



J a n a M y n á ř o v á

Language of Amarna –
Language of Diplomacy

Perspectives on the Amarna Letters

mu' arêya,²⁵⁵ Nimmahê,²⁵⁶ Niu,²⁵⁷ Paḥa(m)nata/e,²⁵⁸ Pâpu,²⁵⁹ Peya,²⁶⁰ Pišyari,²⁶¹ Pauru/Pawura/
Puwuru,²⁶² Paḥura/Piḥura/Puḥuru,²⁶³ Rianapa,²⁶⁴ Šarru,²⁶⁵ Šuta,²⁶⁶ Šutti,²⁶⁷ Taḥmaya,²⁶⁸ Taḥmašši,²⁶⁹
Teye,²⁷⁰ Tûya,²⁷¹ Tutu,²⁷² Riamanul-xi²⁷³ and divine names²⁷⁴ – D.a-ma-nu-um,²⁷⁵ D.a-ma-nu,²⁷⁶
D.a-ma-na,²⁷⁷ D.a-ma-a-nu²⁷⁸ or D.a-ma-a-nu-û-ti-la-an,²⁷⁹ D.a-ma-a-nu-û-la-an,²⁸⁰ D.a-ma-a-nu-
û-ul-la-an,²⁸¹ D.a-ma-a-nu-û-e,²⁸² D.a-ma-a-nu-û-til-la-a-an.²⁸³

An identification of D.A in EA 164: 40 is still doubtful. The traditional explanation of this name is
that D.A could be an abbreviated form of Amun's name.²⁸⁴ However, this explanation has been refu-
ted by both Nadav Na'aman and José-Manuel Galán. While for Galán²⁸⁵ D.A could represent an
Egyptian compound *nfr-ʿ3* 'great god,' for Na'aman²⁸⁶ D.A could be an identification of Aten, which
is a theory further supported by the chronological scheme of the Amarna letters.

However, the 'infiltration' of originally Egyptian words into 'a common Amarna lexicon' and their
utilization in the Amarna corpora is a phenomenon which is extremely rarely attested.²⁸⁷

Based on this very short description of the 'language' of the Amarna letters of Egyptian origin we
can assume that a geographical closeness need not significantly affect the form of a language. The
individual variants of Peripheral Akkadian do indeed reflect certain traces of its own language
substrate, though it is still questionable as to what extent these substrate languages, and a formal
structure of relevant texts written in these languages, affect the formal structure of the Amarna
letters.

²⁵⁵ EA 1: 2; EA 2: 1; EA 3: 1; EA 5: 1; EA 17: 1; EA 19: 1; EA 22 IV: 45, 47; EA 23: 1; EA 24 I: 94; III: 104, 106;
IV: 128; EA 26: 8, 9, 11, 12, 21, 25, 30, 34; EA 27: 9, 13, 14, 20, 38; EA 29: 6, 8, 11, 12, 16, 18, 21, 24, 25, 28, 31, 35, 36, 37, 44,
47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 55, 61, 62, 66, 68, 71, 73, 75, 104, 136; EA 31: 1.
²⁵⁶ EA 162: 77.
²⁵⁷ EA 29: 37.
²⁵⁸ EA 60: 10, 20, 32; EA 62: 1; EA 68: 22; EA 131: 35.
²⁵⁹ EA 333: 2, 22.
²⁶⁰ EA 292: 42, 51; EA 294: 16, 24, 30.
²⁶¹ EA 162: 71.
²⁶² EA 117: 47; EA 124: 44; EA 129: 95, 97; EA 131: 22; EA 132: 36; EA 263: 21; EA 287: 45; EA 289: 38; EA 362: 69.
²⁶³ EA 57: 6, 10; EA 117: 61; EA 122: 13, 34; EA 132: 47; EA 189: 17, 18; EA 190: 2; EA 207: 17; EA 208: 11.
²⁶⁴ EA 292: 36; EA 315: 13; EA 326: 17.
²⁶⁵ EA 162: 68.
²⁶⁶ EA 234: 14, 23, 33; 288: 19, 22.
²⁶⁷ EA 5: 19.
²⁶⁸ EA 265: 09, 11; EA 364: 13.
²⁶⁹ EA 303: 20.
²⁷⁰ EA 27: 112; EA 28: 7, 43, 45; EA 29: 3, 8, 9, 45, 46, 61, 63, 66, 107, 117, 124a, 124b, 143a, 143b, 187.
²⁷¹ EA 162: 69.
²⁷² EA 158: 1, 5, 12, 34; EA 164: 1, 10, 16, 30, 33, 35, 43; EA 167: 28, 31; EA 169: 16, 36.
²⁷³ EA 347: 3.
²⁷⁴ Cf. a name of an Egyptian god Amun (out of composite names; see above).
²⁷⁵ EA 1: 46; EA 19: 15, 24, 76.
²⁷⁶ EA 20: 74; EA 369: 29.
²⁷⁷ EA 71: 4; EA 77: 3; EA 86: 3, 5; EA 95: 3.
²⁷⁸ EA 20: 26; EA 27: 87.
²⁷⁹ EA 24 I: 76.
²⁸⁰ EA 24 I: 101.
²⁸¹ EA 24 II: 65.
²⁸² EA 24 II: 77.
²⁸³ EA 24 IV: 118; see Hess (1986: 150).
²⁸⁴ Cf. SCHROEDER (1915b); RAINY (1978b: 108); HESS (1986: 150); MORAN (1992: 252).
²⁸⁵ GALÁN (1992: 289).
²⁸⁶ NA'AMAN (1991: 250–252).
²⁸⁷ See a term for military troops of Egyptian archers: *šabê pī'āni*, i.e. *Fig. pđt-jw*, p. 51, note 224.

THE LETTER FORMAT

A Diplomatic Letter

When considering the epistolary tradition preserved in documents written down in Peripheral
Akkadian,²⁸⁸ it is clear that, within this large corpus of texts, individual letters share a relatively well-
standardized formal structure, i.e. a letter format. In most cases the letter format contains the fol-
lowing elements, an opening passage and the body of the letter.

In an effort to obtain a more representative, as well as a convenient picture of the Amarna letters
as representatives of a 'diplomatic language,' it is essential to give close attention to both the letter
format and to the individual elements that one can find within the 'highly standardized' opening
passages.²⁸⁹ In this respect, the Amarna corpus offers a wide range of opportunities. For further ana-
lyses it is very important that all the relevant material originates from the specified context of the royal
archive,²⁹⁰ it is chronologically very well determined²⁹¹ and, above all, in many of these texts the ori-
gin is directly or indirectly indicated, either in the opening passage or in the body of the letter.

Even today, the way in which a diplomatic letter is composed might represent a key-factor in
modern diplomacy. It is essential to recognize the elements which characterise the structure, as
well as the way in which the individual elements combine with one another. It is not too simplistic
to describe the writing of diplomatic letters as a process of assembling standardized and generally
accepted – as well as expected – formulae of politeness, before reaching the desired subject. Howe-
ver, we must keep in mind that an omission of these phrases and formulae, or an employment of
some non-standard expressions²⁹² is inadmissible and easily reveals an inexperienced author–scri-
be of the message. Among the expected phrases belongs an expression of compliments. After both
sides of the correspondence are identified, the sender – such as the Embassy, presents its compli-
ments to the addressee, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The sender never requests the
desired subject directly but always 'has the honour to ...'! The politeness goes even further since the
Embassy avails itself of this opportunity to renew its assurances of highest consideration to the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁹³ Today, in modern society, the forms of an address and salutations are
bound with a diplomatic protocol and a very formal style of letter writing is employed following
strict written rules and conventions.

²⁸⁸ See the following chapter, pp. 67–91.

²⁸⁹ The significance of the opening passages as a starting point for further discussion was recognized, in the field of the
Amarna studies, at an early stage by HANMISON (1893) in his discussion on the correspondence of Ribhaddi, when he
bound together the chronology of Ribhaddi's letters and a preference given to certain type of 'salutations', i.e. the ope-
ning passages.

²⁹⁰ Against all the odds in relation to the location of the letters' discovery, it is apparent that all of them originate from the
immediate area or immediate vicinity of the royal archive.

²⁹¹ On the subject of the chronology of the Amarna letters, consult especially CAMPBELL (1964) and KÖNIG (1973).

²⁹² In this respect a diplomatic *faux pas* can be interpreted, for example in a case, such as the usage of 'the Canadian
Embassy' instead of the correct and official form 'the Embassy of Canada.'

²⁹³ The standardization of these diplomatic phrases is reflected in the usage in other languages, such as in Spanish 'La
Embajada de Chile en Praga saluda muy atentamente al Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y tiene el honor de ...' and
'La Embajada de Chile hace propicia la ocasión para reiterar al Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores las seguridades de
su más alta y distinguida consideración,' or in French 'L'ambassade de France à Prague présente ses compliments au
ministère des Affaires étrangères et à l'honneur de ...' and 'L'ambassade de France remercie le ministère des Affaires
étrangères et saisie cette opportunité pour lui renouveler les assurances de sa très haute considération.'

However, for any diplomatic correspondence – modern or ancient – it also stands that a successful correspondence definitely depends upon such diplomatic facilities as a declaration and logical arguments, as well as a strong and clearly recognizable emotional context for the written record. It is evident that in any diplomatic text there is a considerable need to decode the indirect instructions as well as the emotional metaphors representing the most important diplomatic codes. However, many misunderstandings – sometimes pragmatic – might appear in the communication between correspondents with different cultural backgrounds. It is thus extremely important to compare the realities of both cultural backgrounds.

The material of the Amarna letters offers a unique possibility for such a comparison. The considerable linguistic, cultural, social and religious differences without question demanded that the developing relations among particular entities should be facilitated through the use of universally accepted codes. These codes had to be comprehensible to all members of this 'international' community. It is obvious that the Amarna culture, as well as modern diplomacy, created a very specific diplomatic language, containing many ceremonial and complimentary phrases, influenced by the social environment. Through such phrases, both sides acknowledged recognition of prestige, power or dependency.

Thus, it is one of the main goals of this study to determine if the scribes of the Amarna letters – in a similar way to their contemporary counterparts – followed any rules and/or conventions when composing letters, choosing a particular style and letter format, including the type of address or salutation. If we discover certain parallels between letter writing in Peripheral Akkadian and in the native languages of the scribes as well as in the contingent geographical particulars, this could contribute to the further discussion as to the origin of some of the Amarna documents.

As has been already stated,²⁹⁴ the variability in respect of the Amarna language situation is, to a great extent, related to a relatively wide area from which the particular letters originate. It is thus obvious that among the individual regions differences can be recognized, not only in a grammatical structure of these texts but also in their palaeography and orthography. Nevertheless, can we also observe the same phenomena in the standardized formulae and expressions that, to a certain extent, were 'codified' by generally accepted conventions or even rules? In this respect it is impossible to deal with the corpus on the whole. On the contrary, it is imperative to set apart several smaller collections, based on their stated origin and to analyze them carefully. Only then will it be possible to reach more general conclusions. However, even such an approach is unlikely to be sufficient because even when focusing on one collection, consisting of a geographically consistent corpus, differences can occur. These differences are often in connection with a development of the existent structure over time or with the scribe's individuality, his background and school tradition, or rather his 'training.' Thus, we will try to determine if it is possible to recognize within the Amarna corpus any structural differences determined by the origin of the individual epistolary documents and, in cases where such differences are found, to discuss in detail their individual backgrounds.

The Structure

Immediately, it is possible to recognise that the Akkadian letters, preserved in the Amarna archive, share, in the same way as many other similar texts discovered in other places,²⁹⁵ an identical or very similar formal structure. Therefore, in many of the studies devoted to various aspects of the Peripheral Akkadian epistolary tradition we may find only brief and rather concise comments or descriptions as far as the structure or internal organization is concerned. Since the subject of the structuralization, as well as further analyses of the inner structure preserved in these letters, usually passes for general interest, it is the aim of this chapter to provide a more detailed overview, as well as a discussion on this important aspect of the epistolary tradition.

²⁹⁴ See pp. 42–45 in this volume.

²⁹⁵ See pp. 67–91.

When describing the general structure of the Akkadian letters belonging to the Amarna corpus, we can, of course, identify parallels with other epistolary groups of documents – after all, the problems of epistolography belong in the same camp as the traditional and widely researched subject in Ancient Near Eastern studies.²⁹⁶ Based on his analysis of the Hebrew and Aramaic epistolography, Lindenberg²⁹⁷ postulated a tripartite elementary structure present in these letters – an introduction (containing the address and the greeting), the body of the letter and a conclusion containing some specific concluding formulae.²⁹⁸ Among the elements that are almost always present in the opening passage are the two introductory parts, the introductory address and the greeting, containing, primarily, the identification of the sender and the addressee, often mentioning their respective titles as well.²⁹⁹ However, the introductory greeting is largely varied, starting with very simple greeting and moving towards more complex formulae.³⁰⁰ Among the Aramaic letters, Lindenberg³⁰¹ has been able to recognize two main groups. While in the first group the greetings are represented through a plea for the blessing for the addressee, in the second group the sender expresses his wishes of well-being, wealth and prosperity to the addressee. Nevertheless, both groups might be combined as well.³⁰² However, in many Hebrew letters no greetings formulae are in evidence.³⁰³

With respect to Peripheral Akkadian, a deal of great attention has been given to the Akkadian and Ugaritic epistolary documents discovered at Ugarit.³⁰⁴ In her dissertation, Sally W. Ahl speaks about three elements, or, in her own words, 'component parts',³⁰⁵ in the structure of the Akkadian letters found at Ugarit – 'the heading', 'the salutation' and 'the subject'.³⁰⁶ A typical letter would thus contain the heading inclusive of an identification of both correspondents, the salutation that might be composed of up to three elements – 'an obeisance of the sender to the addressee, 'a greeting' and 'a divine blessing' – and 'the subject'.³⁰⁷

²⁹⁶ Consult especially the results of the research project of the SBL 'Ancient Epistolography Group,' cf. WHITE (1982). For the Ugaritic correspondence and letter formats, consult especially LOWENSTAM (1969), AHL (1973), KRISTENSEN (1977), CUNCIULLOS (1999) and see also PANDER – WHITING (1987). A detailed discussion on the Hittite epistolography can be found in HAGENBUCHNER (1989) for the structure, consult especially 29–46). For the Akkadian epistolography, consult PRAEFER (1923) and especially SALONEN (1967). For Mesopotamia in general, see OPPENHEIM (1987); MICHALOWSKI (1993). For Aramaic and Neo-Assyrian letters cf. FALLES (1987). On Hebrew epistolography, see CAVALIUS (1954–1957); PANDER (1978a); *idem* (1982); for the letters from Arad cf. PANDER (1978b). For Aramaic and Hebrew correspondence, see also, with references to further literature, LINDENBERGER (1994); *idem* (2003). For Aramaic letters, consult especially FITZMYER (1974); *idem* (1982).

²⁹⁷ LINDENBERGER (1994: 6ff.).
²⁹⁸ In addition to the concluding or summarizing formulae, references to the scribe, and in some cases also the date when the letter was composed, are mentioned. A kind of 'exterior address' may follow. However, it is obvious that some of the standard, above-mentioned, elements might be omitted by the scribe. Thus, in his study, which was also devoted to the structure of the Aramaic letters, FITZMYER (1974) discusses the following structural elements: the *praescriptio*, the initial (religious or secular) and secondary greetings, the concluding formulae, the mention of a scribe or a secretary and the final or exterior address, leaving aside the body of the letter. The terminology postulated by FITZMYER is only slightly modified by PANDER (1982) for the Hebrew letters, who identifies within the structure the following elements: the address, the initial and the secondary greetings, the concluding formulae and the mention of a scribe or secretary, the date and the final or exterior address.

²⁹⁹ The social rank of the correspondents is most often couched in the expressions of 'the master' for the superior and 'the servant' for the inferior. Eventually, references to family metaphors are referred to.

³⁰⁰ The is similar to some of the Akkadian letters belonging to a corpus of Egyptian-Hittite correspondence, found at Boghazköy (13th century B.C.E.). In addition, some Hebrew and Aramaic letters do not contain messages other than the greetings.

³⁰¹ LINDENBERGER (1994: 7ff.).

³⁰² For the greeting formulae in the Aramaic letters, consult also FITZMYER (1974: 214–216).

³⁰³ In the case of the following texts: Lindenberg no. 61, Lindenberg no. 64 and Lindenberg no. 66 we witness a passage, in which the sender explicitly expresses his subordinate position to the addressee, using the expression of 'I am nothing but a dog.' For a qualification of the sender as a 'dog' in the Amarna letters, consult pp. 140, 145–146.

³⁰⁴ Consult especially AHL (1973: esp. 72ff.); KRISTENSEN (1977); CUNCIULLOS (1989).

³⁰⁵ AHL (1973: 49).

³⁰⁶ The very same three elements can be also recognized in the epistolary documents written in Ugaritic, cf. AHL (1973: 99ff., 108ff.). A tripartite scheme of the Ugaritic letters has been recognized also by CUNCIULLOS (1999: 360) who, however, described these three elements as 'heading', 'main message' and 'ending'. In his concept the heading comprises of the address, prokynesis, greetings and wishes. The body of the letter or the message represents the second part of Ugaritic epistolary documents, whereas the ending or closing formula contains a call for a reply (CUNCIULLOS 1999: 367).

In her view³⁰⁸ the heading³⁰⁹ – i.e. the part where an identification of the sender and the respective addressee is stated, the form reflects the original oral transmission of the message – consisting of two interrelated elements – the identification of both correspondents, whereas the identification of the sender is introduced by 'an elliptical statement'³¹⁰ of speech and 'an injunction to speak'³¹¹ to the addressee. The correspondents are usually identified by means of their personal names. Their respective functional and/or honorific titles are often included in the identification as well. The identification of the sender and the addressee, including their respective titles, are important items, especially in formally strict correspondence, such as in the diplomatic letters preserved in the Amarna corpus. It is not only in the case of the Amarna letters that for purposes of expression, as well as for the identification of the respective social rank of both correspondents, a terminology based on family relations is employed.

The identification of the correspondents may result in a dual form. In the first of them – used between correspondents of an equal social rank or in letters addressed by a person with a higher social rank to his inferior – the identification of the sender comes first, followed by the identification of the addressee. On the other hand, in the second – observed in the letters addressed by a person with a lesser social status to his superior – the identification of the addressee, often containing honorific elements, precedes the identification of the respective sender.³¹²

For the elliptical statement of speech the convention is that this statement notifies the reader that the following text is a communication of the sender of the letter. A component part of the elliptical statement is a particle *umma* followed by a noun in the genitive form or a noun phrase (in apposition), by which the sender is – in a more or less elaborate manner – identified.³¹³ A marker of the following direct speech, an enclitic particle *-ma*, might appear as a suffix. The other element of the heading is named by Ahl as an injunction to speak. The injunction to speak can assume two different forms – either a simple or a composite. Within the simple form of the injunction we can identify a genitive construction (preposition + name and/or title of the addressee) followed by a verbal form *qibima* (imperative ms with suffixed enclitic particle *-ma*³¹⁴), while in the composite form the name and/or title of the addressee is further enhanced by other nouns or nominal phrases in apposition. The sequence of the elliptical statement and the injunction to speak is conditioned by the form used for the identification of the correspondents. While in the letters, where the sender's identification precedes the identification of the addressee, the elliptical statement is employed first, followed by the injunction to speak, cf. *umma* sender – *ana* addressee – *umma* sender. Among letters, where the addressee is identified first, the sequence will be the injunction to speak followed by the elliptical statement, cf. *ana* addressee – *umma* sender – *umma* sender.³¹⁵

The second part of the letter represents the salutation, containing up to three individual elements referred to by Ahl as 'an obeisance of the sender to the addressee,' 'a greeting' and 'a divine blessing'.³¹⁶ All these elements eloquently reveal the nature of the relationship between the sender and the addressee.

The first of these elements – an obeisance of the sender to the addressee³¹⁷ can be more simply identified as a prostration formula representing an expression of the respect of the sender in relation

³⁰⁷ A slightly different set of terminology for the individual elements preserved in the Ugaritic and Akkadian epistolary documents has been proposed by KRISTENSEN (1977), who targeted the following five elements: 'the address,' 'the prostration formula,' 'greetings,' 'well-being of sender' and 'well-being of addressee' in his study.
³⁰⁸ Ahl. (1973: 69–75); for the parallels in the corpus of Ugaritic epistles, see *idem* (1973: 108–115).
³⁰⁹ 'The address' in Kristensen's terminology, cf. KRISTENSEN (1977: 144–147).
³¹⁰ In the terminology of FINLEY (1979: 185–186) called 'a marker of direct speech.'

³¹¹ FINLEY (1979: 185–186) applies for this part of the heading a term 'the introductory statement of direct speech.'
³¹² Cf. originally NOUGAYROL (1955: 3).
³¹³ The sender can be introduced by his name and/or respective title only or, in more detail, by a noun phrase extended by other nouns or noun phrases in apposition.
³¹⁴ The enclitic *-ma* might be suffixed to the name of the addressee, in this case it is considered as an emphatic element, cf. Ahl. (1973: 74). For the particle in the Old Babylonian, see RAINY (1976b); for its usage in the 'greeting formula' of the Old Babylonian letters, consult ŚLANSKI (1998).
³¹⁵ See Ahl. (1973: 72).

to the addressee by means of repeatedly 'falling at' the addressee's feet. Ahl divided this element into four individual parts:³¹⁸

- (i) 'a directional phrase' – one of the the two essential parts – 'to the feet' – is represented by a preposition *ana* followed by a noun *šepē*, further modified by the genitive pronoun, noun or noun phrase, indicating to whom the act is exercised, i.e. the addressee.

- (ii) 'a locative phrase' – in the corpus of the Akkadian letters found at Ugarit, represented by an expression 'from a distance,' understood as 'from an appropriate distance.' It consists of a preposition *ištu* followed by an adverb *ruqūš*, expressing where the action of prostration takes place.
- (iii) 'an element of manner' – it is an adverbial expression, describing how the prostration is carried out. In the corpus studied by S. Ahl it usually takes a form of 'twice seven times,' i.e. 2-šū 7-šū.
- (iv) 'a verbal form' – the final and essential part of the prostration formula, usually in preterite 1 cs 'I fall' or 'I prostrate' (i.e. *amiqu*, *ušejin*), expressing both the subject of the sender and proper act of prostration.

The second element of the salutation is the greeting, containing a wish of well-being to the addressee. Ahl postulated, based on the sequence of the elements, two main different forms of 'the greeting,' with subsequent sub-forms:³¹⁹

- (i) 'a simple form' – the first place in the element is occupied by a precative particle *lū*, followed by a stative 3 mp form *šulmū*³²⁰ and a phrase, by means of which the addressee is indicated, most often by a preposition *ana* *mulū* often with a suffixed pronoun of 2 s/p genitive.³²¹
- (ii) 'an inverted form' – the prepositional phrase, identifying the addressee, precedes the precative phrase *lū* *šulmū*; this form can be also used in cases when the greeting is addressed to a third party or when double greetings are employed.³²²

The third element recognized by Ahl³²³ in the salutation is the divine blessing³²⁴ – a request for a blessing of the divine world or of a particular deity. In its simplest form, it consists of three parts – a subject, an exhortation (particle *lū* + imperfect 3 s/p of *našāru* 'to guard,' 'to watch over,' 'to protect') and an object (pronominal *-ka* or substantive, cf. *napištaka*). However, this element can also be extended and an adverbial phrase *ana* *šulmāni* 'for peace' or 'safely' can be used preceding the exhortation. The divine blessing is a rather variable element and thus can be also enlarged through a vocative noun or by other blessings.

Another aspect affiliated to the preference given to a specific form of the opening passage in the Akkadian letters found at Ugarit, i.e. the social rank of the individual correspondents, is also underlined – though indirectly – by J. Huehnergard in his overview of Akkadian epistolary documents discovered at Ugarit.³²⁵ As has been already mentioned, the social ranks of the sender and the addressee have implications for the choice of heading. Perhaps, on that basis, Huehnergard illustrates the opening passages in three examples: first comes the letter sent by the king of Ugarit to his superior (RS 20.238; *Ug. V. no. 24*); the second is a letter exchanged between the king and queen of Ugarit, addressed to their inferior (RS 19.70; *PRU IV, 294*) and finally, the last example illustrate correspondence from an inferior to the king of Ugarit (RS 17.383; *PRU IV, 221–223*). In the relationship between the inferior and the superior rulers Huehnergard pays heed to the fact that immediately after the

³¹⁶ Ahl. (1973: 75–82); the parallels to the individual parts attested in the Ugaritic letters can be found at *idem* (1973: 115–120).

³¹⁷ A 'prostration formula' in: KRISTENSEN (1977: 147–150).

³¹⁸ Ahl. (1973: 75–77).

³¹⁹ Ahl. (1973: 77–81).

³²⁰ Sporadically imperative ms *bulu* 'live!'.
³²¹ For other examples, see Ahl. (1973: 78–79).

³²² However, the greeting can be further extended by an adverb modifying the greeting 'very' or 'very, very', i.e. *dammis* or *dammis dammis*.

³²³ Ahl. (1973: 81–82).

³²⁴ KRISTENSEN (1977: 150–153) joins the parts referred to in Ahl as the greeting and the divine blessing into one category, 'the greetings.'

heading, an obeisance expressed by the prostration formula follows an extended wish of well-being to the addressee, including his own household. The second example, where the expressed relationship is between the superior (ruler) and his inferior, illustrates the situation where, after the heading, there follows a simple or short form of the wish of well-being to the addressee and a plea for divine blessings. Finally, in the last example, reflecting the relationship between the inferior to his superior (ruler), the heading is accompanied a stereotyped declaration as to the sender's well-being and a request for information regarding the addressee's well-being.

On the grounds that there is considerable similarity between the opening passages in the Amarna letters and those preserved in the epistolary documents discovered at Ugarit, and discussed by S. Ahl in detail, the present study will utilise only a slightly modified terminology, based on Ahl's work.³²⁶ Thus, the general structure of the opening passage can be described more simply as a binominal structure, consisting of the heading and followed by the salutations. The heading is composed of four elements – an identification of the sender (introduced by an elliptical statement of speech) or the addressee and an injunction to speak. The salutations may contain the following elements – a prostration, greetings and divine blessings.

The Opening Passages and the Amarna Corpus

Despite the generally prevalent opinion that the opening passages present a simple structural and content-based phenomenon, this is contrary to the evidence. In fact, the opening passages constitute a rather specific and complex body of material, worthy of a more detailed analysis.³²⁷ We can identify here a series of components, some of them as expected but several others being conditioned by individual and/or geographical factors. For our better understanding of the 'language of diplomacy' as represented by the corpus of the Amarna letters, it is necessary to determine what exactly the opening passages meant for both correspondents, i.e. the sender and the addressee. It is important to establish if the preference given to certain types of opening passage was only accidental or if there was, in fact, a system of generally understood codes, reflecting the social reality of the situation.

As we have already mentioned, from a historical point of view the Amarna archive covers only a relatively short period during which the documents were written. However, this chronological limitation ensures that all relevant documents were composed in accordance with one, broadly used and understood mode and style of letter writing. Thus we can presuppose that the format of the letter, as well as its individual elements, should reflect identical social components, intelligible to all interested parties.

On the basis of the social hierarchy of individual senders and addressees, as well as according to the particular place of discovery, the Amarna material can be understood at once as a corpus of diplomatic and administrative correspondence. It is exactly the character of the texts, as well as their explicit determination, that makes the Amarna documents an extremely important historical source for the ancient Near East, during the period around the middle of the 14th century B.C.E.

It was J. A. Knudtzon,³²⁸ in his fundamental study on the Amarna letters, who chose to divide the Amarna epistolary documents into two separate groups. A key factor in this decision was in relation to the social position of the correspondents. Thus, based on the social rank of the sender and the addressee, Knudtzon postulated two, numerically unequal, sets. Since then, his division has been widely accepted by other scholars.³²⁹

The smaller group of documents represents the so-called 'international' correspondence. Into this category we can place both letters and lists of objects, which might constitute component parts of these letters having been exchanged between particular representatives of the 'Great Powers'

³²⁵ HUEHNIGER (1999: 375–377).

³²⁶ For a similar application of these criteria, see OWEN (1981: 4–6).

³²⁷ Cf. MYNAROVA (2004); *idem* (2006a), *idem* (2006b).

and/or lesser 'independent states' of the region. Thus we can find here the following entities:³³⁰ Egypt (EA 1, EA 5, EA 14),³³¹ Babylonia (EA 2, EA 3, EA 332, EA 6–13³³³), Assyria (EA 15 and EA 16), Mitanni (EA 17, EA 18–29³³⁴), Hatti (EA 41–44), Alashiya (EA 33–40) and Arzawa (EA 31 and EA 32). However, the overall majority of the letters represent documents of more or less an administrative character, marked as a 'vassal' or 'imperial' correspondence. Nevertheless, such a categorical division of the texts within the corpus encompasses several weak points since distinctions are strongly influenced by our own subjective perception and impression of, for example, the 'political status' of individual correspondents, as demonstrated by the epistolary documents from Ugarit.³³⁵

Based on the nature of the texts, the Amarna documents represent a comprehensive corpus for the study of letter structure, as well as for analyses of the opening passages. However, in order to study the opening passages we have to leave aside some unsuitable documents, which can be divided into the following groups:

- (i) scholarly documents – a diametrically different group of Amarna documents, which constitute the representatives of a cuneiform scribal tradition³³⁶ among them a part of the Akkadian version of the story of Kešši (EA 341), probably an exercise in letter writing (EA 342), exercises (EA 343, EA 344, EA 345, EA 346,³³⁷ EA 377), probably a lexical list (EA 347), fragments of a S³ signlist (EA 348, EA 379), probably a fragment of syllabary (EA 349), a fragment of *tu-ta-ti* exercise³³⁸ and *Silbenalphabet*³³⁹ (EA 350), fragments of *dirri*, tablet 2 (possibly joins; EA 351,³⁴⁰ EA 352+353, EA 354 and EA 373), a clay cylinder (EA 355), the myth of Adapa and the South Wind (EA 356), the myth of Neirgal and Ereškigal (EA 357), a still undetermined narrative³⁴¹ (EA 358), fragments of the epic *šar tamḫāri* (EA 359, EA 375), a fragment of undetermined genre (EA 360), an Egyptian-Akkadian vocabulary (EA 368), fragments of a literary texts (EA 372, EA 376), and a list of divine names (EA 374);
- (ii) lists of gifts or inventories – cf. the following texts: EA 13, EA 14, EA 22, EA 25, EA 120 and, very probably, also EA 172;
- (iii) epistolary documents written in other languages – i.e. a Hurrian letter EA 24 and two letters written in Hittite, EA 31 and EA 32;
- (iv) second parts of the foregoing tablets – these documents do not incorporate any opening passage, cf. EA 101, EA 113, EA 134, EA 236, EA 237, EA 245 and EA 251;
- (v) damaged or broken – there is also a group of several letters in which the opening passages were either completely lost or are too fragmentary to allow us to postulate only a very general reconstruction of their original state, cf. EA 4, EA 36, EA 43, EA 46, EA 47, EA 56+361, EA 57, EA 66, EA 67, EA 69, EA 70, EA 72, EA 80, EA 115, EA 127, EA 128,³⁴² EA 131, EA 133, EA 135, EA 163, EA 167,

³²⁸ See KNUDTZON (1964: 19ff.).

³²⁹ For a text including the two most recent volumes of translations, consult MORAN (1992: xxii–xxviii) and LAVRIANI (1998–1999). According to the origin of the documents.

³³⁰ The remaining group of seven documents is addressed to petty Syro-Palestinian rulers and thus has been included in the second group of documents, see EA 99, EA 162, EA 163, EA 190, EA 367, EA 369 and EA 370.

³³¹ See GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN (2004: 34–35).

³³² See GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN (2004: 40). EA 30, a letter from the Mitannian king to the Canaanite rulers, is therefore listed among the vassal/imperial correspondence.

³³³ EA 12, from a Babylonian princess(?), see GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN (2004: 36).

³³⁴ For EA 18 see GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN (2004: 40). EA 30, a letter from the Mitannian king to the Canaanite rulers, is therefore listed among the vassal/imperial correspondence.

³³⁵ Cf. MYNAROVA (2006a: 125): 'I have tried to demonstrate here, that both the form and the contents of the letters from Ugarit speak for their "status", somewhere inbetween the so-called "international" and so-called "vassal" correspondence. ... Our understanding of terms like "royal," "vassal," "imperial" etc. is probably too much influenced by our modern way of thinking, and it can be difficult for us to differentiate, describe, and above all to correctly appreciate the situation which is so different and distant from our own.'

³³⁶ For this subject, consult especially ARTZT (1986); *idem* (1992); DEMSKY (1990); IZHÉ EL (1997); VAN DER TOORN (2000).

³³⁷ Only the reverse.

³³⁸ On the reverse.

³³⁹ On the obverse.

³⁴⁰ According to IZHÉ EL (1997: 32) EA 351 might be a join with EA 352+353, EA 354 and EA 373.

³⁴¹ For 'The King and the Evil Portending, Ominous Sign In His House,' see ARTZT (1982).

EA 169, EA 173, EA 179–181, EA 186, EA 190, EA 197, EA 208, EA 218, EA 219, EA 240, EA 247, EA 291, EA 310, EA 313, EA 335, EA 371 and EA 381;
(vi) fragments – cf. a collective number EA 382;

Even with this elimination of items, we still have at our disposal a total of 289 opening passages³⁴³ preserved within the Amarna corpus³⁴⁴ to which we can also add the Tell el-Hesi tablet (EA 333). Altogether, these represent a relatively homogenous group of opening passages available for analysis, although their state of preservation differs considerably. Such a limitation, however, enables us to study and discuss the preserved opening passages and relevant formulae in more detail. Among these documents we can also distinguish two different groups – i.e. letters with a more or less clearly stated origin and letters without a stated origin in the opening passages. This situation must always be taken into consideration when making more general conclusions.

It is not the aim of the chapter to give a thorough overview of the types of opening passages preserved in the Amarna corpus;³⁴⁵ however, it is necessary to make some general remarks at this point. In general, we can describe the epistolary Amarna documents as having predominantly a binominal pattern, consisting of the opening passage and the respective body of the letter. Only very rarely is this binominal pattern extended by means of a postscript, following the body of the letter, that contains a message to the scribe reading the pertinent letter to the addressee, cf. EA 286–289 and EA 316.³⁴⁶ It has already been mentioned, *sub* (iv), that in some cases, no opening passages are employed and it is highly probable that in these cases the particular tablets were indeed second parts or tablets, following on from the foregoing tablets, and thus not in need of an opening passage.

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 1	lines 1–9	Amenhotep III (Egypt)
EA 2	lines 1–5	Kadašmanenilī I (Babylonia)
EA 3	lines 1–6	Kadašmanenilī I (Babylonia)
EA 5	lines 1–12	Amenhotep III (Egypt)
EA 6	lines 1–7	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 7	lines 1–7	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 8	lines 1–7	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 9	lines 1–6	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 10	lines 1–6	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 11	lines 1–4	Burnaburiyaš II (Babylonia)
EA 12	lines 1–6	Babylonian princess (Babylonia)
EA 15	lines 1–6	Aššuruballit I (Assyria)
EA 16	lines 1–5	Aššuruballit I (Assyria)
EA 17	lines 1–10	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 18	lines 1–6	Tušratta(?) (Mitanni)
EA 19	lines 1–8	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 20	lines 1–7	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 21	lines 1–12	Tušratta (Mitanni)

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 23	lines 1–12	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 26	lines 1–6	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 27	lines 1–6	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 28	lines 1–11	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 29	lines 1–5	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 30	lines 1–2	Tušratta (Mitanni)
EA 33	lines 1–8	King of Alasiya
EA 34	lines 1–7	King of Alasiya
EA 35	lines 1–8	King of Alasiya
EA 37	lines 1–7	King of Alasiya
EA 38	lines 1–6	King of Alasiya
EA 39	lines 1–9	King of Alasiya
EA 40	lines 1–5	King of Alasiya
EA 41	lines 1–6	Suppiluluma I (Hatti)
EA 42	lines 1*–3*	Suppiluluma I (Hatti)
EA 44	lines 1–6	Zita (Hatti)
EA 45	lines 1–7	Amištamru I (Ugarit)
EA 48	lines 1–4	Queen of Ugarit I-ljlepa
EA 49	lines 1–7	Niqmaddu II (Ugarit)
EA 50	lines 1–7	Daughter of ... (unknown, sent from Byblos; GORIN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 159])
EA 51	lines 1–3	Addunirari (Nuljašše)
EA 52	lines 1–4	Akizzi (Qatna)
EA 53	lines 1–3	Akizzi (Qatna)
EA 54	lines 1–3	Akizzi (Qatna)
EA 55	lines 1–3	Akizzi (Qatna)
EA 58	lines 1–3	Teḫuteššub (Syria)
EA 59	lines 1–4	Citizens of Tunip
EA 60	lines 1–5	Abdiširta (Amurru)
EA 61	lines 1–5	Abdiširta (Amurru)
EA 62	lines 1–3	Abdiširta (Amurru)
EA 63	lines 1–6	Abdiširta (Gath)
EA 64	lines 1–7	Abdiširta (Gath)
EA 65	lines 1–5	Abdiširta (Gath)
EA 68	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 71	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 73	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 74	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 75	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 76	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 77	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 78	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos; sent from Šumur; GORIN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 139])
EA 79	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 81	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 82	lines 1–4	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 83	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 84	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 85	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 86	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 87	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 88	lines 1–4	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 89	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 90	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 91	lines 1–2	Ribhaddi (Byblos)

³⁴² Letter EA 128 might be a double letter, see MORAN (1992: xxiv, n. 58).

³⁴³ See tab. 6 'An overview of analyzed tablets'. However, in his study devoted to the scholarly texts from Amarna Sh. IZME'EL (1997: 97–99) also recognized two more letter fragments that were omitted in the previous studies devoted to the Amarna letters. First of these is a tablet EA 361, being a join to EA 56 (today in Berlin; VAT 1714) and EA 381 (VAT 3781). Nevertheless, none of them is applicable for further analysis.

³⁴⁴ EA 170 is a double letter. The first message with the opening passage in lines 1–6 is addressed by two individuals, Ba³luya and Bel³lu, to Aziru of Amurru. The second message (following the body of the first message), with the opening passage in lines 36–39, was sent by a certain Amurba³ia to four individuals concerning the report of well-being of their relatives. The two opening passages are thus marked as EA 170A and EA 170B respectively.

³⁴⁵ Cf. pp. 89–104 in this volume.

³⁴⁶ The postscript is also preserved in EA 32; however, this letter is written in Hittite and thus not suitable for further analysis.

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 92	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 93	lines 1–3	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 94	lines 1–3	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 95	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 96	lines 1–6	Egyptian commander (sent from Šumur; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 116])
EA 97	lines 1–3	Yapa'hadda(?) (Beirut; sent from Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 161–162])
EA 98	lines 1–2	Yapa'hadda (Beirut)
EA 99	lines 1*–9*	Amenhotep III or Amenhotep IV (Egypt)
EA 100	lines 1–6	Irqata and his elders (sent from Šumur; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 122])
EA 102	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 103	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 104	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 105	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 106	lines 1–3	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 107	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 108	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 109	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 110	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 112	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 114	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 116	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 117	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 118	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 119	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 121	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 122	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 123	lines 1–9	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 124	lines 1–6	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 125	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 126	lines 1–3	Ribhaddi (Byblos; sent from Šumur; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 154–155])
EA 129	lines 1–3	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 130	lines 1–8	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 132	lines 1–7	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 136	lines 1–5	Ribhaddi (Byblos; sent from Beirut; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 157])
EA 137	lines 1–4	Ribhaddi (Byblos sent from Beirut)
EA 138	lines 1–4	Ribhaddi (Byblos sent from Beirut; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 157–158])
EA 139	lines 1–4	Ilirap' and Byblos
EA 140	lines 1–4	Ilirap' and Byblos
EA 141	lines 1–8	Ammunira (Beirut)
EA 142	lines 1–5	Ammunira (Beirut)
EA 143	lines 1–6	Ammunira (Beirut)
EA 144	lines 1–9	Zimreddi (Sidon)
EA 145	lines 1–4	Zimreddi (Sidon)
EA 146	lines 1–6	Abimilki (Tyre; not from Tyre; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 168–169])
EA 147	lines 1–5	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 148	lines 1–3	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 149	lines 1–5	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 150	lines 1–3	Abimilki (Tyre)

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 151	lines 1–5	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 152	lines 1–5	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 153	lines 1–3	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 154	lines 1–5	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 155	lines 1–6	Abimilki (Tyre)
EA 156	lines 1–3	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 157	lines 1–5	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 158	lines 1–4	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 159	lines 1–4	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 160	lines 1–4	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 161	lines 1–3	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 162	lines 1–2	Amenhotep IV (Egypt)
EA 164	lines 1–3	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 165	lines 1–3	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 166	lines 1–5	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 168	lines 1–3	Aziru (Amurru; probably sent from Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 112–113])
EA 170A	lines 1–6	Ba'luaya and Bet'lu (Amurru)
EA 170B	lines 36–39	Amurba'lu (Amurru)
EA 171	lines 1–2	Aziru (Amurru)
EA 174	lines 1–7	Beti (Hajabab)
EA 175	lines 1–6	Ildaya (Hasi)
EA 176	lines 1–6	unknown (Beqa' Valley)
EA 177	lines 1–5	Yamiyuta (Guddaššuna)
EA 178	lines 1–3	Ujbiya (Beqa' Valley)
EA 182	lines 1–5	Šutarna (Mušijuna)
EA 183	lines 1–9	Šutarna (Mušijuna)
EA 184	lines 1–8	Šutarna (Mušijuna)
EA 185	lines 1–8	Mayaršana (Jasi)
EA 187	lines 1–8	Šaliya (Enišasi)
EA 188	lines 1–3	unknown (unknown)
EA 189	lines 1–4	Eiakkama (Qadesh)
EA 191	lines 1–3	Arzawiya (Rubizza)
EA 192	lines 1–9	Arzawiya (Rubizza)
EA 193	lines 1–4	Tiwate (Labana)
EA 194	lines 1–5	Biryawaza (Damascus)
EA 195	lines 1–15	Biryawaza (Damascus)
EA 196	lines 1–4	Biryawaza (Damascus)
EA 198	lines 1–9	Arawana (Kumidi)
EA 199	lines 1–4	unknown (Bashan region)
EA 200	lines 1–6	'Your(?) servanis' (probably from Bashan region; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 221])
EA 201	lines 1–8	Artamanya (Zirbašani)
EA 202	lines 1–6	Anayaše (probably from Bashan region; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 221])
EA 203	lines 1–8	Abdimilki (Sasjimi)
EA 204	lines 1–8	ruler of Qanu
EA 205	lines 1–8	ruler of Tubu
EA 206	lines 1–8	ruler of Nazib(?)a
EA 207	lines 1–3	Iptel...l (unknown; sent from Aštartu; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 221–222])
EA 209	lines 1–6	Zišamimi (unknown; sent from Damascus; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 222])
EA 211	lines 1–7	Zitriyara (unknown; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 306–307])

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 212	lines 1–5	Zitriyara (unknown; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 307])
EA 213	lines 1–9	Zitriyara (unknown; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 307–308])
EA 215	lines 1–9	Bayawa (unknown; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 308])
EA 216	lines 1–6	Bayawa (unknown)
EA 217	lines 1–7	Alb(?)...J (unknown; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 310])
EA 220	lines 1–9	Kurtuya (Zuf(?)nu)
EA 221	lines 1–7	Yikasu (unknown; sent from Tel Yoknean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 255])
EA 222	lines 1–7	Yikasu (unknown; from Tel Yoknean (?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 255])
EA 223	lines 1–6	Endaruta (Akšap)
EA 224	lines 1–6	Šumhaadda (unknown; sent from Beth Shean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 234–237])
EA 225	lines 1–7	Šumuhadda (Šamhuna)
EA 226	lines 1–5	Šipturilšal (unknown; from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 308])
EA 227	lines 1–4	ruler of Hazor
EA 228	lines 1–9	Abditišī (Hazor)
EA 229	lines 1–7	Abdinal...J (sent from Gath; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 286])
EA 230	lines 1–3	Yama (unknown)
EA 231	lines 1–10	unknown (unknown; from Byblos(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 315])
EA 232	lines 1–11	Surata (unknown; sent from Beth Shean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 239])
EA 233	lines 1–15	Satatna (Akka)
EA 234	lines 1–9	Satatna (Akka; sent from Beth Shean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 238])
EA 235+327	lines 1–11	Satatna (Akka; sent from Beth Shean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 238–239])
EA 238	lines 1–3	Bayadi (unknown; sent from Anaharath(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 240–243])
EA 239	lines 1–7	Baduzana (unknown; sent from Anaharath(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 241–243])
EA 241	lines 1–8	Rušanaya (Šaruna)
EA 242	lines 1–8	Biridiya (Megiddo)
EA 243	lines 1–7	Biridiya (Megiddo)
EA 244	lines 1–8	Biridiya (Megiddo)
EA 246	lines 1–7	Biridiya (Megiddo)
EA 248	lines 1–8	Yašdara (Megiddo)
EA 249	lines 1–4	Ba'lu-UR-SAG (Gintipadalla; sent from Rehob(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 249–250])
EA 250	lines 1–3	Ba'lu-UR-SAG (Gintipadalla)
EA 252	lines 1–4	Lab'ayu (Shechem)
EA 253	lines 1–6	Lab'ayu (Shechem)
EA 254	lines 1–6	Lab'ayu (Shechem)
EA 255	lines 1–7	Mutba'lu (Pella; sent from Beth Shean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 261])
EA 256	lines 1–4	Mutba'lu (Pella)
EA 257	lines 1–6	Ba'lumeyir (...Ilgnate(?); sent from Tel Yoknean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 251])
EA 258	lines 1–5	Ba'lumeyir (...Ilgnate(?); sent from Tel Yoknean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 251])

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 259	lines 1–5	Ba'lumeyir (...Ilgnate(?); sent from Tel Yoknean(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 252–255])
EA 260	lines 1–5	Ba'umir (Bit-Tenni)
EA 261	lines 1–6	Dašru (unknown; sent from Šamhuna(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 305–306])
EA 262	lines 1–6	Dašru (unknown)
EA 263	lines 1–5	unknown (Palestine; sent from Rehob(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 250])
EA 264	lines 1–4	Tagi (Gintikirmil)
EA 265	lines 1–4	Tagi (Gintikirmil)
EA 266	lines 1–8	Tagi (Gintikirmil)
EA 267	lines 1–8	Mikilu (Gezer)
EA 268	lines 1–7	Mikilu (Gezer)
EA 269	lines 1–8	Mikilu (Gezer)
EA 270	lines 1–8	Mikilu (Gezer)
EA 271	lines 1–8	Mikilu (Gezer)
EA 272	lines 1–7	Ba'lušipil (Gezer)
EA 273	lines 1–7	Belet-UR-MAJ.MEŠ (Šabuma; sent from Gezer(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 276–277])
EA 274	lines 1–9	Belet-UR-MAJ.MEŠ (Šabuma; sent from Gezer(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 276–279])
EA 275	lines 1–8	Ya'zibada (sent from Shepela)
EA 276	lines 1–8	Ya'zibada (sent from Shepela)
EA 277	lines 1–7	unknown (unknown; sent from Shephela(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 291])
EA 278	lines 1–8	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 279	lines 1–8	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 280	lines 1–8	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 281	lines 1–7	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 282	lines 1–7	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 283	lines 1–6	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 284	lines 1–5	Šuwardata (Gath)
EA 285	lines 1–4	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 286	lines 1–4	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 287	lines 1–3	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 288	lines 1–4	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 289	lines 1–4	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 290	lines 1–4	Abdišeba (Jerusalem)
EA 292	lines 1–7	Ba'lušipil (Gezer)
EA 293	lines 1–7	Ba'lušipil (Gazer)
EA 294	lines 1–6	Šl...ni...J (central Palestine)
EA 295	lines 1–7	Ba'lušipil (Tyre)
EA 296	lines 1–8	Yašliru (central or southern Palestine; sent from Ashdod(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 292–293])
EA 297	lines 1–7	Yapašu (Gezer)
EA 298	lines 1–14	Yapašu (Gezer)
EA 299	lines 1–11	Yapašu (Gezer)
EA 300	lines 1–10	Yapašu (Gezer)
EA 301	lines 1–11	Subandu (southern Palestine)
EA 302	lines 1–10	Subandu (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 297])
EA 303	lines 1–12	Subandu (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 297])
EA 304	lines 1–14	Subandu (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 298])

EA no.	Opening Passage	Sender
EA 305	lines 1–14	Šubandu (southern Palestine)
EA 306	lines 1–11	Šubandu (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 298])
EA 307	lines 1*–2*	unknown (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon or Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 311])
EA 308	lines 1*–8*	unknown (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon or Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 311])
EA 309	lines 1*–5*	unknown (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon or Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 311–312])
EA 311	lines 1*–13*	unknown (central or southern Palestine; sent from Laljish(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 289])
EA 312	lines 1*–6*	unknown (southern Palestine; sent from Ashqelon or Gaza; GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 312–313])
EA 314	lines 1–10	PU-ba'la (Yurša)
EA 315	lines 1–7	PU-ba'la (Yurša)
EA 316	lines 1–9	PU-ba'la (Yurša)
EA 317	lines 1–6	Dagantakala (Syria; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 309])
EA 318	lines 1–7	Dagantakala (Syria; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 309])
EA 319	lines 1–14	Zurašar (Ghilašna; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 302–303])
EA 320	lines 1–15	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 321	lines 1–14	Yidya (Ashqelon; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 295])
EA 322	lines 1–14	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 323	lines 1–9	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 324	lines 1–9	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 325	lines 1–9	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 326	lines 1–8	Yidya (Ashqelon)
EA 328	lines 1–16	Yabni'lu (Lachish)
EA 329	lines 1–12	Zimreddi (Lachish; sent from Gaza(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 288–289])
EA 330	lines 1–8	Šipilba'la (Lachish)
EA 331	lines 1–12	Šipilba'la (Lachish)
EA 332	lines 1–6	Šipilba'la (Lachish)
EA 333	lines 1–3	Papu (central or southern Palestine)
EA 334	lines 1–3	l...ldib (Zubra)
EA 336	lines 1–5	Uziru (unknown; sent from Zukra(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 220])
EA 337	lines 1–6	Uziru (unknown; from Aštartu(?); GOREN – FINKELSTEIN – NA'AMAN [2004: 219])
EA 338	lines 1–3	Zifi...l (unknown)
EA 362	lines 1–4	Ribhaddi (Byblos)
EA 363	lines 1–6	Abdireša (Eniṣasi)
EA 364	lines 1–9	Ayyab (Aštartu)
EA 365	lines 1–7	Birdiya (Megiddo)
EA 366	lines 1–10	Šwardata (Gath)
EA 367	lines 1–5	Amenhotep IV (Egypt)
EA 369	lines 1–4	Amenhotep III (Egypt)
EA 370	lines 1–6	Amenhotep IV (Egypt)
EA 378	lines 1–10	Yapaḫu (Gezer)

Table 6 An overview of analyzed tablets.

EPISTOLARY PERIPHERAL AKKADIAN

The Amarna corpus, or more precisely the Amarna letters, are often mentioned as primary and important representations of the peripheral epistolary tradition of the Late Bronze Age. Nevertheless, the Amarna corpus represents only a fragment of this phenomenon, as is evidenced throughout Late Bronze Age Syro-Palestine. Not all corpora, however, include the epistolary documents, or more precisely, a combination of the diplomatic and administrative letters which appear in the Amarna correspondence. It is necessary to stress that in this chapter, where the objective is to offer only a brief overview of epistolary Peripheral Akkadian as well as to provide the reader with a short description of the inner structure of particular letters, the texts are arranged according to the place of their discovery, instead of according to the place of their origin. I am fully aware that this approach is very simplistic and cannot be used as an opportunity for further analysis or as a means of reaching more general conclusions concerning a typology of the opening passages. This approach is, nevertheless, eventually abandoned in the ensuing part, devoted to analyses of the Amarna material.

Alalah (Tell Atchana)

The earliest Late Bronze Age peripheral corpora,³⁴⁷ however, originate in a region situated outside the 'borders' of Amarna Syro-Palestine, namely at the Amuq plateau, as well as in the basin of the upper stream of the Euphrates river. Without a doubt, one of the most important centres of the northern area, which is not attested through the letters of the Amarna archive, is the site of ancient Alalah (modern Tell Atchana)³⁴⁸ in the Amuq plain. The relevant stratum for the particular Late Bronze Age material is Level IV, being dated approximately to the 15th century B.C.E.³⁴⁹ Among almost 300 tablets and fragments written in Hurro-Akkadian or Hurrianized Akkadian³⁵⁰ discovered in Level IV, there was a group of approximately seventeen documents of an epistolary nature,³⁵¹ cf. the following texts: AIT 106 (AT 118); AIT 107; AIT 108 (ATT 38/251); AIT 109; AIT 110; AIT 111 (ATT 38/9); AIT 112 (*ATT 38/20); AIT 113 (ATT 38/104); AIT 114 (ATT 38/14); AIT 116 (ATT 38/8); AIT 117 (ATT 38/32); AIT 118 (ATT 49/1); AIT 123 (ATT 38/58); AIT 297 (ATT 38/21), as well as AIT 5 (AT 139) and AIT 124, both probably letters, and AIT 115 which is

³⁴⁷ For an overview of the corpora, see also PUDRIŠIN (1998); HOROWITZ – OSIMA – SANDRIS (2002); *idem* (2006).

³⁴⁸ The earliest period of archaeological survey and excavation is connected with the activities of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago under the direction of C. Leonard Woolley (1936–1939; 1946–1949), cf. especially Woolley (1938); *idem* (1939); *idem* (1955). The excavations of the Oriental Institute were renewed in 2000, led by K. Ashihani Yener and since 2006 the excavations have continued with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey and the Mustafa Kemal University; see <http://www.alalakh.org>, see YENER (1998); *idem* (2001); *idem* (2005). For the reports of individual seasons since 2000, see http://www.alalakh.org/report_main.asp.

³⁴⁹ For the chronology of Alalah, in general consult especially SMITH, S. (1940); NA'AMAN (1976); *idem* (1979a); COLLON (1977); GATES (1981); *idem* (1987); OLIVA (1999–2000); ZIEB (2004).

³⁵⁰ Cf. RAINY (1996a; II, 1), 'a development of an Akkadian strongly flavored by the Hurrian language spoken by large segments of the mid-second millennium population there.' For a detailed overview of studies pertaining the Alalah Akkadian, see chiefly ARNAUD (1998) and MARGUÉZ ROWE (1998).

³⁵¹ For an overview of the already published Alalah texts, including references to the subsequent literature, see HESS (1988). For an extensive study of the documents from Level IV, see von Dassow (2005). For the publications of the tablets, consult, above all, SMITH, S. (1939); WISPMAN (1953); *idem* (1954); SNEIDER (1954); HESS (1992); for the overview of the Alalah texts, see GREENSTEIN (1997). For the archives and scribes see NA'AMAN (1980) and HESS (1996).