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Scruples

Extradition in the Mari Archives

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The issue of what happened in antiquity to leaders who in troubled times found it prudent to escape their home has not been neglected in scholarly literature. Nor has scholarship ignored the counter-measures taken by those feeling threatened by the survival of potential rivals.¹ In a study offered in

¹ See David Elgavish, „Extradition of Fugitives in International Relations in the Ancient Near East,“ *Jewish Law Association Studies* 14 (2003): 33-57. The topic occasionally surfaces in discussions of treaties that include provisions for extraditing escaped slaves and criminals, as well as for controlling the movement of merchants. See K.-H. Ziegler, „Regeln für den Handelsverkehr in Staatsverträgen des Altertums,“ *The Legal History Review* 70 (2002): 55-67; Amnon Altman „On some Basic Concepts in the Law of People Seeking Refuge and Sustenance in the Ancient Near East,“ *Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 8 (2002): 323-342; Daniel C. Snell, *Flight and Freedom in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden: Brill, 2001): 86-98. Matthew W. Waters publishes „A letter from Ashurbanipal to the Elders of Elam (BM 132980),“ *JCS* 54 (2002): 79-86, regarding the extradition of Nabû-bêl-šumâti. Interesting extradition cases in Greece are discussed in Christoph Auffarth's, „Protecting Strangers: Establishing a Fundamental Value in the Religions of the Ancient Near East and Ancient Greece,“ *Numen* 39 (1992), pp. 193-216, especially 204-205 and for the Mameluke period, Ralph S. Hattox, „Qaytbay's Diplomatic Dilemma Concerning the Flight of Cem Sultan (1481-82),“ *Mameluke Studies Review* 6 (2002): 177-190. Hattox quotes (pp. 181-182) al-Zâhiri's opinion (15 c) on how to treat political refugees:

The sovereign should not allow a fugitive from a neighboring monarch to become an intimate, and should not disclose confidential matters to him, but rather should honor him and keep him at a distance.

If the fugitive comes from a monarch in a state of enmity with the sovereign, one of two possibilities is true: either the fugitive is lacking in loyalty, having not perceived the loyalty he owed to his master; or there is some deception, so that he might obtain information about the kingdom, and communicate it to the monarch he supposedly fled; perhaps, indeed, he will sow dissatisfaction among the troops.

If the fugitive comes from a monarch friendly with the sovereign, he should be kept at a distance out of concern for the sensibilities of the monarch from whom he has fled. If the fugitive has a death sentence hanging over him when he seeks refuge, the words of the commander of the faithful come forward: „Beware that you not obstruct the punishments of God.“ And if he has committed some [other, lesser] crime, and has asked forgiveness for it, it is fitting.

The issue continues to exercise legal thinkers, see „Draft Convention on Extradition,“ *Research in International Law* 29 (1935): 21-31, as well as „K.4 Committee Draft Convention on Extradition“ (<http://www.fecl.org/circular/4001.htm>).

tribute to Hermann Hunger, I review what the rich Mari archives have to say about searches for asylum and requests for extradition, dwelling in particular on reasoned arguments for resisting the surrender of refugees to their nemeses.

I open on an incident reported in ARM 26 413 by Yasim-El, Zimri-Lim's ambassador to the upper Habur. When Kukkutanum, the *rāb amurrim* (that is the general) of Asqur-Addu of Karana failed to spark a rebellion in one of his king's towns (Qattara), he fled for shelter to Atamrum of Andariq. However, a brief exchange of letters between the two kings was enough to settle his fate. Asqur-Addu wanted him extradited and Atamrum said fine; but in exchange he demanded the extradition of five men hiding in Karana.² Kukkutanum was delivered to Haqba-hammû, the king's diviner, brother-in-law, and co-star of the Rimah archives. Haqba-hammû brutally executed Kukkutanum, exhibiting his remains widely.³ The fate of the five men Atamrum collected is not known, but it could not have been rosy.

Treaties in the ages of Ebla (between Ebla and Abarsal) and Agade (between Agade and Elam) included provisions for extradition. Two Old Assyrian accords between Assur and respectively Kanesh and Hahhum include such stipulations.⁴ They are also reported to occur in a treaty between Till-abnû of Apum and Yamši-Hadnû of Kahat, found at Old Babylonian Tell Leilan (L87-1362+).⁵ While no such stipulations have so far surfaced in the Mari archives, the letters imply that they existed. Here is one illustration. According to ARM 26 368, Hammurabi of Babylon once complained to Rim-Sin of Larsa about escapees to Yamutbal, and Rim-Sin replied, „You must know that I care about life. A couple of times already I have sidetracked them to my heartland. Once I calm them down, I will have them conveyed to you“ (lines 24-27).⁶ The point Rim-Sin is making is that the oath he had taken placed him in jeopardy were he to neglect terms that include the return of escapees. Provisions guaranteeing the reverse, that is prohibiting the expulsion of the conquered, are also known. Thus when surrendering their town to Atamrum of Andariq, the people of

² On the relation between Ašlakka and Ašnakkum, see M. Guichard, „Le Šubartum occidental à l'avènement de Zimri-Lîm,“ FM 6 (2002): 137-149.

³ On Haqba-hammû in the Mari archives, see the Denis Lacambre, „L'enlèvement d'une fillette,“ FM 2 (1994): 275-284.

⁴ Cahit Günbatti, „Two treaties texts Found at Kültepe,“ pp. 249-268 in J.G. Dercksen (ed), *Assyria And Beyond: Studies Presented To Mogens Trolle Larsen* (PIHANS, 100; Leiden: The Netherlands Institute for the Near East, 2004).

⁵ For an overview see J. Eidem, „Mille et une capitales de Haute-Mésopotamie. Récentes découvertes en Syrie du nord,“ *Les Dossiers de l'Archéologie* 155 (December 1990): 50-53.

⁶ This text was originally published as ARM 2 72. Durand has recently translated it as LAPO 17 584 (pp. 218-220), offering the following for our lines: „Ne sait-tu pas que j'aime la vie? Après être allé à l'intérieur de mon pays faire une ou deux fois le tour de ces gens, je le rassurerai et les ferai revenir à toi.“

Šuhpad had him swear: „You must not trap us, kill us, or hand us over to another state“ (*la tabarrannêti, la tadukkannêti, u ana mâtim šanîtim la tanassahnêti*). In turn, Atamrum had them pledge „The agent (*šaknum*) I am placing over you: you must not trap him or kill him. You must also not bring back your previous king“ (ARM 26 409:23-33).

The men Atamrum wanted back from Asqur-Addu are labelled *bêlû arnim*, that is, „criminals,“ a general term that covered many affronts. From other letters, however, we meet with the term *keltum* or *kaltum*.⁷ A *keltum* is applied by those in power to a political rival, one whose manifest crime is to covet the throne that they themselves already occupy. The *keltum* naturally tries to bide his time in another court until fortune smiles. Often enough it does: Zimri-Lim being an excellent example of such a turnaround.⁸ As frequently, however, the rival either dies unfulfilled or our archives run out of gossip about him. The roaming that rivals are obligated to endure for survival can generate incredible tension, as sides quickly develop. We have a little exchange between Zimri-Lim and Bunu-Ištar of Kurda, in which they accuse each other of harboring rivals and of promoting their cases.⁹

⁷ Latest discussions are in D. Charpin and J.-M. Durand, „Prétendants au trône dans le Proche-Orient amorrite,“ pp. 112-113 in Dercksen, *Assyria and Beyond*, and in B. Lion, „Les familles royales et les artisans déportés à Mari en ZL 12,“ *Amurru* 3 (2004): 219-220. A fine sarcastic use of the term is in ARM 26 377:29-30.

⁸ A brief list is given in Charpin and Durand, *Assyria and Beyond*, pp. 108-109.

⁹ The extract is from a letter General Yassi-Dagan sent his brother Sammetar (a palace administrator), „Bunu-Ištar had sent (the king) as follows, ‘Yamši-malik, son of Abimadar is staying by me!’ So the king answered him, ‘What? Is it acceptable that you should ceaselessly promote my servant Yamši-malik against me as my [*ka-de-e-em*] and my rival (*kaltīya*), while I should not keep promoting against you as your rival the son of Da’irum, your servant, who now stays with me?’“ (A.1215: 40-48; Charpin and Durand, *Assyria and Beyond*, p. 100). On Sammetar and his woes, see Frans van Koppen, „Seized by Royal Order: The Households of Sammêtar and other Magnates at Mari,“ *FM* 6 (2002), pp. 27-49.

FM 6 18 is a splendid letter Sumu-lanasi writes to Zimri-Lim. Apparently for a very brief interval, he succeeded in dethroning Yumraš-El of Abi-ili, possibly his brother (A.4182 = FM 6 18; see D. Charpin „L’évocation du passé dans les lettres de Mari,“ *CRRAI* 43 [1998]), 94 n. 16, with previous literature):

5] Do you recall when in a garden you, my lord, and I, at the ruler of Carchemish we learned of his death, we consulted and discussed matters? Now the god of your father had you occupy the throne of your father. But when I reached to my father’s house, Yumraš-[El] was occupying my city. I had respect for you and did not force him off my throne.

18] Now the god [of my lord] Zimri-Lim is mighty and has set me back on the throne of my ancestors. Just as my father follows the lead of your father Yahdullim, I will follow your lead.

27] Another matter; after a series of letters, Takka of Tilla has now formed an alliance with my lord Zimri-Lim. I plan to dispatch him to Bunu-Ištar [of Kurda]. I

Take the case of Ibni-Addu as told by ambassador Yamšum.¹⁰ A king of Ta'dum thanks to Zimri-Lim, Ibni-Addu ruled a day's march from Ilašura, the seat of Haya-sumu, a more senior vassal. There was a suspicion that Ibni-Addu was keeping contacts with Haya-sumu's rivals (ARM 26 312:23'-24'); moreover, he had gained the hatred of Haya-sumu's wife (Šimatum), his vizier (Aqba-abum), and a top diplomat named Šuriya. So Haya-sumu twice forced him out of his capital Ta'dum, jailing him in podunk places such as Elali and Meškillum, and once instigating his people to assassinate him.¹¹ Still, Ibni-Addu was supported by Yamšum who proposed that Zimri-Lim detain Šuriya, then in Mari for a ceremonial obligation, until Ibni-Addu is released. Why would Ibni-Addu expose himself to such tribulations by supporting Haya-sumu's rival is not clear. Perhaps Haya-sumu is simply inventing an excuse to rid himself of Ibni-Addu, his real rival.

During the Mari age, such political machinations and twists in personal fortunes were fairly frequent, especially in the upper Habur about which we know much. There are of course risks in sheltering another king's *keltum*; but less so if the *keltum* was contesting a throne not of strategic importance to the ruler giving shelter. It helped a lot, too, if the protector's own overlord cared little who ruled a specific town as long as tribute was regular. But there can be many gains in offering asylum and in the Mari age a number of powers invested in the exile

wrote Huziri [of Hazzikkanum]. Following his refusal for peace, his land revolted in my favor. My lord should rejoice. I have therefore set my borders at Tehranum, as Yahdullim had determined for my father. As I am the same as my father, the house of my father is not *wašar*. From my district to your district there is a pasturing, so Isqa, Qaya, Ilisum, and Yarihu men are your servants, with shepherds getting angry with other shepherds.

48] You do know that I have accessed an empty house, so do not count me among the kings (*ša-ra-ni*) who now stay with you. I am your servant.

Grievance shapes this letter. Sumu-lanasi invokes a period when two men dreamt of occupying a throne their father's once held and likely promised to help each other achieve their goals. Zimri-Lim succeeded to rule Mari; but not only did he not help Sumu-lanasi, but actually supported his rival. Only an act of Zimri-Lim's god (sarcasm is palpable here) allowed Sumu-lanasi to reach the throne. The rest of the letter underscores Sumu-lanasi's virtues as vassal; but they also prove his legitimacy by displaying parallels with an older generation of leaders.

¹⁰ The story of Ibni-Addu is folded within that of Haya-sumu as reported in the dossier of Yamšum; see ARM 26 310 to 315; 319:17-22-23. See also Charpin in ARMT 26/2, p. 40.

¹¹ ARM 26 310:4-21, „Ibni-Addu went to Šehna and told Kunnam, 'Zimri-Lim has set me up as king of Ta'dum but I was removed (*issuhūninni*).' So giving him a soldier, he told him, 'Just go back to your city.' But Haya-sumu sent word to Ta'dum, 'Now, kill him!' But he was not killed there and turning back, he told Kunnam, 'I am not welcome there (*ul imgurūninni*). Since they did not welcome me, give me 1000 [weapons], equipment for 100 men'."

business; for political refugees can be hoarded, traded, or sold. When the Turukkû leader Zaziya wanted to make peace with Zazum of the Qutis, he not only delivered his (grand-)children as hostages (*ana yalûti*), but also transferred to his control the king of Šimurru, who had taken refuge with Zaziya after betraying his overlord (ARM 26 491:27-33 = 525:25-32).¹² On the one hand, to be deemed a protector of a *keltum* can add prestige, whether one is an overlord or not.¹³ On the other, delivering or even murdering problematic patrons can earn the hosts handling fees from equals, and brownie points from overlords (ARM 28 154).¹⁴ There is this astonishing confession by Bunu-Ištar of Kurda, „When a while back I lived in Zalbar, Samsi-Addu wrote the king of Zalbar for my return. Saying „fine!“ (*anumma*), the king of Zalbar (text: Zarbal) managed to substitute for me a man *made worthless*³ (1 lú *rēqam ersēm*). Aminum conveyed this man as if it was me, and Samsi-Addu killed him. So the king of Zalbar gave me life. (Since

¹² „Zaziya took his children [525:25 „grandchildren“] and led them to Zazum of Qutu as hostages (*ana yalûti ... ušāri*). He transported tribute [there]. Zaziya turned him over (*ittadinšu*) to Zazum of Qutu the king of Šimurru who (once) attended Zazum but had escaped to Zaziya.“

On hostage taking, see ARM 10 121:4-7 (= LAPO 18 1141, pp. 318-319) in which Zimri-Lim writes Šiptu, „On the same day I send you this tablet, I have received tribute from the town of Šenah. I have taken their (elders³) as hostage (*ana yalûti elqe*), and appointed a resident-agent among them...“

¹³ Itur-asdu writes Zimri-Lim (A.468, Michaël Guichard, „La malédiction de cette tablette est très dure!': Sur l'ambassade d'Itûr-Asdû à Babylone en l'an 4 de Zimri-Lim,“ *RA* 98 (2004): 25-27):

5] Asqur-Addu, who controls Andariq's throne (*bēl kussîm ša Andariq*), is now in Babylon. He came to meet with me and took up conversation with me, „Qarni-Lim [lost lines] ... My lord should have me enter Andariq among 10 men and let them (try to) kill me.“

17] Now then, if my lord favors this man, my lord should write Hammurabi to let me bring back this man, so that were he to draw attention to one side, the majesty of my lord might be recognized.

24] My lord should really question his servant Mut-hadqim (about the matter).

¹⁴ A case is illustrated by ARM 28 111. This letter to Ibal-Addu was likely harvested when Zimri-Lim took over Ašlakka. In it, Hammikun of Šuduhum writes:

4] About the man you are seeking; he won't come out of Šuduhum. The man is in my own compound (*sulhum*) and can't [escape] my control...“

... you should say, „when I was besieged in Ašlakka, Hammikun's messengers were constantly reaching me.“ So [speak to the king]. Bring Kanisanu with you so that he can petition the king in my behalf.

9] Another matter; if you are truly my brother and care for me, elders should install me on the throne of my dynasty [*ana giš.gu.za é abīya*]. A trusted officer of the king should come here with you and I will give you 300 sheep as your baksheesh (*nēbehum*).

On *nēbehum*, see FM 2, pp. 15-16; also ARM 28 122:27, 111:15', 109:9ff.; ARM 2 28.

then) I left Zalbar and now live in Kurda.¹⁵ We might note that in the process, the king of Zalbar earned credit at least three times: on accepting Bunu-Ištar, on not killing him, and on sponsoring his return to Kurda.

The prestige of a host, not to say also the size of the paid *nēbehum* (lit. „sash“; but „baksheesh“ in a transferred meaning), when a protected client obtained the coveted throne. Thus, when Ibal-Addu of Ašlakka opened his palace to the rivals of such neighbors as Zakura-abum of Zalluhan (ARM 28 53) and Yaphur-Lim of Izallu (ARM 28 115:5-32¹⁶), he gained importance as a king-maker and earned

¹⁵ A.1215:11-25; Charpin and Durand, *Assyria and Beyond*, p. 100. Veiling the fate of refugees was itself a strategy, as we learn from correspondence between Samsi-Addu and his vassal Kuwari, overviewed in Jesper Eidem and Jørgen Læssøe's *The Shemshāra Archives, 1. The Letters* (Historisk filisofiske Skrifter, 23, Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2001), 46-49. [Tablets from this volume are henceforth cited as SA1.] Without reviewing the whole dossier, I concentrate on a letter Samsi-Addu wrote Kuwari (SH 883 = SA1 16:15-31, pp. 89-90) regarding a rival named Hazip-Teššup, „It occurred to me regarding what you wrote to me, namely about having Hazip-Teššup killed. Since you mentioned his murder, let him die. Why should he live? Let him die in captivity (workshop) because he continues to write to his hometown, aiming to prompt rebellion in your own land. If any of his compatriots who are with me question me, I will act as he is still alive, saying ‘he lives, he lives. [...] we are indeed his kin.’ They will keep thinking he is still in captivity.“

SH 906 + (= SA1 17, pp. 90-91) reports on the same individuals, but it is difficult to know whether it is chronologically earlier or later. Kuwari had sent Hazip-Teššup to Samsi-Addu; but hearing that he was being well Kuwari's suspicion was aroused and Samsi-Addu was forced to write him:

3] You informed me as follows about Hazzip-Teššup, „My lord must not convey him to me; but why is his setting him up with gold rings and dressing him up in garments? Still he must not head once more to me.“ This is what you informed me via Šumahum.

8] You had not conveyed him to me to have him killed; rather you conveyed him to calm him down and then return to you. I questioned your servant who brought Hazip-Teššup here. I said, „Should I from now on detain Hazip-Teššup or send him back to Kuwari?“ Having asked your servant thus, he answered me, „In no [way should he be kept, let him calm down] and send him back. I have been instructed (by?) Kuwari, ‘Let him come back and stay with me.’“

19] This is what your servant told me. Consequently, setting him up with gold rings and dressing him up in garments, I calmed him down. I told him, „A father is not responsible for a son (*abum ana mārim ul izziz*); but your father has taken responsibility for you, having treated you as your case required. You should not be troubled at all.“

26] Having told him all this, I calmed him down, thinking, „Let him remain calm for the next 2-3 days, I will convey him.“ Yaši-[El] came here and having questioned him, he told me, „Kuwari cares for him....“ [Rest fragmentary.]

¹⁶ Yaphur-Lim writes to Zimri-Lim, his lord:

5] Are all these acts of Ibal-Addu acceptable? When my lord stayed in Nahur, I spoke there to my lord about my rival (lú *kiltiya*). My lord summoned Ibal-Addu

one of Zimri-Lim's daughters as a bride. (Ironically enough, she was the widow of the same Zakura-abum he once irritated. Need I add that the marriage failed?) Eventually, Ibal-Addu proved too manipulative for his own good, and Zimri-Lim captured then emptied Ašlakka, lock, stock, and barrel.¹⁷ What is piquant is that we have a letter (ARM 28 52) in which Ibal-Addu himself complains that despite his many requests, and those of a Zimri-Lim official as well, an apprentice scribe who joined a plot to murder him was being sheltered in neighboring Ašnakkum.¹⁸ We also learn from ARM 28 105:21'-31' that his own man is being kept alive elsewhere to testify against him.¹⁹ And thus the game kept on being played

and this is what you [sic] asked him, „Where is the man?“ Ibal-Addu answered my lord, „He is in Talhayum.“ But when my lord told Ibal-Addu, „When will this man depart?“ Ibal-Addu answered you [sic], „He will arrive tomorrow.“

18] This man is now in Ašlakka, and he keeps on telling milord lies. He has heard none of my lord's words that you have said, whether in Nahur or in Šuša. This man is now in Ašlakka and Ibal-Addu has provided him with a house, land, food (grain) and everything else. He is telling this man, „Don't worry about anyone.“ Food („bread“) is turning bitter in my mouth!

33] Another matter: This I what I told Yatar-asdu (=Itur-asdu), „Since you are staying in Nahur, representing (lit. „the body of“) my lord, why is my rival living in Ašlakka?“ Yatur-asdu answered me, „I will send troops to seize him.“ So Yatur-asdu went to Ašlakka, but my rival has audience before him and Ibal-Addu. And while he is making food and drink (for himself), Yatur-asdu will not exercise his authority (*akālam u šatām ippeš u Yatur-asdu pīšu ul eppes*[sic]). My lord should simply see what Ibal-Addu is doing and how he is providing (my) rival the stature of a major House....

¹⁷ See FM 2 72-73 (P. Marelló, „Esclaves et reines,“ pp. 115-129); Durand LAPO 18, pp. 462-479.

¹⁸ Ibal-Addu writes to Zimri-Lim:

6] Your God is showing his love to me. He gave me comprehension (he opened my ear), and the matter of these men came out. I arrested Tašbir and two elders with him. I questioned these men and I jailed an apprentice scribe. But, because he knew the jailer, this apprentice scribe escaped, entering Ašnakkum.

16] I keep writing him [the king of Ašnakkum]; but he does not reply. Your own servant Itur-asdu also wrote as much as five times about him, but he would not reply. The father [Zimri-Lim] must not know about this matter; otherwise why does he not release [*wuššurum*] my servant when I keep writing him? I have now sent him an elder. One way or another, whether there is release of him or not, just after writing (to you) this note, I plan to once more send him a letter. My lord should write toughly to him. But my lord might write him too soon; so my lord should not write him until I post my fourth note to him.

See also ARM 28 69 in which Ibal-Addu demands the release of men under Urgiš's control.

¹⁹ „Another matter; concerning Ašub-lanum about whom you wrote to me, 'This man just generates rebellions.' My lord knows that he and Ibal-Addu threaten my borders; but my lord's god (*lamassum, ilum* in 28 98:12) has protected me and I captured this

The verb concerned with releasing personnel is a generic *wuššurum*, „to let go.“²⁰ In our documents, there is a broad range of individuals whose release is demanded, but we cannot always discriminate whether in consequence they gain their freedom or, to the contrary, they are surrendered to the mercy of a third party. Certainly within the first category is the ransoming of prisoners of wars (*iptirum*, 28:97b²¹), the freeing of non-combatants (28 69:3-10; MARI 8 5-6; SA1 31-33), normally on exchange for substitutes (ARM 27 85²²; 28 173:17-33), and the release of supportive troops kept long after termination of hostility (ARM 28 77; FM 6 14:12'-17').²³ Belonging here too is the discharge

man, handing him over to Itur-asdu. I said, 'This man should be kept alive, so that he could be made to testify before my lord and Ibal-Addu.' Now, however, [I realize that] his silver, gold, and property were withdrawn before I could capture him. Among the holdings he withdrew, his estate is ... [Kupper, lit. „ses fesses sont chaudes“]. He keeps writing to Ibal-Addu, Ililim [= ? Ilulim of Hurra], Urgiš, and Šinah. This man cannot be kept alive. My lord should execute him (*lišāšū*).“

²⁰ We also find *duppurum*, with the sense of „chasing away“; but normally this verb connotes getting rid of unwanted people rather than transferring their custody; See *sub* FM 7 7 and others. *nasāhum* (often with *ana/ina*) refers to the transfer of personnel, either individually when they irritate a superior (for example ARM 26 6:9ff., 344:33-34; ARM 27 36:34-35; 108:15'-20', 109:14'-16'), or as a group (ARM 26:358:2'-6'; 27 132:17-19). The last verb often refers to removing an item (people or words) from a list.

²¹ ARM 28 97b, from Sammetar of Ašnakkum to Zimri-Lim, reads: „I have herewith sealed under my name 11 shekels of silver, conveying them to my lord. This money is for the redemption of the son of the man carrying this tablet of mine. My father should accept to release his son.“ A rich dossier on this subject is studied by P. Villard, pp. 476-505 in ARM 23 (AAM 1).

²² Zakira-hammû, the governor of Qattunan, balks at exchanging a beautiful slave-woman for an older person (ARM 27 85).

²³ Some of the troops apparently died for the cause. The letter, from Ibal-Addu of Ašlakka, evokes the earliest moment of Zimri-Lim's triumph over Yasmah-Addu, when he had just conquered Tuttul. How true they are to history is another matter. Ibal-Addu writes to Zimri-Lim:

5] *When my father* was living in Tuttul, *I sent soldiers* and my father has had them battle Išme-Dagan and then brought them down to Mari. Now that my father took control of Mari, if it is agreeable to my father, he should release them. The bodies of those who died should be buried, but my father should entrust those alive to [...] and to captain Abi-esar. The men I had sent to my father *are just as if they are me* (*kīma pagriya*). But my lord should write me if any other person under *his* control is *duplicious* against my father; I would myself release him. Because of these (acts), my father should do me a favor and release them rather than keeping them.

26] Another matter; my father has overcome his enemy and took over the throne of his ancestors. But as yet I have not taken over the throne of my ancestors. I remain an ordinary citizen (*muškēnēku*); so my father should accord to me whatever he could spare. In my own land, there are many officers of my father...

of messengers and their escorts (more likely „handlers“) in transit after suspicious allies force them to accept their hospitality;²⁴ the release of caravans for

²⁴ See LAPO 16 376 [A.2983], 378 [ARM 2 128: 17-31], 401 [A.2931], as well as ARM 26 353:23-31 (likely here), 372:32-36, 521:30-37, and A.2776 (MARI 8 [1997], p. 383:10-20: Samsi-Addu to Yasmah-Addu, „Set up patrols for seizing and confining to workshops messengers or merchants traveling without requesting permission“). The circumstance is not unique to the Mari archives; see, at Shemshāra, SA1 1:66-67 (pp. 70-71), 2:43-47 (pp. 72-73), and 4:26-29 (p. 76).

A particularly sad case is presented in LAPO 16 326 [= ARM 5 38]. The subject is handled in a general fashion by David Elgavish who cites hardly much Mari material „Did Diplomatic Immunity Exist in the Ancient Near East?“, *Journal of the History of International Law* 2(2002): 73-90. A variation exists in which allies or suzerains of the power that is holding messengers will demand that they be forwarded to them for debriefing. The king of Ešnunna, for example, repeatedly asks Zimri-Lim to forward messengers from Ekallatum, A.1289+ = LAPO 16 281:iii:38-51; full study in D. Charpin, „Un traité entre Zimri-Lim de Mari et Ibâl-pî-El II d'Ešnunna,“ pp. 161-163 in D. Charpin and F. Joannès (eds), *Marchands, Diplomates et Empereurs. Études sur la civilisation mésopotamienne offertes à Paul Garelli* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1991).

There is an exchange of letters that illustrates the deep suspicion between rulers, even when nominally allies. Zimri-Lim prepares for war with mighty Ešnunna and the last thing he would want to face is Qatna in alliance with his enemy. (We are somewhere around ZI2'). So he writes to discourage contacts between the two sides, but also to buy time before the two powers meet. (See for similar tactics ARM 26 383, in which Hammurabi stops Qatna messengers heading to Larsa). A copy of the initial letter (ARM 26 25) is embedded (after a dividing line) in a missive to Zimri-Lim wrote Asqudum who is being entrusted to argue Mari's case to Amut-pi-El. It reads:

3] According to what you wrote to me, the month of Kinūnum (vii) is about to end, but at the start/end (*ina rēš* applies to either end) of Dagan (viii), the army will march and will proceed upstream to meet you. As for you, don't in any way delay the plans as agreed. Just now, I am having a copy made of a letter I have sent to Amut-pi-El and sending it to you. Listen to it and have Amut-pi-El pay attention to this matter.

12] Tell Amut-pi-El, thus says Zimri-Lim, your brother:

The messenger you have sent to Ešnunna and about whom you wrote me as follows, „Assign protectors for him that will take him safely to Ešnunna.“ This is what you wrote. I have kept this messenger with me for, as the adage has it, „[a number of lines are unfortunately missing]“

26] „... you would be sending this man ... into the fire.“ He [the king of Ešnunna] has thoroughly frightened those messengers of Yarim-Lim who came here, saying, „Why did he not give me the *urnû* wood that I asked of him?“ He treated them as must not be done. For this reason, I have kept your messenger and have promptly sent you a full report. Now then, send me a full report whatever your decision as suits your consultation. Until an answer to my letter reaches me, I am keeping your messenger with me.

lack of reason (ARM 27 65); the return of women on proof of their marriage to non-belligerents (28 150²⁵; 173:5-16); and the release of foolish young men escaping home (ARM 28 90²⁶). But we must certainly treat as extradition the

38] Another matter: You are invited to the „cadavers of Dagan“ sacrifices and those for Ištar. Come.

You will notice how obvious Zimri-Lim's tactics are. Turning the king of Ešnunna into an ogre is a good beginning. It is too bad that we do not (yet) have the text of the adage; as such insertions invariably mean to sharpen observation even as it conveys folksiness and bonhomie. The willingness to abide by Amut-pi-El's decision is another effort for ingratiation, as is the invitation to come to the festivals. (Zimri-Lim knows that Amut-pi-El would not come, as these events would have taken place within weeks of the invitation.)

ARM 28 14 is Amut-pi-El's answer and it reveals that he is not at all taken by Zimri-Lim's solicitation. He writes to his „brother“:

5] You wrote me the following about the messenger I sent to the king of Ešnunna, „I have kept him with me; your previous messenger was killed. Should we cast this one too into the fire?“ This is what you wrote.

14] What have I done to the king of Ešnunna and how did I offend him? What have I taken from him? Following your statement, I conferred with my servants: his mission is fine. If he is to live, let them keep him alive. But if he is to die, let them kill him. He would be giving himself for his land and people. Let any other king who would send his messenger to Ešnunna learn from my example. As for you, send your messenger along mine, to lead him safely to Ešnunna. By these acts, I shall experience you as brother and friend.

Displaying impatience, Amut-pi-El gives a shortened version of Zimri-Lim's message. (It is really too bad we do not have the original message; we'd like to know more about the alleged death of a previous messenger.) The king of Qatna turns dramatic. Messengers take their chances when they are sent on errands. If they are killed, then would they not be sacrificing their all to their homeland? They would have, at the least, earned the gratitude of other kings who would recognize in their ordeal evidence of the crudeness of Ešnunna. The last line, about experiencing Zimri-Lim's cordiality, is pure sarcasm.

²⁵ From Turumnatki of Apum to his „father“:

4] Tišpak-ili, who now lives in Ašnakkum, has taken at Qirdahat the wife and children of your servant Apil-Sin, when my father expelled the population of Qirdahat. Now Tišpak-ili has left for his town, but my father is holding the wife and the children (having told him), „You must not convey to your town the man's wife and her children; her husband lives (here).“ So my father is holding them.

19] Now then, my father should entrust them to my messengers. [Apil-Sin], your servant is vexing me.

²⁶ Haya-sumu (of Ilašura) to Sammetar (Mari palace majordomo) (Kupper gives a slightly different rendering):

4] A young man from Hummala is now serving me; but he got angry with his father and just run off to Mari. While I myself was (in Hummala), I informed his father and he was set to go the land (Mari); but you have taken hold of him (the son) and had him confined to a workshop. Yet in Sankartum (Saggaratum) you

requested expulsion of *munnabtû*: deserters and defectors, sometimes comprising entire families (ARM 5 41 = LAPO 18 1035, pp. 206-207).²⁷ Here too we may place the return of officials who had escaped (ARM 26 412:70-74), sometimes with state secrets (ARM 28 163).²⁸ Not yet fully understood (at least by me) is the status of *hābirû*, in Mari uprooted folks who have not yet gained political protection.²⁹ Occasionally, however, we find a vassal leaving to a suzerain a decision of criminals who had escaped his authority.³⁰

Much more precise in its connotation is *šūšûm*, a verb that can mean „to expel,“ but in many contexts, „to deport“ or „to extradite.“³¹ When Larsa fell to Babylon and Mari forces, Rim-Sin's family and belongings were transferred

once answered me, „Your servant should come along with me and I will release the young man.“ So please release this young man; just don't detain him, so that his father will not bother me here.

²⁷ See also the dossier Durand has compiled in LAPO 17, 325-329; LAPO 18, pp. 205-210; ARM 26 79; ARM 27 61, 68. In general, see Giorgio Buccellati, „*Apirû* and *Munnabtûtu* The Stateless of the First Cosmopolitan Age,“ *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 36 (1977): 145-147. The same problem crops up in the Shemshara tablets, see SA1 13, 15 AbB 13 10 gives the impression that Larsa deserters came under the legal jurisdiction of Emutbal, where they have taken refuge.

²⁸ Bunu-Ištar of Kurda writes Zimri-Lim who is not characterized as lord, father, brother, or friend, „My private secretary Šarrum-andulli, and my servant Zakura-abum, have managed to run-away. I have heard that these men are living in Mari. Now if you truly want to deal fairly with me, turn these men back to me. These men are my servants; don't hold them back.“ ARM 27 71 reports on a messenger from Kurda who once revealed the contents of his king's tablet to a potential enemy. It turns out that the king of Kurda had enough doubts about his servants that he handed the tablets to Babylonian couriers.

²⁹ Terru of Ugiš laments that „I have left the comfort of my home and heading toward Šinah, for emigration“ (*ana Šinah ana hābirūtīm attaş*). See *hābirum* LAPO 16, p. 463; 17, pp. 76, 374-375, 419-420; 18, pp. 205-206. In the Mari archives the term for mercenary armies seems to be *habbātum*, see ARM 28 40:8'-9' and Kupper's note on it. Durand has argued that they are „gitans“ in LAPO 17 456, pp. 29-31, 419-420. Earlier, he proposed they were itinerant workers (CRRAI 38, p. 106).

³⁰ Such a case is reported in ARM 27 69 (= ARM 2 79 = LAPO 18 1058, pp. 232-233) in which two shepherds are accused of stealing sheep belonging to Qarni-Lim of Andariq (Yamutbal). Qarni-Lim wants Zakira-hammû, governor of Qattunan, to send them to be judged by his „brother,“ presumably Zimri-Lim even if he should be addressed as „father.“ Zakira-hammû gives Qarni-Lim an equivocal answer. ARM 27 70 picks up on the issue after Zakira-hammû contacted his king and received permission to look into the matter. By then one of the accused had escaped to Kurda and the other denied everything. Saying that the matter was not within his jurisdiction, Zakira-hammû leaves the matter to Ibal-pi-El, the *merhûm*. It looks like this is another case without clear resolution.

³¹ See ARM 26 372:27-34 and A.442:7-8, cited there on p. 182.

(*ušēšûnimma*) to Babylon (ARM 27 158). A fine, if misunderstood illustration of its use occurs in FM 2 128:5-24. A vassal (Huziri of Hazzikkanum) writes colloquially to Zimri-Lim about Akin-amur, a rival of his who is being protected by Kabiya of Kahat:

4] Your servants had no sooner landed at the gate of Kahat – at Kabiya –, that they said, „This man Akin-Amur, you did not extradite (him) (*ula tušēši*)! You should have convicted and extradited him (*tubahhir tušēši*), just (as you did it) for Asqur-Addu, Iniš-ulme, and Naram-Sin regarding the fault of Haya-abum. Now then, if you do not extradite this man, he is your responsibility. My lord must therefore consider the opinion of his servants because Kabiya had said, „a tablet from my lord’s tablet should come to Kabiya!“ My lord should not keep silent about these matters

A fair number of cases involving extradition are embedded in the reports of diplomats. These careerists rarely argue with their king the propriety of going after a targeted refugee, so fuller context for such cases is available only when matters are carried over a number of letters.³² Because, as we shall soon see, the Mari archives only obliquely suggest the existence of asylum as an institution that is authorized by law or tradition and honored by the rulers of the period, we depend on a few letters to highlight the scruples that rulers may have had when asked to surrender those seeking their shelter.³³ In some cases, the excuse is perfunctory and suspiciously self-serving. For example, ambassador Yasim-El reports on a request Zimri-Lim had made of his vassal Atamrum of Andariq. He was asked either to convey to Mari two „criminals“ or simply to hand them over to Yasim-El for execution.³⁴ Atamrum, as fiercely an ambitious a ruler as we find in our documents, replies (ARM 26 408:45-50) „Why is my brother (Zimri-Lim) concerned about these men? (These) two criminals (*bēlū arnim*), is there not a large army that has *merged* with them? Were I to hand them over to my brother, a large contingent of men could leave my command, thus turning the opinion of my subjects against me.“ Zimri-Lim must have

³² For example, rather than justifying Ibni-Addu’s release, Yamšum draws on mythological language in claiming that in consequence of Ibni-Addu’s jailing, „Idamaras in its entirety is dead and not alive“ (26 312:32’-33’).

³³ J. C. Greenfield, „Asylum at Aleppo: A Note on Sfire III, 4-7,“ pp. 272-278 in *Eretz-Israel* 27 (= *Tadmor Volume*, 1991): 272-278.

³⁴ Like those of many rulers of the period, Atamrum’s rise and fall at Andariq occurred within a very limited interval (ZL 9’-11’) and included the same range of brutality. His rule was as cruel as most. Beginning as a prince in Allahad, Atamrum lost his throne before staging a comeback there. He assassinates Qarni-Lim even as the latter and his family were escaping to Mari for safety; see „Une décollation mystérieuse,“ NABU 1994/59:51-52. But during his moment in the sun, Atamrum carried a lot weight, with major powers, Elam, Mari, Ekallatum, and Babylon, competing for his favor.

flipped his lid when he received this note, not just because he was frustrated in what he wished done, but also because Atamrum had the *chutzpah* of calling him „brother,“ implying power parity.³⁵

There are, however, two interesting instances where detailed or multiple arguments buttress a refusal to extradite refugees. As it happen they both involve Zimri-Lim and Yarim-Lim of Yamhad, with its capital at Aleppo. Aside from the bonds that were established when Šiptu, Yarim-Lim's daughter, came to be Zimri-Lim's trophy wife (he married her after taking Mari's throne), the two forged many links, with Yarim-Lim acting as a senior partner rather than an overlord. One of these incidents is known to us from a single letter Zimri-Lim wrote to his father-in-law.³⁶ It opens by quoting Yarim-Lim as alerting Zimri-

³⁵ It is possible that Atamrum was being clever, giving the impression that „brother“ addressed Yasim-El. From ARM 26 328:63, we know that Atamrum and Zimri-Lim had committed to each other by oath.

³⁶ Durand published a transliteration of the text, TH 72.16, in „La Cité-État d'Imâr à l'époque des rois de Mari,“ MARI 6 (1990): 63-65. Earlier studies on this text are those of A. Malamat, „Silver, Gold and Precious Stones from Hazor.' Trade and Trouble in a New Mari Document,“ *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33 (1982): 71-79 and „Silver, Gold and Precious Stones from Hazor' in a New Mari Document,“ *Biblical Archaeologist* 46 (1983): 169-174. On pp. 173-174 of his 1983 article, Malamat offered a reconstruction that centers Zimri-Lim as the victim of the affair; but he leaves uncopied the better part of the reverse. Here is the full text in translation:

5] You have written the following about a smith, „This man has taken from Hazor silver, gold, and a fine (precious) stone and has headed toward you. The people of Hazor are holding back the donkeys and personnel that are on a trade mission, saying, 'The smith has taken silver, gold, and a fine (precious) stone and has gone toward Zimri-Lim.'“ This is what you wrote me.

15] This man has not brought anything at all toward me, be it silver, gold, or a fine (precious) stone. This man was seized and humiliated in Emar. They relieved him of all that was transported and even took away from him the document (proving) that this man paid for what he purchased. [Or: „even took away from him the seal that this man had bought“ [(Durand); *kunukkam ša ana kaspim awilum šū išāmu itbalūšu.*] In fact, it was to save his life that this man ran toward me.

26] My father has written me about this man, about returning a man who, like a trembling bird ahead of a falcon, had come to me. Is this a man I should release? If I release this man, afterwards any one who hears will he seek shelter as if with an interceding deity?

35] If it pleases my father, my father should not request this man. This man's possession, whatever he took away from Hazor, is now kept in Emar. My father should write to Emar for the man's belonging to be taken to the [disposal?] of my father.

A.2976+A.3820 (D. Charpin, „Sapîratum, ville du Suhûm,“ MARI 8 [1996]: 347-351) is a fine letter in which a certain Lahamum argues the case for abandoning one's land without betraying one's lord. The fawning tone is worth noticing, suggesting a person

Lim about a smith who had stolen precious objects from a Hazor caravan and had gone to Mari. As a result, the caravan simply refused to proceed until the matter was resolved. Zimri-Lim first denies that any precious material was brought to him, and absolves the man (and himself for that matter) from the crime. But Zimri-Lim goes further. The smith was himself the victim. In Emar, the scene of the incident, he was seized and robbed of a personal seal he had purchased. In heading toward Mari, Zimri-Lim asserts, the smith sought only to save his own life.

Thus far, Zimri-Lim is arguing innocence and victimization. But then he waxes eloquent, „My father has written me about this man, about returning a man who, *like* a trembling bird ahead of a falcon, had come to me.³⁷ Is this a man I should release?“ The argument here is humanitarian, with a fine avian simile that tells it all: Would decent people not want to shelter the guiltless and the oppressed? The point is taken in still another direction when, in a line

fearing punishment. Moreover, the haste with which he departed cast suspicion on his explanation:

3] Previously, when I came before my lord and kissed his foot, my lord treated me right. Later, I resolved to go to my kinfolk to Suhum. My younger brother Meptum is now spreading such unacceptable suggestions that this man is risking removing the entire Suhum from my lord's control. He has coveted my house and sheep and for a couple of months now is setting guards to watch me. So I became anxious and thought, „This man will rob me unjustly. I ought to go back to Ešnunna and bring back my servants who are there now and live in Sapiratum until my lord on coming (here) forces a division of his territory.“

19] When I was making plans to leave, I left all my sheep, my people, and my belongings with my kinfolk and did not take them along here. I certainly did not run to any (other) king. It was because of my sons – about whose sake I was most concerned and (because) this man has robbed me that I resolved to depart his presence.

30] When I departed, I left behind 1,300 sheep, perhaps 200 of which he gave to my lord. All these 1,300 sheep are now lost ahead of my lord's (coming). It would be very good if my lord took these 1,300 sheep; but if otherwise and my lord had not taken these sheep, my lord should question the shepherds and Laplulu's son whether he [Meptum] took the sheep and did not show (them) to my lord. My lord should take into account these sheep, so that they can be brought up (to him). If it suits my lord, let him promptly [dispatch] servant; if not let him do what he wishes.

47] I am now sending my sending your servant to you. As for me, leading my two sons, my lord's servants, I will come to my lord to kiss my lord's feet. I will set before my lord my whole story, (including) my troubles. Now I am just writing to my lord: This man has moved the whole of Suhum out from my lord's control. My lord should know. This man's tablets keep coming here....

³⁷ In line 28 *e[m]* is difficult in all sorts of ways, including spelling (normally *e-em* in Mari]. Maybe we need to find something like *ki-ma*. In 31 and 35, perhaps we are dealing with the verb *katāmum* with a different theme vowel than normal.

that is unfortunately badly preserved, Zimri-Lim seems to evoke the issue of prestige: What will happen if folks hear about him extraditing such a person?

So we now have: Justice, humanity, (im)propriety, each and all fine reasons for resisting extradition. We might notice that there is no appeal to treaties, oaths, legal precedence or the like. Yet there is more to the letter. Zimri-Lim concludes, „If it pleases my father, my father should not request this man. This man’s possession, whatever he took away from Hazor, *is now kept in Emar*. My father should write to Emar for the man’s belongings to be taken to the [*disposal*’] of my father.“ So now Zimri-Lim is appealing to greed; why should Yarim-Lim bother with this smith’s return if he gets to keep whatever he once possessed? But in making this offer, is Zimri-Lim in fact not admitting to this refugee’s guilt? Is he acknowledging that the story he heard from the smith, may not at all be true? The matter is ambiguous. If the smith had been robbed in Emar, what is there now of his to collect in Emar? And why would those who dispossessed the smith be ready to hand over to the king of Yamhad what was taken from Hazor?

Admittedly these are difficult issues to resolve. But our biggest challenge to reconstructing matters is simply that this letter may never have been posted, since it was found in Mari. True, it is just one tablet among a dozen destined for foreign rulers that Zimri-Lim authored and therefore should have been found at their destination rather than in Mari; but while others can be explained as the *brouillon* for mass mailings to diverse allies, this one is more challenging to so justify.³⁸ But if this letter remained in Mari, did Zimri-Lim

³⁸ Zimri-Lim’s allies often quote statements he has mailed them without us ever finding copies of their originals, thus suggesting that copies of posted tablets were not normally kept by the Mari chancellery. Here is a list of letters Zimri-Lim wrote to royalties (or their spouses) that were found in the Mari archives (see LAPO 16, pp. 383-398; M. Guichard, „Les relations diplomatiques entre Ibal-pi-El et Zimri-Lim: Deux étapes vers la discorde,“ RA 96 (2002): 117):

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ARM 28 16 [LAPO 18 857] | To Yarim-Lim of Yamhad – wants grain to be released for Mari |
| TH 72.16 [LAPO 16 248] | To Yarim-Lim of Yamhad – theft from Hazor merchants |
| ARM 10 139 [LAPO 18 1191] | To Gašera, Queen of Yarim-Lim – not to deliver concubine |
| ARM 28 17 | To Hammurabi of Yamhad – about sending him timber |
| M.6242 [RA 96 111-113] | To Ibal-pi-El of Ešnunna – attacking Babylon! (conjectured attribution) |
| ARM 28 2 | To Hammurabi of Babylon – about an alliance against Elam |
| M.14233b | To Hammurabi of Babylon (unpublished) |
| ARM 28 11 [LAPO 16 250] | To Hammurabi of Babylon – about needed Yamhad troops |

have cold feet and decide to send the smith back instead of the letter? Or did it occur to him that the matter was not worth the bother of a diplomatic fuss and so never gave Yarim-Lim an answer? It is too bad that we cannot place a date on this incident, for it would have been a perfect match for another extradition episode, albeit with more weighty circumstances; this time, however, the circumstances are the reverse. Zimri-Lim demands while Yarim-Lim demurs.

Within months after capturing Mari's throne, all but one (Dadi-hadun of the Rabbû) leader of the Yaminite confederation, which once helped him gain power, launched against him a war that lasted a full year.³⁹ (In fact it was the first of two such wars.) Zimri-Lim's triumph over them is recalled in an expanded version of one of his early year-names (ZL 2'): „Year in which Zimri-Lim defeated the Yaminites at Saggatum, overcoming their kings.“⁴⁰ But four of the rulers he had crushed escaped west: His brother-in-law Sumu-Dabi (a Yahrurû of Mišlan), Hardum (an Amnanû), Samsi-Addu (an

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ARM 28 12 [LAPO 17 567] | To Hammurabi of Babylon – about Yamhad troops |
| ARM 28 13 [LAPO 17 575] | To Hammurabi of Babylon – about harvest and about troops |
| ARM 28 15 | To Amut-pi-El of Qatna – about sending troops to Qatna |
| ARM 28 131 [LAPO 17 632] | To Kabiya of Kahat – about not despoiling a conquered area |
| ARM 28 148 | To Abi-samar and Ikšud-lašēmēšu – about return to ancestral land |
| TH 72.15 [LAPO 16 247] | To Tiš-ulme adapted version of ARM 28 148 |
| ARM 28 149 | To Turum-natki of Apum – about no longer asking for troops |
| TH 72.17 | To Yarim-šakim of [?]; Birot, <i>Syria</i> 50 (1973): 9 n. 3; FM 2, 58 n. 6 (unpublished). |
| M.10743 | To Aplahanda of Carchemish; Guichard RA 96 (2002): 117 (unpublished) |
| ARM 10 140 [LAPO 18 1184] | To Liqum, Queen of Burundum – pact with King Adal-šenni [see MARI 8, p. 455; Liqum is Zimri-Lim's sister] |
| ARM 26 191 | To ^d Narum [would normally go to Hit, where Narum is the deity]. |

There are plenty of letters that Zimri-Lim wrote to Mari administrators and to members of his family and it is naturally that they should be found there. Letters from Zimri-Lim have been found in the Rimah archives (OBTR 1-3; in Stephanie Dalley *et al.* (eds), *The Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell Al Rimah*, London: British School in Iraq, 1976).

³⁹ Charpin and Ziegler (FM 5, p. 190) suggest that Zimri-Lim tried to stop the Yaminites and Ešnunna from making common cause. There is also reason to believe that Zimri-Lim expected the Yaminites to be subservient when they felt themselves equal.

⁴⁰ This is an expanded form of the normal year-name and it occurs in ARM 21 128; see Charpin and Ziegler FM 5, pp. 190-191.

Ubrabû of Samanum), and Yaggih-Lim (a Yarihû).⁴¹ A correspondent, whose name is now lost, alerted Zimri-Lim that Samsi-Addu and Yaggih-Lim were in Emar (ARM 2 14 = LAPO 17 689, pp. 432-433). To flush them out, the king sent on a mission to Aleppo Dariš-libur, keeper of the royal wardrobe – so an intimate of the king.⁴² Zimri-Lim was still in negotiation about marrying Šiptu, so matters were delicate.

In FM 7, Durand has published three reports that Dariš-libur filed while on the mission. Naturally there is an issue of their sequence; still it is useful to set FM 7 7 and 7 8 in parallel columns:

FM 7 7

3] On the seventh day of my entering Halab, I said the following to Yarim-Lim, „May my lord give me an answer so that I can leave,“ This is what I told him.

FM 7 8

3] I have heard the tablet meant for Yarim-Lim that my lord sent me. I gave precise account of what my lord's position, as was written on the tablet, before Yarim-Lim and Aplahadda [of Carchemish]. My lord should hear their replies about the men. Once I gave Yarim-Lim a detailed account of my lord's words, he answered me,

12] „Zimri-Lim has ousted his enemy, but now his requests are tough. When *Sumu-epuh*, my father, feared God, he achieved [his goal]. No other king matched him. When he [coveted] that which [Addu?] gave Samsi-Addu, my father Sumu-epuh did not enjoy old age. Because he attacked the land of [...] that [Addu] gave Samsi-Addu, Addu had him killed. As of now, however, Addu has not been angry at me.“ This is what he answered me.

24] At his second response, he answered me, „Zimri-Lim must have clearly forgotten the lesson (*tēm*, Durand: „will“) of Addu, to the point that Zimri-Lim might not realize that in Addu's territory fugitives (*munabtu*) are not to be handed into custody. Else, could he be writing the following, „Capture these men in your heartland; they must not stay“? This is his second reply.

⁴¹ So leaders of each Yaminite sub-tribe but the Rabbûs (led by Dadi-hadun).

⁴² This, rather than a hypothetical Yamhad origin (Durand FM 7, pp. 15-16), might explain his choice for the mission.

7] *The next day, he summoned me and told me the following, „These kings are not now in my land. If they were in my land and I kept them from Zimri-Lim, may Addu, lord of Halab, convict Yarim-Lim. From now on – be it one, two, or even ten years – should they enter my land, I shall bind them and turn them back to Zimri-Lim. These kings are not within my dominion (dadmûm).“ This is what he answered me.*

24] But I argued back, „Is the *entire* dominion and Emar as well not yours, your own land? Certainly my lord [Yarim-Lim] is withholding these men.“ This is what I told him.

30] So he summoned the elders of Emar and gave them the following order, „The Yaminu kings ought not stay in Emar. Expel them (*šūšēšunūti*)! From now on, they must not remain here. Should these men try again to enter Emar, Zimri-Lim and I will war against you.“

40] This is what he said to them, and they answered, „We will expel (*nušēši*⁴³) them. From now on, they can never enter Emar.“ This is what they answered him.

46] Regarding Yaggih-Addu and Samsi-Addu who are in Carchemish, Aplahandu is coming to Halab, and matters will be resolved. I will send my lord whatever news he gives me in answer.

34] *The third time, his answer, „Had these men been in my land and I kept them from Zimri-Lim, right then (ina ūmīšu), Zimri-Lim would have cause to be peeved at me. From now on – be it one, two, or even ten years – should these men once again enter (lishurūnim līrubūnim) my land and my kingdom, I shall bind them and have them brought to Zimri-Lim. Should I not fulfill this promise to Zimri-Lim, may Addu, lord of Halab convict Yarim-Lim.“ This is what he answered me.*

50] He wrote to Amutpila [of Qatna] as follows, „Samsi-Addu, enemy of Zimri-Lim, is making his way towards you. You must expel this man from your land; he must not stay there.“

55] About Yaggih-Addu, he took up the matter with Aplahanda, in terms of instructions of my lord of which I reminded him, hearing my lips: „One day or another, this man will cause you grief.“ Exactly what I have told Yarim-Lim, Yarim-Lim told him. Aplahanda answered him ... [a few lines missing].

FM 7 7 is written as if it depended on a previous note; but it does contain a fairly clear response. It reads:

3] On the seventh day of my entering Halab, I said the following to Yarim-Lim, „May my lord give me an answer so that I can leave,“ This is what I told him.

⁴³ *nu-še-ši* occasionally needs to be treated as an imperfect; see ARM 26 140:38.

7] The next day, he summoned me and told me the following, „These kings are not now in my land. If they were in my land and I kept them from Zimri-Lim, may Addu, lord of Halab, convict Yarim-Lim. From now on, be it one, two, or even ten years – should they enter my land, I will catch them and turn them back to Zimri-Lim. These kings are not within my dominion (*dadmûm*).“ This is what he answered me.

This is as categorical denial as they come. But Dariš-libur was not born yesterday and his report continues:

24] But I argued back, „Is the *entire* dominion, and Emar as well, not yours, your own land? Certainly my lord [Yarim-Lim] is withholding these men.“ This is what I told him.

30] So he summoned the elders of Emar and gave them the following order, „The Yaminû kings ought not to stay in Emar. Expel them (*šūšêšunūti*)! From now on, they must not remain here. Should these men try again to enter Emar, Zimri-Lim and I will war against you.“ This is what he said to them, and they answered, „We will expel them. From now on, they can never enter Emar.“ This is what they answered him.

Ostensibly, Dariš-libur got his way, maneuvering Yarim-Lim into forcing Emar to deal with the issue. Yet in pledging to *šūšûm* the kings, Emar was expelling rather than extraditing them. The city, therefore, was not handing them over to Zimri-Lim. This interpretation is obvious since the Yaminite leaders would never have been in a position to re-enter Emar had Zimri-Lim taken hold of them.

In closing this letter, Dariš-libur reports that Yaggih-Addu and Samsi-Addu are now in Carchemish.⁴⁴ Luckily, he adds, its king, Aplahanda, was about to come to Halab and he – Dariš-libur – planned to pressure him into doing the right thing. This little coda should be kept in mind as we turn to FM 7 8, by far the most interesting document on the matter.

Although the text opens with the normal heading we find in letters („Tell my lord, so says Dariš-libur, your servant“) in fact, it reads like a memorandum on a series of meetings Dariš-libur had had in Aleppo. Three lines across the tablet break its message into four distinct portions, three of them citing discreet comments by Yarim-Lim and the last reporting on actions he is taking.⁴⁵ Let's first notice that in this compilation the gist of Yarim-Lim's statement on the absence of Yaminite fugitives from Yamhad, which was featured in FM 7 7, is

⁴⁴ (lines 46-58): „Regarding Yaggih-Addu and Samsi-Addu who are in Carkemish, Aplahandu is coming to Halab, and matters will be resolved. I will send my lord whatever news he gives me in answer.“

⁴⁵ The printed version of the text shows only three segments. The photo, however, shows another line drawn just below l. 33. It may well be that Dāriš-libūr wrote his own missives as his position may have required him to use stylus and clay.

now set as the king's third and final discourse (lines 34-49). In this setting, however, Yarim-Lim's categorical denial of the refugee's presence in Aleppo is toned down and the interview with the Emar elders is simply no longer there, probably because the issue had become moot by the time Dariš-libur posted this memorandum. But we notice that Dariš-libur has muddled the chronology: Aplahanda of Carchemish is now in Halab at all times when, according to the earlier letter, he did not arrive to Halab until *after* Yarim-Lim issued his unqualified disclaimer. It is difficult to know why Dariš-libur reconfigured events: He may have wished to create a frame in which Aplahanda is cited at both ends of the letter, so treating Zimri-Lim to a complete evocation of a mission. More likely, however, is that he wanted Aplahanda to serve as witness to two powerful statements in which Yarim-Lim invokes the working of God in history.

Lines 12 to 23 of FM 7 8 are full of breaks; yet despite the overly generous restorations Durand has provided them, it is nonetheless clear that Yarim-Lim is evoking the searing memory of his father's sudden death, likely in combat, as material for a lesson worth learning. Sumu-epuh, the father, enjoys unmatched success as long as he recognizes the power of Addu. When Addu gives territory to rulers, even if they are as unworthy as the rapacious Samsi-Addu, no one, not even the noblest of kings (as Yarim-Lim's father Sumu-epuh surely was) can take measures in his own hands lest he forfeit his life. Such a confession is itself remarkable and while we do find it voiced in Hittite, Assyrian, and Hebrew literatures, it is rare indeed when it crafted with such introspection by an affected king rather than by later historiographers.⁴⁶ As it happens we have other evidence both of Yarim-Lim's propensity to lecture a younger colleague and of claims by Addu of Halab of his universal control over human destiny.⁴⁷

This is a powerful admission about the control God has of human affairs; but Yarim-Lim is not delivering this painful history because he is a theologian, but because he wants it to buttress his next statement, found in lines 24-33, the gist of which goes as follows: In territories that are Addu's, escapees cannot be caught and delivered, presumably because they have entered political sanctuary. If Yarim-Lim is arguing the case for political asylum, we are meeting with one of its broadest application from antiquity.⁴⁸

Even as he lectures Zimri-Lim on the custom of the land and on divine control of human destinies, Yarim-Lim turns realistic. Just because Zimri-Lim's enemy cannot be extradited into his control, they do not necessarily receive official

⁴⁶ (With H. Tadmor and B. Landsberger) „The Sin of Sargon and Sennacherib's Last Will," *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 3 (1990), 3-51.

⁴⁷ For the former see TH 72.8+ = LAPO 16 249, pp. 390-393; for the latter, see the oft-cited letter Addu send Zimri-Lim declaring his control over land and rulers, FM 7 38 = A.1968 = MARI 7, pp. 53-54 = LAPO 18 934 pp. 83-84.

⁴⁸ See M. Guichard, „Les aspects religieux de la guerre à Mari," *RA* 93 (1999): 15-16, who cites this text.

protection. Dariš-libur cites Yarim-Lim's assurances that they would never be sheltered in Aleppo. He seems to know the content of a letter Yarim-Lim wrote Qatna about not harboring Samsi-Addu, one of the escapees. This is curious, because Samsi-Addu had once been reported in Emar (ARM 2 14) then in Carchemish (FM 7 7). Presumably Aplahanda was able to deny his presence there. But in the letter's final but fragmented lines, the issue of yet a third escapee, Yaggih-Addu, is raised. He too is placed in Carchemish, but one has the impression that no one seems to know anymore where any of the fugitives was likely to be.

So what we have here is a record of a pursuit of enemies that did not end well for Zimri-Lim. Yet there is a coda. On his return trip to Mari, Dariš-libur writes his lord the latest news of the enemies, and we have them recorded as FM 7 6.⁴⁹ Using a vocabulary that alerts to the fragility of his sources (*tēm lugal.meš ina ahītiya aštālma...*), Dariš-libur reports that three of the escaped kings have left Yamhadian territory (*dadmûm*) and that they have found refuge in the home of a Yahurrû tribesman in Serda, by the Balih. The three are reported to threaten doing something (the text is broken here) within a month. This news may have reassured Zimri-Lim that his men are still in the hunt for the escaped enemies, because spies are feeding them the latest news, not just on their whereabouts, but also about their plans. Still, in the archives we lose track of what happens to them. Charpin has Sumu-dabi die in combat, „*sans-doute*“ (which in French seems to mean the opposite).⁵⁰ He and Ziegler also conjecture (FM 5, p. 191 and n. 167) the same fate for Hardum, citing an inventory of property of a Hardum murdered in Saggaratum (FM 2 130) I doubt it is the same person. In fact, Durand mentions an unpublished text that gives Hardum credit for occupying Serda (FM 7, p. 18 n. 71).

Undoubtedly Zimri-Lim never achieved the resolution he would have wished in this matter. Still, we should notice that when the next Yaminite eruption took place a couple of years later, none among the new leadership includes the four Zimri-Lim was so hotly pursuing. They simply vanish, like some disgraced citizens excised from the pages of the *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*. For us, however, there are two lessons to draw from this review of the Mari material: One is that every case of refuge and extradition creates a context of its own and that its resolution can hardly depend on appeals to formal provisions in treaties or oaths. The second lesson is one I am sure western leaders drew as they chased Usama bin Laden and Mullah Omar: in the Middle East, today or yesterday, with help and a bit of luck, those that run can also get to hide.

⁴⁹ See Durand (FM 7, pp. 17-18) about the direction of Dāriš-libūr's itinerary on posting this letter.

⁵⁰ OBO 160/4, p. 195. I do not know the evidence for this statement.