**Tintir** (Dintir, Tenter). An ancient toponym, spelled tīn.tir ki, pronunciation provided by Dirī IV 89, where it is glossed [t]e⁻‘en-tir? (George 1992, 237; Civil 2004, 152, [t]e-e[n-ter]). Probably derives from a prehistoric language, though an origin in the “Kiš tradition” of writing has also been suspected (Kienast 1979). It has three known applications in the historical toponymy of lower Mesopotamia.

1. A village near Umma that appears in documents of the Ur III period as a cult centre of Nergal (Edzard/Farber-Flügge 1974, 194; George 1992, 238; Cohen 1996).

2. A spelling of Babylon that first occurs in the nineteenth century, in year names, archival documents and a Sumerian hymn of Inanna; in royal inscriptions it begins to be used in the Kassite period, and becomes common in the first millennium (George 1992, 237–241).

3. A spelling of the toponym Šuanna, both as another name of Babylon and as a quarter of the city inside the Uraš Gate (George 1992, 374 f.).

The name Tintir also refers to a series of scholarly lists, incipit Tintir = Babylon, that celebrate Babylon, its monuments and topography (George 1992: 1–71; Veldhuis 1998). In bilingual lists tīn.tir ki occurs in the left-hand column, explained to the right as (a) ŠU, i.e. Tintir, (b) Šuanna, and (c) Babilu (Babylon), which prompted ancient scholars to treat it as a Sumerian counterpart of (b) and (c). Thus it occurs in a pseudo-Sumerian personal name tīn.tir ki-ki-dù.ga (“Babylon is a Pleasant Place”), the scribe of a document written at or near Babylon in the reign of Abiešu (Klengel 1971, 125 f.). As a supposedly Sumerian proper noun tīn.tir ki was open to etymological speculation, through which it was interpreted in Dirī IV 92–93 and Tintir I 2–3 as (d) šubat nubšu “the seat of plenty” and (e) šubat balāṭi “seat of life”, where tīn = balatu and nubšu and tir = šubtu.


A. R. George