

31) The restricted repatriation of the Judeans — Josephus (*Antiquitates Judaearum* [A] xi, 3) states that after the return from the Babylonian captivity only the rich Jews who cared about their property remained in Babylonia. This statement is not supported by cuneiform sources and is even contradicted by the biblical account (Ezra 2, 64-67 || Nehemiah 7, 66-68), according to which some returnees owned slaves and pack animals (see Zadok 1979, 88). Recently published documents from Yahūdu further refute Josephus' statement (see presently). It should be remembered that Josephus compiled his oeuvre over 600 years after the Judean restoration and had no access to cuneiform or other contemporary non-biblical sources. His motivation here is not clearly apologetic (as is typical of his tendentious AJ, see Feldman 1998, 54-55, who does not discuss this passage), but Josephus might have had his own agenda as priest and member of the Jerusalem élite when he dealt with the Babylonian diaspora, a potential rival of hegemonic Jerusalem before 70 CE.

It stands to reason that the pool of returnees consisted mainly of Judeans who resided in the Babylonian cities. The number of Judean returnees from Babylonian rural areas must have been restricted since they mostly belonged to the sector of dependent workmen (Akkad. *šušānū*, sg.) and thus did not enjoy freedom of movement. Judeans were deported to rural settlements where they were assigned fiefs on crown lands in return for corvée work on state projects or military service (see Wunsch 2013, 252-253). The holders of these fiefs were regarded as *šušānūs*. Members of this social group were both Babylonians and foreigners. Therefore the Judeans were neither a peculiar case nor enjoyed a special status (see Pearce 2011, 272-273). The Judean *Ši-id-qi'-iá-a-'ma'* son of *Še-li-im-mu* held such a fief (*É a-za-ni-šú* "his quiver fief") in Yahūdu as early as the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (Pearce & Wunsch 2014, 2, 2f., 7, see already Pearce 2011, 271). He very probably belonged to the 1st generation of the deportees. More explicit evidence for Judeans who were tied to crown lands as *šušānūs* holding bow fiefs (the equivalent of the rare term quiver fief) come from the same settlement, which was named after the Judeans, from 11.XII.9 to 24.V.15 Darius I (513-507 BC, the references below are to Pearce & Wunsch 2014, unless otherwise indicated):

White barley from the fields (*qaq-qar*^{mes}, lit. "lands") of the "Judean *šušānūs*" (^{lu}*šú-šá-[na-né]-e*^{mes} *ia-'ha'-da-*, 18, 7, see Pearce 2011, 272-273) is to be delivered in Yahūdu, an indication that the fields were located near that settlement. Interestingly, these *šušānūs* were under the authority of Uštanu, <the governor> of Transeuphratene. The document was issued on 11.XII.9 Darius I in *Bīt-Ši-in-qa-ma-a*, which was probably named after the father of Iddinā. The latter was the functionary to whom the barley was owed by Ahiqām, the main protagonist in the Yahūdu documentation. Dates, assessed rent from the fields (actually palm groves) of ^{lu}*šú-šá-<nu->né-e* ^{lu}*ia-a-hu-du-A+A* under the same authority, had to be delivered in Yahudu according to two documents which were issued there (19, 20) on 5.VI and 6.<VI>.11 Darius I. Dates, assessed rent from the field of ^{lu}*šú-šá-né-e ia-hu-du-A+A* under the <authority of Uštanu, the governor> of Transeuphratene, are recorded in a deed which was issued at Yahūdu on [x].1.II.11 Darius I (21, 2). The issue of the relationship and affiliation of the *šušānūs* mentioned in this set of four deeds, as well the hierarchy of the functionaries involved,

is tackled by colleagues who are due to publish their results. This special issue does not infirm my conclusion that many rural Judeans were basically unable to join the waves of returnees. Nor do I intend to present here the full documentation on *šusānûs* in the corpus from Yahūdu and its region. The above-mentioned deeds and the following records are ample proof of my claim.

Dates from the field of Judean *šusānûs* (^{lú}šú-šá-na^{meš} šá'ia[?]-hu[?]-[da[?]]-an-na) under the authority of *Ka-an-za-ra-*' were owed to Ahiqām by his son *Né-e-ri-a-ma*. The guarantor has a Yahwistic filiation; issued at Yahūdu on 24.V.15 Darius I (25, 4). The same Judean (*Né-ri-ia-a-ma*) gave a grain field, institutional land (*bīt ritti*), of the *šusānûs* (^{lú}šú-[šá]-an-né[?]-e) of the deputy? (^{šá}II ?) < of the governor? > of Transeuphratene (*šá' e-bir I*), under the authority of Zaba<ba>-[x], chief of the troops (*rab šab[?]-bu*), for cultivation to a Babylonian (place of issue broken, 4.II.21 Darius I = 501 BC, 26, 5).

Evidence for *šusānûs* bearing Yahwistic names (or having such paternal names), i.e. implicitly Judeans, who held bow fiefs, is contained in other tablets of the same documentation: Dates, assessed rent, grew in bow fiefs (or shares of such fiefs) amounting to at least six such fiefs held by 16 named individuals, but their number may be slightly higher, presumably 18, as two lines in the middle of the list are destroyed. These bow fiefs are subsumed as the field<s> of the ^{lú}šú-šá-<<na>>-né-e (15, 21 from Yahūdu, 6.VII.5 Darius I = 517 BC). It follows that all the holders of the bow fiefs were *šusānûs*. No less than 12 out of these 16 individuals were Judeans, as they bore Yahwistic names (cf. Pearce 2011, 271-273), while one individual, *Šu-ra-A+A*, i.e. “the Tyrian”, is Phoenician. The remaining three individuals, who had Hebrew-Canaanite anthroponyms, can be either Judeans, Phoenicians or Philistines. The designation ^{lú}šú-šá-<<na>>-né-e is broken in another record (14, year 4[+x] Darius I, probably 5 = 517 BC), but since that record has a similar format the restoration is certain. All the recognizable names borne by six individuals are Yahwistic and therefore must belong to Judeans. The names of another three individuals are severely damaged (one is entirely broken). A litigation (16) concerning fields (palm groves) of *šusānûs* (^{lú}šú-šá-né^{meš}) took place on 26.XII.9 Darius I = 512 BC between two Judeans, viz. Ahi-qām, the main protagonist in the Yahūdu documentation and *Na-da-bi-ia-a-ma*.

The following two deeds with a different format are of less probative value.

Barley, harvest of the field of *šusānûs* (^{lú}šú-šá-né^{meš}), owed to Ahiqām and another five individuals with Yahwistic filiations is mentioned at Idibi'il on 8.I.12 Darius I = 510 BC (23, 1). Dates, assessed rent of *šusānûs*, owed to Ahiqām by an individual with a Yahwistic filiation, viz. *Ba-na-*'-^{lú}šú-šá-né^{meš} son of Ahi(ŠEŠ)-*ia-ma*, are recorded at Yahūdu on 19.VI.4 Darius I = 518 BC (33, 2).

Among the returnees who could not prove their Israelite extraction there were former inhabitants of the Babylonian rural settlements *Tl mlḥ*, *Tl ḥrš'*, *Krwb*, 'dn, and 'mr (Ezra 2, 59 || Nehemiah 7, 61).¹ These returnees did not have in all probability a *šusānû* status. It may be surmised that these people might have been of certain standing, like Ahiqām of Yahūdu. Their relationship to Babylonian settlements is highlighted, in contrast to other returnees who originated in places in Judah and Benjamin (see Fried 2015, 137).

¹ Cf. Steinmann 2010, 174, but his etymology of *Krwb* as “meadow” is unfounded. The latter is perhaps either a dialectal variant of Akkad. *kuruppu* “shop” (for which see Baker 2010), or was the Akkadian name later re-interpreted as Heb. *krwb* “cherub”? A case of re-interpretation in the very same list may be that of 'dn (Ezra 2, 59) which has become 'dwn (Heb. “lord”) in Nehemiah 7, 61.

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