

laborers during the harvest season. Numerous rent and lease contracts dating from the Old Babylonian and neo-Babylonian periods are also extant, but it cannot be proved from the former class of contracts whether a considerable proportion of the urban population lived in rented quarters. The importance of leases is indicated by their detailed regulation in the Code of Hammurabi. They are found in various forms, as interest lease or partial lease, depending upon whether it was plowed land, plantations or land to made arable. In the neo-Babylonian period is is found also as a lease in consideration of an impost (inittu) upon the lessee, to be fixed at a later date. This was possibly the form of lease for the dependent peasants of temples and large estates. Moreover the leases were made for small plots of land and ordinarily, with the exception of leases for virgin land, covered only the term of a single harvest.

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