

Pūlu « *Vicia Faba* » in Neo-Babylonian – The plant ^u*pu-lu* is mentioned in the NB deed BM 17726 from 27.X.540/39 B.C. (issued at Bāb-Nār-Šamaš near Sippar, but belongs to the archive of the Borsippean Marduk-šuma-ibni/Šulā/Iliya ; I should like to thank the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to publish the text) :

¹ 7 1/2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR ŠÁM úpu-lu <<a-na>> ² šá ^{md}ŠÚ-MU-DÙ A-šú šá ^{mšu-}la-a A ^mDINGIR-iá ³ AŠ IGI ^{md}AG-DÙ-ŠEŠ A-šú šá ^mba-la-tu ⁴ A ^mDÙ(?)^{meš-}šá-DINGIR-iá AŠ UGU mpir-⁵ A-šú šá ^{mšu-ma-a} A ^mSUM-^dpap-sukkal ⁶ ú-šá-az-az-ma a-na ^{md}AMAR.UTU-MU-DÙ⁷ i-nam-din (r.) ⁸ lá ^{mu-kin-nu} ^{md}UTU-MU-SI.SÁ ⁹ A-šú šá ^{mšu-ma-a} A ^mSUM-^dpap-šukkal ¹⁰ ^{md}AG-ni-ip-šá-ri A-šú šá ¹¹ ^{md}AMAR.UTU-GI A ^mZÁLAG-^dpap-šukkal ¹² lá ^{UMBISAG} ^{md}A.É-SUR A-šú šá ¹³ ^{md}A.É-E A ^mšá-DIŠ-LUH ¹⁴ KÁ I₇-^dUTU ⁱⁱⁱAB (u.e.) ¹⁵ U₄ 27 KAM MU 16 KAM ¹⁶ ^dAG-I LUGAL TIN.TIR^{ki}

Pu-lu is a perfect rendering of the plant name which is recorded as *pwl* in Official Aramaic (*pwl*^l in later Aramaic, see J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic inscriptions*, Leiden 1995, 903, s.v.), *pwl* in Biblical Hebrew, and is rendered « bean » (> Arab. *fūl* « broad bean » = *Vicia Faba*). This is so far the earliest clear evidence for the cultivation of broad beans in Babylonia, the more so since the evidence of the other written sources is inconclusive due to manifold semantic developments. For the archaeobotanical record see W. van Zeist, *BSA* 2 (1985), 36 who reports that only *Vicia Faba minor* (tick bean) is recorded in early historical sites. He is of the opinion that its cultivation was confined to the Levant (cf. J. M. Renfrew, *BSA* 2,69f.). It is noteworthy that *pwl* was one of the ingredients of the bread which Ezekiel prepared after he had been deported to Babylonia at the beginning of the sixth century B.C. (Eze. 4,9), a few decades before the occurrence of *pūlu* in the above-mentioned deed. M. Stol, who devoted a special article to pulses in the same issue of *BSA*, states (129) : « the broad bean (*Vicia Faba*) seems to be left as the only remaining possibility for *gú.gal* = *hallūrum* » (cf. *AHw.*, 313a, s.v. ; *CAD* H. 47f.), but after a thorough discussion he assumes that *gú.gal* = *hallūrum* can be identified with the chick-pea (133 ; cf. the relevant statement of J. Eidem, *BSA* 2, 142 : « ... firmer evidence is needed »). Stol also notes that Classical/New Persian

hullar denotes « pea » (neither chick-pea nor any kind of beans). On the other hand, Armenian olor-n (Gk. Κύαμος = *Vicia Faba*) is thought to originate ultimately from hallūrum by N. Adontz (*Revue des études indo-européennes* [Bucharest] 1, 1938, 463, cf. J. N. Postgate, *BSA* 5, 1990, 146).¹ The possibility that *olor-n* was borrowed in Armenian via Iranian, i.e. the putative forerunner of hullar, is not mentioned in H. Hübschmann, *Armenische Grammatik*, 1 (Leipzig 1897) or G. Bolognesi, *Le fonti dialettali degli imprestati iranici in Armeno* (Milano [1962?]). The New-Persian word for chick-pea, *naxod*, is recorded as early as Middle Persian.

1. Adontz's article, which is quoted by Postgate, was not available to me. I should like to thank Dr. M. Jursa who kindly sent me a photocopy of it. B. Meissner (*Babylonien und Assyrien* 1, Heidelberg 1920, 199) compared Gk. ὄλυρα (« rice-wheat ») and Arm. olor-n (in the Biblical translation Arm. *olor-n* denotes « broad bean »). Adontz does not dissociate Arm. olor-n from Gk. ὄλυρα. The latter is translated by Arm. *hacar* « spelt ». Adontz regards *hallūru* as « asianique », i.e. not necessarily Semitic.- For Biblical Hebrew ḥrwl see J.C. Greenfield, in S.R. Brunswick (ed.), *Studies in Judaica, Karaitica and Islamica presented to Dr. Leon Nemoy on his eightieth birthday* (Ramat-Gan 1982), 79-82.

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