64 obv. II 9) may be suggested (in turn GIŠ.PI.PI<sup>sar</sup> can be compared with the Fara name of stone GIŠ.PI.PI<sup>za</sup> attested in SF 20 obv. I 11 // SF 21 obv. I 11, see Civil 1987, 149 and 153); (c) ú-PI-NAGA, attested in the bilingual lexical equivalences VE 306, VE 1432’ and EV 0430, where it is translated as *a-ri-a-tum* and *ḫa-nab(-)šu-ru<sub>12</sub>*, with probable reference to an alkaline plant, and cf. Mesopotamian denominations such as *uzun lalê* = ú-ur-tál-tál, ú-ur-tál-tál, perhaps “plantain”; unfortunately, the Ebla Semitic spellings remain uninterpreted (see Hajouz 2013, 336), but if *ḫa-nab šu-ru<sub>12</sub>* illustrates a construct state, then the *regens* could be compared with Akk. *ḫanābu(m)*, “to sprout, flourish”; (d) GIŠ.PI.LAGAB, perhaps attested in the unilingual acrographic (éš-bar-kin<sub>3</sub>) lexical list MEE 15 39 rev. VI’ 10’ (but to be collated; alternatively, to be read GIŠ.PI.TÚG’, and see below). On the other hand, to my knowledge unattested at Ebla is the name of profession or of function *lú-PI* documented in ED Lú D line 8, whose meaning remains unclear (Civil 1969, 15; Taylor 2003, §6).

<sup>12</sup> GIŠ.PI- has been read <sup>gis</sup>geštug- or geštu<sub>x</sub>- in Archi 1985, 282; 1988, 212 (geštu<sub>x</sub>(GIŠ.PI)-lá); Conti 1997, 64 and n. 4; and Waetzoldt 2001, 350 and 631 (<sup>gis</sup>geštug-lá); Fronzaroli 2003, 262 (GIŠ-geštug-lá); Sjöberg 2003, 547 (“perhaps to be read as gištu<sub>x</sub>, ‘ear’”); Lahlouh, Catagnoli 2006, 535; and Archi 2018, 261 (geštu<sub>x</sub>-lá). Cf. Pettinato 1980, 29; D’Agostino 1996, 360; Pettinato 1996, 386 (giš-PI-lá); Edzard 1981, 126; Archi, Biga 1982, 353; Biga, Milano 1984, 298 (GIŠ.PI.LÁ); Sollberger 1986, 56f. (giš-pi-lá).

<sup>13</sup> See Pettinato 1980, 29; Civil 1987, 152; Fronzaroli 1990, 118, n. 27; Sjöberg 2003, 547. Possibly to be considered here is the spelling KA-PI-LÁ of the unilingual acrographic (éš-bar-kin<sub>3</sub>) lexical lists MEE 15 27 rev. II’ 4’ and MEE 15 41 obv. I 7’, because of the presence of KA.

<sup>14</sup> See Edzard 1981, 137; Fronzaroli 1990, 118 (a dual form “šahaw-ā(n)/ ‘two pendants’”); Lahlouh, Catagnoli 2006, 576; and Archi 2018, 272 (“pendant”).

list found at Ebla, but belonging to a Mesopotamian tradition which is different from that documented at Tell Mardikh in the Ebla bilingual lexical list, because in this entry the Sumerian spelling GIŠ-PI-LÁ for “earring” does not occur. I refer here to line 18 of the *Early Dynastic Practical Vocabulary A* (i.e. geštug-lá-lá za:gin), corresponding to KUR-KUR *mu-uš-gal-lu-tum* LAK24 of the syllabic Semitic manuscript.<sup>15</sup> In turn, this entry should be related to the entries in lines 107f. of the *Early Dynastic Metal List* which, despite the fact that -lá does not occur, could indicate (because of the lexicographical context referring to objects) the “earring” and not the “ear”, i.e. LAK24<sub>vert</sub>.PI / an-LAK24<sub>vert</sub>.PI in the early Mesopotamian sources, GIŠ.TÚG.PI in that from Ebla, and giz-zil<sub>x</sub>(MI) in a later Mesopotamian source.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. EARRINGS IN THE EBLA ADMINISTRATIVE TEXTS

In the Ebla administrative texts, “earrings” (giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá) are recorded among the items suitable for gods, animals, men and women.

### 2.1. Earrings for gods

Precious earrings for cult images of deities are rather rarely recorded. Most of them decorated statues of goddesses. I can cite the following occurrences:<sup>17</sup> 2 earrings in gold, qualified by mah, among the gifts from the Ebla queen for Išhara of Zidara (<sup>d</sup>BARA.<sup>15</sup> *Zi-da-ra*<sup>ki</sup>; ARET II 8), weighing 17.5 shekels (an enormous amount); 2 earrings in silver for a divine lady (<sup>d</sup>BAD-mí; ARET XV 4), probably the wife of <sup>d</sup>NI-da-bal of *Lu-ba-an*<sup>ki</sup>,<sup>18</sup> and 2 earrings in silver for a divine lady (<sup>d</sup>BAD-mí; ARET VII 79), probably the wife of <sup>d</sup>Ra-sa-ap of <sup>d</sup>A-da-NI<sup>ki</sup>.<sup>19</sup> However, a pair of deities comprising the god <sup>d</sup>Wa-da-à-an (possibly a name of Dagan) and his wife <sup>d</sup>Ša-la-ša

also receives 4 earrings in gold, weighing 2 shekels in all (TM.75.12505).<sup>20</sup>

### 2.2. Earrings for animals

I am aware of only one mention of earrings for animals – namely “mules” – in a passage in which bronze obtained from 2 shekels of “tin” (nagga) and 14 shekels of “copper” (a-gar<sub>5</sub>-gar<sub>5</sub>) is recorded for giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá-gi<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá / BAR.AN-BAR.AN (MEE 12 36).<sup>21</sup> Two further – and peculiar – passages in which golden earrings and oxen to be purchased are mentioned together cannot refer to earrings for animals.<sup>22</sup>

### 2.3. Earrings for men

The occurrences of earrings for men, from Ebla as well as other places, are very numerous. They will be discussed in detail elsewhere, and so I will offer only a brief summary here.

Golden earrings are given to men who worked for the Ebla king and were very near to his person, such as his “royal valet” (pa<sub>4</sub>-šeš en) *Ga-à-ti* (ARET XX 5) and “barber” (šu-i) *Su-na-im* (ARET I 15). Furthermore, golden earrings are given to artists of the Ebla court. These include the “dancers” (NE-di) *Gul-/Gú-lu*, *Iš-má-ga-lu*, *Ra-ba* and the four sons of *Ga-ga*,<sup>23</sup> the “flautist” (lú-gi) *Ip-dur-NI*, and the “acrobat” (húb-ki) *Gi-li-tum* (see the relevant passages in ARET XV 30, MEE 2 12, MEE 10 29, and MEE 12 36). Further occurrences of golden earrings for men refer to several other persons, whose precise identification is often prosopographically uncertain.

In the above-mentioned cases, no clear indication as to why the earrings were given to men is reported. When an occasion occurs, it is the arrival of “news” (nig-mul-an) of various kinds at Ebla. Sometimes the news concerns members of the Ebla elite, such as a man acting as šeš-2-ib<sup>24</sup> or a woman who has given birth. In the former case, 2 earrings of gold are

<sup>15</sup> They occur respectively in *IAS* 33+ = Civil 2008 source AA obv. I:18' // *MEE* 3 44-45+ = Civil 2008 source EA, obv. I:18' // TM.75.G.10011+ = Civil 2008 source EC obv. I:18', and in *MEE* 3 61 = Civil 2008 source EB, obv. II:8. These entries are discussed in Civil 1987, 147f.; 2008, 57f. and 61 s.v. 018 and 028.

<sup>16</sup> They occur respectively in *SF* 9 rev. IV 7-8, *IAS* 14 obv. VII 4-5, *IAS* 13 obv. VI 5-6, and in *MEE* 3 26 obv. VII 5-6. See Civil 2008, 58. However, it is unclear to me whether “earring” is meant here (if so, perhaps the Ebla scribe of *MEE* 3 26 mistakenly wrote GIŠ-PI-TÚG twice – in *VE* 389 seen above corresponding to *hasisum*, “comprehension; wisdom” – in place of the current Palace G spelling for “earring”, i.e. GIŠ-PI-LÁ).

<sup>17</sup> The alleged occurrence of 10 giš<sup>15</sup>[geštug-lá] for [<sup>d</sup>BAD-mí] / <sup>d</sup>A-da in ARET XV 41 obv. XI:1-6 seems doubtful to me (cf. Pomponio 2013, 8 and 18).

<sup>18</sup> If the passage in *ARET* XV 4 obv. V:9-VI:2 is to be read: 1 sal<sup>tug</sup> 1 [...] / [...] / [<sup>d</sup>NI\*-da\*-bal\*] / [*Lu*]-ba-an<sup>ki</sup> / 1 gu-dùl<sup>tug</sup> 2 bu-di kù:babbar 1 kù-sal 1 buru<sup>mušen</sup> kù:babbar / 1 a-ba-ma-tum kù:babbar / 2 giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá kù:babbar / 4' [...] 'kù':babbar // [nig-b] a / <sup>d</sup>BAD-mí.

<sup>19</sup> Following Pomponio, Xella 1997, 119.

<sup>20</sup> This passage is quoted in Archi 1995, 1. See also Pomponio, Xella 1997, 343f.

<sup>21</sup> See Waetzoldt 2001, 444 (“2 D.-Sekl Zinn, legiert mit 14 D.-Sekl reinem Kupfer (zur Herstellung von) Ohranhängern (für die Männer?, zuständig für) die B.-Equiden”). Note that this is the only attestation of bronze earrings in the Palace G texts known to me, so that its use for decorating the ears of animals, rather than those of the men who had charge of them, seems possible.

<sup>22</sup> See *ARET* VII 40 (8 ma-na kù-gi 2-1/2 / in / 1 NI-gi-tum / zi-ru<sub>12</sub> // è / giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá-gi<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá / nig-sa<sub>10</sub> gu<sub>4</sub>-gu<sub>4</sub> / A-bu / šu-ba<sub>4</sub>-ti); *ARET* XII 107 rev. IV:4-9 (1 ma-na kù-gi 2-1/2 / tak<sub>4</sub> / lú giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá-gi<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá / lú nig-sa<sub>10</sub> gu<sub>4</sub>-gu<sub>4</sub> / al<sub>6</sub> / [x]-bù- [...] // [...]).

<sup>23</sup> In *MEE* 12 36 rev. IV:13 read 8 gín-DILMUN kù-gi / 12 giš<sup>15</sup>geštug-lá / Ra-ba / Ib-dur-NI / lú-gi / wa / 4\*(3) dumu-nita-dumu-nita / Ga-ga. Note that four sons of *Ga-ga* are mentioned in several other texts, see Catagnoti 1989, 193.

<sup>24</sup> On the Ebla šeš-2-ib see Archi 2002a.

given to 'A-NE-šu who brought the news that Ru<sub>12</sub>-zi-ma-lik, son of minister I-bi-zi-kir, acted as šeš-2-ib in Mar-tum<sup>ki</sup> (ARET VIII 527 = MEE 5 7),<sup>25</sup> and 2 golden earrings are given to Ga-du-um lú Ki-ti-ir who brought the news that the same Ru<sub>12</sub>-zi-ma-lik acted as šeš-2-ib in Ba-nu<sup>ki</sup> (ARET XX 17). In the latter case, En-na-ba-al<sub>6</sub>, an ur<sub>4</sub> who brought the news that princess Ti-iš-te-da-mu gave birth to a male child, receives from the Ebla queen 2 earrings of gold (MEE 12 36). However, almost all the news of interest to us here concerns wars, and in such cases earrings are delivered not only to those who bring the news, but also to the other (almost always high-ranking) men who are mentioned. These last occurrences will be fully discussed in a further study.

In all these records concerning earrings for men, the most interesting element in the context of the present discussion is the amount of gold. Indeed, depending on the importance of those who receive earrings and of the occasion referred to, the weight of the objects can vary considerably. Without pretension to exhaustivity, and leaving aside some unexpected occurrences, I can therefore summarize, according to the amount of gold for one pair of earrings, the available attestations as follows:

10 shekels of gold	I-bi-zi-kir
6 shekels of gold	Gi-li-tum
3 and 1/2 shekels of gold	the king (en); I-bi-zi-kir
3 shekels of gold	the king (en); A-ba-ga, Bu-ma-NI, Du-bù-ḥu- <sup>d</sup> A-da, I-bi-zi-kir, Ib-gi, Ig-su-ub-da-mu, Ra-i-zú
2 and 1/2 shekels of gold	Du-bù-ḥu- <sup>d</sup> A-da, I-bi-zi-kir, Mu-lu-wa-du, Šu-ga-du
2 shekels of gold	A-ba-ga, 'A-zi, En-na-BAD, En-na-NI, Ga-'à-ti, Gú-lu, Ib-gi, Il-ti, Ir-am <sub>6</sub> -ma-lik, I-ti- <sup>d</sup> I-lam, I-ti-ki-da-mu, Kù-nap-ḥu, Mu-lu-wa-du, Ra-ba, Ra-i-zú
1 and 1/2 shekels of gold	A-šu-ur-ma-lik, Du-bù-ḥu-ma-lik, Du-tum, Ga-du-um, Ib-gi, Ig-bù-ul-ma-lik, Iš-má-ga-lu, Rí-i-ma-lik, Zu-ba

1 shekel of gold	A-mur-da-mu, 'A-gàr, Du-bù-ḥu- <sup>d</sup> A-da, En-na-il, Il-e-i-šar, I-na-[x]-N[E'-...], Iš-al <sub>6</sub> -da-mu, Iš <sub>11</sub> -ga-um, Na-am <sub>6</sub> -ḥa-lu, Ra-i-zú, Rí-ba-[x]-'x', Rí-i-da-mu, Ru <sub>12</sub> -bí, Sag-da-mu
1/2 shekel of gold	'A-NE-šu, Du-bi-zi-kir, En-na-da-mu, Gul-lu, Il-e-i-šar, I-ti-a-gú, Na-am <sub>6</sub> -ḥa-lu, Ra-ba, Su-na-im
3 NI of gold	Ra-i-zú
2 NI of gold	dumu-nita Ir-am <sub>6</sub> -da-mu, En-na-ba-al <sub>6</sub> , En-na-bad, En-na-il

Given that at the time of the Palace G Ebla texts 1 shekel was equivalent to 7.83 g,<sup>26</sup> the weights of the pairs of golden earrings recorded in the above-mentioned passages range, disregarding the fraction of a shekel called NI, from 78.30 g (10 shekels) to 3.91 g (1/2 shekel).

#### 2.4. Earrings for women

Almost all the women who receive earrings belonged to the Ebla court. An alphabetical list of their names known to me includes: Ar-za-du, Bù-kù: babbar, Da-ba-a-du, Dag-rí-iš-da-mu, Dar-ib-da-mu, Daš-má-da-mu, Daš-zi, Du-si-gú, En-na-<sup>d</sup>Utu, Gi-mi-ni(z)a-du, I-šar-tum, I-ti-mu-ut, Kir-su-ut, Maš-gú-du, Nu-ru<sub>12</sub>-ut, Rí-i-du, Ti-a-bar-zú, Ti-a-i-šar, Ti-bù-da-mu, Tir<sub>5</sub>-kab-du-lum, Ti-iš-te-da-mu, Za-a-šè and Zú-ga-lum. The recorded occasions are mainly their weddings or funerals. In such cases, the earrings are exclusively made of gold, and their number is higher than the single pair that is usually assigned.

The weddings of these women include those of: Ar-za-du (daughter of lady En-na-<sup>d</sup>Utu), who married Zú-du, a son of the Ebla king (TM.75.G.1464: 10 earrings in gold);<sup>27</sup> Dag-rí-iš-da-mu (daughter of the Ebla king Iš<sub>11</sub>-ar-da-mu), who is supposed to have married Ul-TUM-ḥu-ḥu, prince of Nagar (TM.75.G.1250+: 8 earrings in gold);<sup>28</sup> I-ti-mu-ut (daughter of the Ebla king Ir-kab-da-mu), who married either Ru<sub>12</sub>-zi-ma-lik (probably a son of the minister Ar-ru<sub>12</sub>-LUM) or one of his sons (ARET II 31: 10 earrings in gold);<sup>29</sup> Rí-i-du (an Ebla princess, dumu-mí en), who married Ru<sub>12</sub>-zi-malik, son of Ib-du-<sup>d</sup>Aš-dar (TM.75.G.2507: 8 earrings in gold);<sup>30</sup> Ti-a-bar-zú (sister of the important man called Ip-du-lu), who

<sup>25</sup> In ARET VIII 527 = MEE 5 7 obv. XIII:16 read <2\*> <sup>gis</sup>geštug-lá.

<sup>26</sup> See Archi 1988, 212.

<sup>27</sup> See Archi 2002b, 163, n. 8.

<sup>28</sup> See Archi 2002b, 172f.

<sup>29</sup> See Archi 2002b, 162.

<sup>30</sup> See Archi 2002b, 163.

probably married a man of the family of the minister *Ib-ri-um* (TM.75.G.1679: 8 earrings in gold);<sup>31</sup> *Ti-a-i-šar* (an Ebla princess, *dumu-mí en*), who married a son of *Ir-bí*, the latter son of *I-ib-ma-lik* and brother of *Du-si-gú* mother of the Ebla king *Iš<sub>11</sub>-ar-da-mu* (TM.75.G.2507: 8 earrings in gold);<sup>32</sup> *Za-a-šè* (daughter of the minister *I-bí-zi-kir*), who married prince *Ir-à-aq-da-mu* (MEE 12 36: 8 earrings in gold; also cf. MEE 12 37: 2 earrings in gold); and *Zú-ga-lum* (probably daughter of the Ebla king *Ir-kab-da-mu*), who married the king of Haran (TM.75.G.1330 // TM.75.G.1860 = MEE 10 20: 8 earrings in gold).<sup>33</sup>

The funerals of these women include those of: *Dar-ib-da-mu* (daughter of the Ebla king *Ir-kab-da-mu* and sister of *Ti-iš-te-da-mu*, see below, who was priestess, *dam-dingir*, of the god <sup>4</sup>NI-*da-bal* of *Lu-ba-an<sup>ki</sup>*), who died a few years before the fall of Ebla (ARET XX 25: 8 earrings in gold);<sup>34</sup> *Gi-mi-ni(z)a-du* (sister of the queen *Da-bur-da-mu*, *nin-ni ma-lik-tum*, who was a priestess, *dam-dingir*, of the god <sup>4</sup>NI-*da-bal* of *Lu-ba-an<sup>ki</sup>*), who died several years before the fall of Ebla (ARET 4.19 = MEE 7 24 // TM.75.G.1860 = MEE 10 20: 10 earrings in gold);<sup>35</sup> and *Ti-iš-te-da-mu* (daughter of the Ebla king *Ir-kab-da-mu* and sister of *Dar-ib-da-mu*, see above), who died a few years before the fall of Ebla (TM.75.G.2276: 8 earrings in gold).<sup>36</sup>

Further ritual occasions mentioning precious earrings for other high-ranking women sometimes occur. Concerning the Ebla “queen” (*ma-lik-tum*), in a passage in the unpublished text TM.75.G.2462<sup>37</sup> 2 golden earrings are among the goods mentioned on the occasion of a purification rite (a:tu<sub>22</sub> *ma-lik-tum in du-ru<sup>ki</sup>*).<sup>38</sup> Concerning *Téš-zi*, probably a priestess, 8 golden earrings are recorded at the beginning of a long passage in another unpublished text, TM.75.G.2372, which ends with the mention of ritual offerings and purifications (*nídba dingir-en-ki maḥ lú a:tu<sub>22</sub>*).<sup>39</sup> Concerning a lady described as “wife” (*dam*) of *I-da-ad-mu*, 2 earrings of gold are recorded on the occasion of his “olive oil offering” (*nídba i-giš*), a political agreement (MEE 10 4).<sup>40</sup> Moreover, further

high-ranking women receive golden earrings, e.g. *Maš-gú-du*, *Kir-su-ut*, *I-šar-tum*, *Da-ba-a-du* and *Nu-ru<sub>12</sub>-ut* (*dam en*; MEE 10 20); a daughter of *Ig-ri-iš* (*dam en*, residing at *À-za-an<sup>ki</sup>*; MEE 10 20); two princesses (*dumu-mí en*, residing at *À-za-an<sup>ki</sup>*; MEE 10 29); and *Ti-bù-da-mu* (TM.75.G.10210).<sup>41</sup> Considering how the items are recorded, the rather unusual administrative passage concerning the queen of DU-*lu<sup>ki</sup>* in ARET XV 11 should be interpreted as “1+1 garments (and) 20 shekels of silver (equivalent in value to 2 golden) earrings: for the queen of DU-*lu<sup>ki</sup>*”,<sup>42</sup> probably in reference to a pair of golden earrings possibly weighing the equivalent of 20 shekels of silver, and if so weighing perhaps 4 shekels of gold.<sup>43</sup> In other passages, the “lamination” (*nišmum*, *ni-/ne-zi-mu*)<sup>44</sup> of golden earrings of elite Ebla women is recorded – e.g. see the cases concerning *Bù-kù:babbar* (*dam en*; MEE 12 37); *Dar-ib-da-mu* (daughter of king *Ir-kab-da-mu*; MEE 12 35); *Daš-má-da-mu* (probably *dam en*; ARET III 172); *Du-si-gú* (mother of king *Iš<sub>11</sub>-ar-da-mu*; MEE 2 12); *En-na-<sup>4</sup>Utu* (*dam en*; MEE 2 12); *Tir<sub>5</sub>-kab-du-lum* (*dam en*; MEE 2 49); and two princesses (*dumu-mí en*; MEE 10 29).

Interestingly, earrings for women that are made of silver, rather than gold, are sometimes recorded. This is the case with two young female valets to the queen (*dumu-mí-dumu-mí pa<sub>4</sub>-šeš ma-lik-tum*; MEE 12 36), for instance, and with five young female dancers who act as female valets to the queen (5 *dumu-mí NE-di pa<sub>4</sub>-šeš ma-lik-tum*; MEE 12 37). Clearly, these women were not members of the Ebla elite, but rather girls working for the most important elite woman (i.e. the queen), and this explains why they received earrings of a less precious metal. However, one should recall the instances, mentioned above, where silver earrings are also given to goddesses, and conversely where golden earrings are received by a male valet and a male barber of the Ebla king, as well as by male dancers of the court.

A clay statuette from Urkeš (fig. 1) can give us an idea of how the Ebla women wore their earrings.

<sup>31</sup> See Biga 2018.

<sup>32</sup> See Archi 2002b, 163 and n. 6.

<sup>33</sup> See Archi 2002b, 166-170. See also Toniatti 2010.

<sup>34</sup> See Archi 2018, 187, with literature.

<sup>35</sup> See Archi 2002b, 165f.

<sup>36</sup> See Archi 2002b, 176f. and n. 17, with literature.

<sup>37</sup> Cited in Archi 1997, 420: TM.75.G.2462 rev. XI 3–8: 2 <gin> bar<sub>6</sub>:kù 2 *ti-gi-na* 2 GIŠ.DU 2 *geštug<sub>x</sub>-lá* “tu<sub>5</sub>”:a *ma-lik-tum in Du-ru<sup>ki</sup>*.

<sup>38</sup> This and other related passages are most recently discussed in Bonechi 2017, 193f., with previous literature.

<sup>39</sup> This passage, quoted in Archi 2010, 21, has been discussed in Archi 2015, 514; and Pasquali 2016, 49ff.; see also Pasquali 2009.

<sup>40</sup> MEE 10 4 obv. VI:6-13 read 4 gin-DILMUN kù-gi / *ni-zi-mu* /

1 dib / *I-da-ad-mu* / lú *nídba i-giš* / 18 gin-DILMUN kù-gi / “2\*” <sup>giš</sup>geštug-lá / *dam-sù*.

<sup>41</sup> The passage in this unpublished text is quoted in Archi 1998, 17 (“(geštu<sub>1</sub>-lá, šu-dub, GIŠ-DU) *Ti-bu-da-mu maš-ar-tum en* ‘(jewels to) Tibu-damu (for/on the occasion of) the stele of the king’”). It is unlikely that *maš-ar-tum* identifies a priestess (cf. Michel 2014, 118-122, with literature). A woman called *Ti-bù-da-mu* is also mentioned in the unpublished text TM.75.G.2438+ quoted in Biga 2006, 30 n. 53 (1 TUG-NI.NI *Ti-bù-da-mu Û-du-ba-nu<sup>ki</sup>* pa<sub>4</sub>:šeš-mí “*Ra-sa-ap Za-NE-LUM<sup>ki</sup>*”).

<sup>42</sup> 1 TUG-NI.NI 1 gu-dùl<sup>uig</sup> / ŠÚ+ŠA kù:babbar / <sup>giš</sup>geštug-lá / *ma-lik-tum* / DU-*lu<sup>ki</sup>* (cf. Pomponio 2008, 103, “Tessili (1; 1), 20 sicli d’argento per gli orecchini della regina di NL”).

<sup>43</sup> As regards 5:1 as the commonest silver-gold exchange rate in the Palace G texts see Archi 1987, 139.

<sup>44</sup> See the literature quoted in Lahlouh, Catagnoti 2006, 568.

Found in a pit together with broken vessels dating from the fourth quarter of the 3rd millennium, it has been described by its discoverers thus: “her ears are elongated and pierced with four holes the lower of which on her right side shows her wearing double lobed earrings”.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Buccellati, Kelly-Buccellati 2000, 159.

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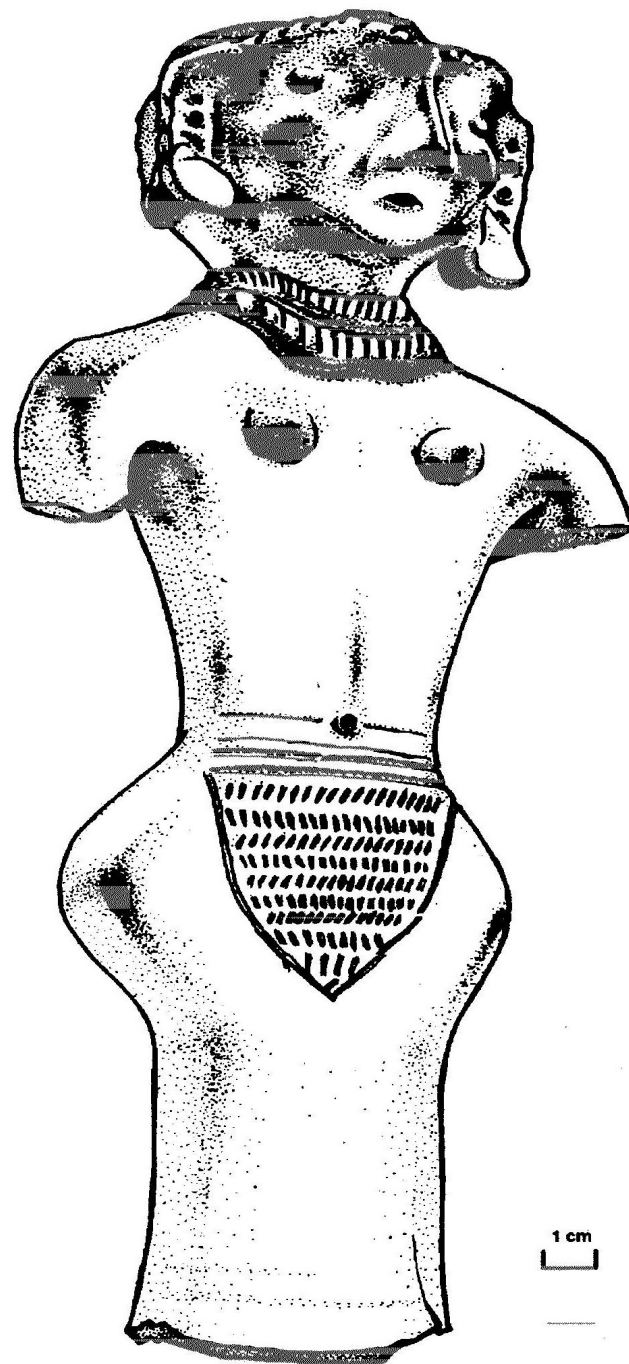


Fig. 1 Clay statuette of female figure, from Buccellati, Kelly-Buccellati 2000, 157, fig. 9.