

ARCHEOLOGIE

EVANS, J.M. — The Lives of Sumerian Sculptures. An Archaeology of the Early Dynastic Temple. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012. (26 cm, XII, 322). ISBN 979-1-107-01739-9. \$ 99.00, £ 60.00.

Several studies have been dedicated to ancient sculptures in Mesopotamia, principally investigating stylistic properties and forms in order to establish groups and boundaries of the visual documents that have been excavated in Mesopotamian sites. Archaeological excavations in Central and Southern Mesopotamia, in Early Dynastic urban centres, date back to the 19th and early 20th centuries, and some problems are related to the documentation and stratigraphic interpretation of the archaeological deposits. In fact, with the exception of a few examples — such as the German excavations at Ashur or the American archaeological research in the Diyala region, excavations have been undertaken without due care and objects have been either discarded or swiftly removed from their context.

In recent years, two other studies have been published on the topic of Mesopotamian sculpture: the essay by N. Marchetti and G. Marchesi in 2006 (*La statuaria regale nella Mesopotamia protodinastica*), with an English version published in 2011, aims at reconstructing the original archaeological context of Early Dynastic statues and sculptures so that conclusion about chronology of the archaeological sites might be derived from both stylistic (according to method developed by the German archaeologist A. Moortgat) and stratigraphic considerations (according to the method of the Dutch archaeologist H. Frankfort with the American excavations in the Diyala region of central Iraq).

The essay here under review follows the same goals: the author points out the importance and essential role of stratigraphy and consideration of the archaeological context to develop a more insightful reasoning about Early Dynastic sculptures in temples that should not only be based on stylistic evaluations of differences and occurrences, but should also take into consideration the place where those sculptures were found and thus can be assumed to have been in ancient times (if visible or invisible to the eyes of beholders, donors and audience). Indeed, this new approach shows that place

and (in)visibility of ancient artefacts is much more intriguing and stimulating than the mere stylistic evaluations of each artefact (thus creating groups and categories of statues and sculptures). However, this does not mean that considerations about styles and formal features of statues are no longer useful, but they must be reinterpreted and perceived into a new dimension of study as a means to achieve a deeper comprehension of the life of statues in ancient Mesopotamia.

The most interesting aspect of the book is the concept of the life of Sumerian sculpture of the Early Dynastic Period: in fact, this also corresponds to verb *tu(d)* of the Sumerian language, literally “to generate, give birth”. Statues are shaped and fashioned as living beings within society and within the system of mutual relationships between the statue itself and people (donors, worshippers). To act in the world, statues necessarily undergo rituals (such as the rite of the opening of the mouth): in this respect, they properly are living subjects and it seems particularly interesting the reference made by the author to the work by W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago, 2005), where the concept of lives of images is pointed out. In particular, as beings acting in the world, Mitchell acknowledges the possibility that images have their own loves and desires and thus want. But, as asked so stimulatingly by Mitchell, what do pictures want? In this respect, can we in fact ask what it is that ancient Sumerian statues want? It is an intriguing question, although we must be aware that the answer might be: nothing. Ancient Sumerian statues wanted nothing, but the donor and the king who commissioned the statue wanted something from the image. For example, this is the case for the statue of King Gudea which is asked to speak to the god Ningirsu once it has been ritually generated and placed in the temple of the city. In this way, statues are not a decorative element of temples, passive paraphernalia of sacred buildings: as Evans points out, statue, “as a material object and physical presence”, “has the potential to shape the human experiences” (p. 110).

I would add that the representation of statues of gods and kings in human shape augments the potential to shape human experiences since viewers and worshippers can perfectly understand the position and action of the statue in a not only agentive perspective but in a deeper empathetic experience. The position of the statue within the building, temple cella or the open temple court, the interactions of the worshippers with the statue (the possibility of moving around the statue), the interactions of the statue with other statues and the use of smells and music emphasise the situation of ritual encounter between statues and worshippers. Human experience is shaped by the physical presence of statues, and both the material and immaterial nature of objects interfere with the humans: statues are represented as carrying objects and the same objects are used in rituals in temples by priests and worshippers. This seems particularly true if one takes into consideration statues and pictures showing banquets and consumption of food and drink that were, as mentioned earlier, part of specific rituals: at the same time, in temple contexts, bowls and goblets used for consumption and pouring of liquids were part of the paraphernalia and it should also be implied that those containers were in fact used to supply statues with food and drinks. In the Temple of Inanna at Nippur many stone vessels (bowls) were dedicated and it might in fact infer that those objects were used for the daily activities in the temple.

Evans’ analysis of Sumerian sculpture fits in with the recent studies and cognitive research by Colin Renfrew and Lambros Malafouris who ideated the Material Engagement Theory and Ian Hodder with his entanglement theory. Statues, as objects inserted in a place and acting in a space, are counterparts of rituals and performances; at the same time, the materials the statues are made of are also involved in the material engagement theory and the use of different raw materials (with their own intrinsic qualities and colours) points out visual response and appearance. In this respect, it is interesting to note the use of coloured materials for physical details of the statues, for example the eyes that, as Evans recurrently states, are a significant part of Sumerian statuary, with larger dimensions that draw the viewers’ gaze. Indeed, eyes have both an active and passive relevance: they receive the direct gaze of the viewers and worshippers in an often eye-to-eye meeting and, conversely, they look at the person or statue in front.

In fact, as pointed out by Evans, the correct evaluation of the use of multi-coloured materials for the shaping of statues might be the suitable way to get and properly interpret the aesthetics of ancient Sumerians according to notions that belong to the culture that produced those works of art rather than applying western based judgments and estimations that cannot always be appropriate to describe non-western works.

Aesthetics or, rather, an aesthetic reevaluation of ancient Sumerian sculpture is the other most interesting and well debated topic of the book under review: Evans’ considerations go beyond the stylistic classification and regrouping of Sumerian sculptures as it was done in the first studies immediately after the discovery of the important deposits of statues.

In fact the author of the first studies of Sumerian sculpture bases his argument on the seminal works of Henri Frankfort: judgements and evaluation of the Sumerian visual world have been strongly influenced by western-based aesthetic principles. Indeed, maybe even the Assyrian sculptures discovered in northern Iraq in the mid-19th century, before the works in Sumer in southern Iraq, caused the definition of Sumerian sculpture as a primitive art and the intentions of shaping the look of the prototype of Sumerian people.

Sumerian art and, generally speaking, ancient Near Eastern art have been judged with the classical art of Greece and Rome as the main points of reference, in what Colin Renfrew has accurately defined “the tyranny of Renaissance”.

Not only simple stylistic considerations, but also the exhibition of Sumerian statues in western museums, has contributed to the definition of the aesthetic appreciation and perception of ancient statues, transferring our own perceptive and cognitive experience to the ancient Sumerians in what Evans recognises as the equivalence of temple = museum and museum = temple. Actually, the introduction and use of photography in archaeological field changed the nature of artefacts: as well as being an instrument for documenting archaeological features, photos of ancient objects and statues give ancient artefacts the aura of work of art (in a reverse perspective of what W. Benjamin was indeed claiming), thus deserving the right to be published in catalogue of works of art and exhibited in museums.

Evans’ book has the great quality of analysing ancient Sumerian statues as material objects and archaeological data, without imposing secondary and forced reinterpretations concerning aesthetics and style: indeed, the evaluation of

Sumerian statues by Evans follows a new kind of aesthetics, based on a rigorous consideration of the Sumerian perspective, starting from the lives of Sumerian statues in their original archaeological context (for example in the insight analysis of the hoard of Tell Asmar), a life centred on both the statue itself and the entirety of actions going on around, for and because of the statue. From the point of view of the Material Engagement Theory, we can affirm that Evans' study moves to analyse how Sumerian statues are rather than what they are.

Evans' study of Sumerian statues in the Early Dynastic Period gives new arguments and ideas on a long interpretation of material, with a very interesting new perspective that is based on the importance of the archaeological contexts where statues have been recovered and, possibly, lived. This approach is much more desirable as the archaeological excavations in southern Iraq are resumed: archaeological research can in fact add new data for the comprehension of old deposits of statues and can also reveal new statues in context to study not only the lives of ancient Sumerian sculptures but also investigate the death of the statues in their reuse, replacement or reallocation.

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KILLEBREW, A.E. and G. LEHMANN (eds.) — *The Philistines and Other "Sea Peoples" in Text and Archaeology*. (Archaeology and Biblical Studies, 15). Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, 2013. (23 cm, XIX, 751). ISBN 978-1-58983-129-2. \$ 88.95.

The present volume is the result of an "updated" workshop in 2001 which was devoted to "The Philistines and other Sea Peoples". It tackles one of the most intriguing historical and archaeological puzzles at the end of the 13th and the 12th centuries BCE in the Eastern Mediterranean. The preface (N.A. Silberman) pays homage to Moshe Dothan and his achievements as an archaeologist and teacher. The remainder of the publication consists of 24 chapters which are thematically divided in an introductory chapter by the editors, "The World of the Philistines and Other Sea Peoples", followed by "The Philistines in Text and Archaeology"; "The Other 'Sea Peoples' in the Levant"; "Anatolia, the Aegean, and Cyprus"; and an appendix on "The Sea Peoples in Primary Sources".

In Chapter 1, Introduction (by the editors), the reader learns that the workshop was co-organized by, in addition to the editors, M. Artzy and R. Hachlili and supported by the University of Haifa and the Ben Gurion University of the Negev. This introduction is useful because it presents a comprehensible summary of the 23 chapters that follow. The editors highlight the well-known problem in the past of overly simplistic interpretations of the best known group of the Sea Peoples, the Philistines, and inform the reader that the publication contains a collection of papers that examines not only the Philistine but also the broader Sea Peoples phenomena from a variety of viewpoints and disciplines. The complexity of the crisis period during the later part of the

Late Bronze Age, viz. the outgoing 13th and the 12th centuries BCE, is well summarized by a historical review of past and present research. This includes the discussion on the somewhat misleading, although today generally accepted, term "Sea Peoples" which encompasses the ethonyms Lukka, Sherden, Shekelesh, Teresh, Eqwesh, Denyen, Sikil/Tjekker, Wehesh, and Peleset. The editors once again point out that despite the ever expanding archaeological record the identity and origins of the Sea Peoples remain quite elusive.

Chapter 2 (I. Singer) addresses the historical value of the biblical record, which has been questioned by I. Finkelstein. Singer rejects any implications which consider the mentioning of early Philistines as a literary invention of the 7th century BCE or later. He argues for a firm Iron Age I date for the appearance of the Philistines, which is supported by the archaeological evidence from the Pentapolis and the epigraphic material from the northern Levant and Cilicia. Chapter 4 (T.J. Barako), which should have followed directly after Chapter 2, concentrates on a comparison of the stratigraphic evidence from the minor Egyptian outpost at Tel Mor with that of one of the cities of the Pentapolis, the major Philistine centre of Ashdod. Barako defends the traditional (high) Iron I chronology with fairly convincing arguments against the roughly 50 years lower chronology of I. Finkelstein and D. Ussishkin: he argues that the Philistines arrived during the reign of Ramesses III and not later, viz. after Ramesses IV according to Finkelstein/Ussishkin, and that Egyptian finds during this period are mainly from outside Philistia because the Philistines, who were hostile to Egypt, dominated the land occupied by them.

Chapters 3 (T. Dothan and D. Ben-Shlomo), 5 (P.A. Mountjoy) and 6 (A.E. Killebrew) discuss the important role of Mycenaean IIIC pottery and its locally made derivatives for our understanding of early Philistine culture. The editors rightly state that these ceramics have long been considered the most important tool for the recognition of the presence of the Philistines in the Southern Levant. This brings us to the problematic and confusing terminology for the locally made derivatives (!) of Aegean/Mycenaean pottery for which, unfortunately, a consensus does not exist: it is variously termed "Late Helladic/Mycenaean IIIC" with or without a variety of suffixes (understood as locally made which is not always obvious from the text), "White Painted Wheel-made (III)", "Philistine Late Helladic IIIC", "Philistine Aegean-style", "Philistine 1", "Philistine Monochrome", and "Aegean-style/type". This makes some of the text in this volume not always easy to comprehend. It would have been advantageous either to explain already in the introductory chapter the contributing author's use of differing terms for certain groups of ceramics or for every individual author at the beginning of the chapter to have explained and motivated her/his use of a specific term, especially since ceramics are our most important tool in this research.

Dothan/Ben-Shlomo (Chapter 3) discuss the progress of research on the "Mycenaean IIIC:1" pottery in the southern Levant, mainly based on well-stratified finds from Ashdod, Tel Miqne-Ekron, Ashkelon and Gath. They list a number of chemical and petrographical studies which demonstrate that this type of pottery was locally made but not standardized. Aegean-imported "Mycenaean IIIC" pottery from Beth Shean, Tel Keisan and possibly Megiddo is briefly discussed. Both Dothan/Ben-Shlomo and Mountjoy put forward the

hypothesis on the transfer of knowledge for the production of these locally made wares, inter alia from Cyprus.

In her Chapter 5, Mountjoy studies the various shapes and decorative patterns of “Mycenaean IIIC” pottery from Tel Miqne-Ekron. She concludes that the “Mycenaean” pottery from Ekron is a hybrid style with influences from the Greek mainland via Cyprus or the south Anatolian littoral, Crete and the Dodecanese. Ekron Stratum VIIB should, according to her conclusions, date from the “first phase of Late Helladic IIIC Early, while the Stratum VIIA material is equivalent to the second phase of Late Helladic IIIC Early”. She emphasizes “that the pottery from Enkomi and Ekron is so similar that it suggests a simultaneous appearance from a common source rather than a gradual infiltration from Cyprus to Ekron”. Killebrew (Chapter 6) focuses on early Philistine pottery technology at Tel Miqne-Ekron and its implications for the Late Bronze–Early Iron Age transition in the Eastern Mediterranean. In her ambitious and lengthy study she goes beyond typological considerations and stresses that there is a clear break with Late Bronze Age ceramic traditions. The close technological affinities with contemporaneous Cypriot and Cilician “Aegean-style” assemblages are highlighted. A minor remark: her Figure 1, which (only) shows the five cities of the Pentapolis, would have gained if supplemented with other important contemporaneous sites or, alternatively, (a) map(s) showing all the essential sites which are mentioned in this volume and which are shown in various figures in the following chapters, could have been placed at the beginning of the publication.

L. Meiberg (Chapter 7) studies the Philistine lion-headed cups and suggests an Anatolian, and not Aegean, origin. S. Laemmel (Chapter 8) describes some tomb groups at Tell el-Fara^ah South. She highlights the continuity of local Late Bronze Age traditions and stresses that the changes observed at the site may have more to do with intensified contacts with Cyprus and its south-eastern maritime centres of Hala Sultan Tekke, Kition and Enkomi.

Tell es-Safi/Gath is a pivotal site concerning the transitional Iron Age I/II period. A. Maeir (Chapter 8) stresses the rapid change in Philistine material culture at the beginning of Iron Age II, viz. 10th century BCE, with the disappearance of Aegean characteristics. However, he points out that the Philistine culture endures well into Iron Age II when Phoenician elements gain in influence. His contribution goes beyond the main theme of the workshop by presenting a summary of this important excavation spanning from the Late Bronze Age (Stratum 10, 13th century) to the Iron Age IIB (Stratum 3, 8th century). H.M. Nieman (Chapter 10) studies the relation between Philistines and Israelites as presented in the Old Testament. He concludes that the conflict between these two groups is the result of socio-economic differences between people dwelling in the plain littoral and those from the hilly country. It would, maybe, have been more convenient if this chapter had followed Chapter 2.

Co-editor G. Lehmann starts the next section, The Other “Sea Peoples” in the Levant, with Chapter 11 on “Aegean-style/Aegeanizing” pottery from Syria/Lebanon during Iron Age I. Based on his thorough and clear overview of the Aegean-style records of this area, he points to the ceramic connection with Cyprus where Enkomi is considered the key site for the reconstruction of the chronological sequence: the “LH IIIC” pottery at Enkomi is divided into two groups, “LH IIIC Early-Middle styles (=Mycenaean IIIC:1)” and

“Granary Ware/Wavy Line style (end of LH III Middle and Late/Submycenaean)”. He stresses that the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age in this area does not denote discontinuity but a gradual change – with the exception of the destruction of the cities such as Ugarit and Alalakh – with downsizing of urban centres to small-scale economic units, but there are exceptions, for instance, Karkemish. New elements in the shape of “Aegean-type” ceramics, cooking jars/jugs, cylindrical loom weights and fibulae appear in Iron I. He does not exclude pockets of Sea People settlements along the Cilician and Syrian coast which co-existed parallel with Hittite- traditional settlements and eventually the Aramaean culture.

M. Artzy (Chapter 12) deals with the historical and archaeological evidence of “less-known” Sea Peoples, namely the Sikila and Shardana who settled north of Philistia along the Carmel coast. She concludes that these people(s) who were involved in the political and cultural changes during the 12th centuries BCE were initially mercenaries, contractors and intermediaries with their own traditions. During the period of “crisis” they either reverted into marauding “Sea Peoples” or filled a commercial void. She adds that the northern neighbours, the Phoenicians, should be considered a major element in the “other Sea Peoples”. Thematically, Chapter 15 (I. Sharon and A. Gilboa) could better have been placed after Chapter 12. The authors persist in their opinion, although new find groups appear at Dor in the shape of “monochrome” pottery, bimetallic knives and notched scapulae, that this does not give proof of the arrival of new people. In contrast, there is evidence of the continuation of Southern Levantine, Canaanite, traditions into the Iron Age “Phoenician” period together with cultural connections with Cyprus and the Northern Levant, according to the authors.

E. French (Chapter 13) discusses briefly the origin and date of “Aegean-type” pottery in the Levant. Based on the evidence from Mycenaean and Tiryns she suggests that the impetus of the new pottery found in the Levant comes following the earthquake disaster in the Argolid well into the LH IIIC Early period. S. Sheratt and A. Mazar in their Chapter 14 present the “Mycenaean IIIC” and related pottery from Beth Shean. They conclude that the imported “Mycenaean IIIC” pottery probably has Cypriot origins according to the petrographic study by A. Cohen-Weinberger. It consists mostly of stirrup jars which reached Beth Shean before the end of Ramesses III’s reign, viz. before roughly 1150 BCE.

H. Genz (Chapter 16) presents an overview of the “last days” of the Hittite empire. Continued research at Bokazköy/Hattusa casts doubt on the idea that the city was destroyed in a sudden catastrophe, for instance by invading hostile forces, which has been suggested. The evidence points rather to a slow decline due to internal problems, with Hattusa not being totally abandoned after the fall of the empire. Evidence of the Sea Peoples, viz. “LH IIIC pottery styles”, is restricted to the coastal regions and no such finds have been made on the central Anatolian plateau. The distribution of “Hel-lado-Cilician” pottery in Cilicia is dealt with by E. French (Chapter 17). Her analysis has gained much from the material from Tarsus, one of the key sites in this area. It seems that Aegean-style ceramics are more common in Cilicia than in Palestine. M.-H. Gates (Chapter 18) discusses the Early Iron Age newcomers at Kinet Höyük in eastern Cilicia.

These people from “behind the scenes” were obviously pastoralists who manufactured pottery rather casually and did not build permanent structures. The arrival of these people can be linked to the breakdown of the Hittite empire and its south-eastern boundaries after 1200 BCE.

Moving to the eastern Aegean and western Anatolia, M. Benzi (Chapter 19) presents an overview of LH III research in the south-eastern Aegean, the cultural material remains of which demonstrate an individual, non-uniform, development of the Greek mainland styles. These individual styles flourish in LH IIIC Middle but show a decline in the LH IIIC late. He highlights our basic ignorance of the events which took place in this area in the 12th century BCE and which can hardly be perceived on the south-eastern Aegean islands. P.A. Mountjoy’s Chapter 21 would maybe have been better placed after Benzi’s. Mountjoy offers here her view on the stylistic development and distribution of late LH IIIB and LH IIIC Early pottery in the eastern Aegean and western Anatolia. It is once again obvious that the general picture is complex in these decentralized communities which express an individual development. She points rightly to the problem of insufficient publications dealing with this period in this area.

J.B. Rutter (Chapter 20) offers his view “from the west” on the earliest Philistine ceramic assemblage. The earliest pottery belongs, according to Rutter, to the advanced stage of LH IIIC Early. Stylistically, the “LH IIIC” pottery of Philistia has close affinities with that from Cyprus rather than from the Aegean. Also Mountjoy in a previous chapter (and pers. communication) stresses the Cypriot stylistic connection of the pottery from Ekron but refers to neutron activation analysis of several samples (by H. Mommsen) which demonstrates that the pottery is locally made.

M. Iacovou in her lengthy Chapter 22 presents the Late Cypriot (IIC) and IIIA evidence. The subtitle of her paper conveys her general opinion on this topic, namely, “minimal evidence, maximal interpretation”. Although fairly critical of certain excavations (methods/results/interpretations), e.g. Sinda and the old excavations at Hala Sultan Tekke, she presents a thorough overview mixed with her own interpretations as regards the general situation during this period, mainly based on the evidence from Enkomi. I quote from her chapter: “(Enkomi) is to this date the only Late Cypriot settlement in the island that can be considered adequately excavated” (p. 594), and “... it is the only Late Cypriot site where excavation has established the settlement’s continuity stratigraphically ...” (p. 595). She rightly points out that her contribution is a slightly updated version (2008) of her paper from 2001 which of course did not enable her to consider new results, for instance, from the latest four seasons at Hala Sultan Tekke, one of the largest cities of this period: these demonstrate that the site was abandoned and never reoccupied after a destruction dated roughly to the mid-12th century BCE. One of not too many editorial flaws in this volume is the repetition of footnotes in Iacovou’s chapter (notes 10 and 13).

In the concluding Chapter 23 S. Sherratt reflects on the “ceramic phenomenon” of the Sea Peoples. She rightly states that the archaeological record, especially the ceramics, should be studied, considering subtleties of site-and-area-specific nature which certainly had a considerable impact on the appearance of Aegean-style ceramics. The volume ends with an appendix by M.J. Adams and M.E. Cohen, who list the primary textual sources which mention the Sea Peoples.

Before I perform the duty of a reviewer which includes the pointing out of deficiencies in this publication, I would like to forward my appreciation to the editors who had the difficult task of publishing this (updated) important workshop 12 years after the actual meeting, the reason for which is not clearly stated in the volume. All scholars who added new knowledge, and references which were published after 2001, should be thanked in particular. The most recent reference is in fact to a publication from 2012, but the bulk of references are from some years back in time and thereby do not take into account recent discoveries. One might have seen contributions, for instance, on the climate and metallurgy in order to add yet another facet to the Sea Peoples phenomenon, and a more uniform ceramic terminology: varying terms for related groups of pottery, and lack of distinction when “originals” and their locally made derivatives appear under the same term in the text, will certainly confuse non-specialized readers. Despite some minor editorial flaws which include a not always logical sequence of articles and quite an unhappy small format which, in regard to handling, makes the 751-page book difficult to read, it represents a most important contribution to the phenomenon of the Sea Peoples. Many questions could not be answered and this was not expected at all, which makes the Sea Peoples phenomenon even more interesting! Scholars who deal with the history and archaeology of the 13th and 12th centuries BCE in the Eastern Mediterranean should not be without this publication.

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MATOÏAN, V., M. AL-MAQDISSI, et Y. CALVET (éds.) —
Études ougaritiques II. (Ras Shamra-Ougarit, XX).
Editions Peeters, Leuven, 2012. (30 cm, VIII, 318).
ISBN 978-90-429-2595-3. € 48,-.

Mit dem zweiten Band der Reihe *Études ougaritiques* wird gleichzeitig bereits der zwanzigste Band der Publikationsreihe *Ras Shamra-Ougarit* vorgelegt. Auch dieser Band enthält, wie schon der erste Band der Unterreihe,¹⁾ erneut ein breites Spektrum an Ergebnissen aus den unterschiedlichsten Forschungsfeldern der syrisch-französischen Ausgrabungen.

Der Inhalt des vorliegenden Bandes umfasst dabei — dem vielseitigen Charakter der *Études ougaritiques* verpflichtet — mehrere unterschiedliche Themenbereiche: Er präsentiert einen Teil der Forschungsergebnisse der aktuellen, aber auch der älteren archäologischen und geo-archäologischen Untersuchungen vor Ort und in der Umgebung von Ras Shamra/Ugarit; zudem werden verschiedene Detailuntersuchungen einzelner Material- und Objektgruppen aus diesen Grabungen vorgestellt. Einzeluntersuchungen behandeln darüber hinaus aber auch philologische bzw. soziohistorische Fragestellungen.

¹⁾ Vgl. dazu den ersten Band der Reihe: M. Yon – D. Arnaud (Hrsg.), *Études ougaritiques I. Travaux 1985–1995*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit XIV (Paris 2001). Mittlerweile ist bereits ein dritter Band dieser Unterreihe erschienen: V. Matoïan – M. al-Maqdissi (Hrsg.), *Études ougaritiques III*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit XXI (Leuven 2013).

Den Anfang des Bandes bilden zwei Untersuchungen zu den paläoklimatischen und naturräumlichen Gegebenheiten der Region von Ugarit in der Bronzezeit („*Études environnementales*“). Y. CALVET stellt in seinem Aufsatz die klimatischen und geografischen Bedingungen, die natürlichen Ressourcen, sowie Flora und Fauna, vor, welche die Region von Ugarit besonders in der Bronzezeit nachhaltig prägten und somit auch zur politischen Bedeutung der Stadt beitrugen („*La région d'Ougarit au Bronze récent*“, 1–10). B. GEYER beschäftigt sich hingegen eingehender mit der Ressource Wasser und den Techniken, die zur Speicherung und Sicherung dienten („*Ressources en eau et aménagements hydrauliques en Ougarit: état de la recherche*“, 11–18). Der Artikel stellt u.a. den singulären archäologischen Befund einer Damm-Brücke (*pont-barrage*) vor, die in den letzten Kampagnen im Bereich des *Nahr ed-Delbé* im Süden der Stadtanlage freigelegt werden konnte.²⁾

Mit der Prähistorie des Fundortes Ras Shamra beschäftigen sich die folgenden zwei Artikel („*Études sur la Pré-histoire de Ras Shamra*“). H. DE CONTENSON und J. CLÈRE stellen in einem kurzen Artikel Schädelknochenfragmente vor, die den Nachweis von Arthritis (*Osteoarthritis*) aufweisen („*Anthropologie et pathologie dans le Néolithique final de Ras Shamra*“, 19–22). D. HELMER beschäftigt sich mit den Tierknochen eines Tiefschnitts H. de Contensons im Bereich des Baal-Tempels, der eine Schichtenabfolge vom Präkeramischen Neolithikum bis in die Frühe Bronzezeit aufweist („*Étude de la faune du sondage Henri de Contenson à Ras Shamra*“, 23–56).

Der dritte Teil des Bandes widmet sich archäologischen Studien („*Ougarit au Bronze récent: études archéologiques*“). Den Anfang machen A. BOUNNI, J. und E. LAGARCE, sowie S. REY, die einen nunmehr 40 Jahre alten (!) Grabungsschnitt im Zentrum der Siedlung von Ugarit vorstellen, der gleichzeitig auch den Anfangspunkt der syrisch-französischen Grabungen in Ras Ibn Hani darstellte („*Un anniversaire dans l'anniversaire. La campagne de fouilles franco-syrienne à Ras Shamra en 1974: rapport sommaire*“, 57–121). Neben den dort freigelegten spätbronzezeitlichen architektonischen Befunden wird zudem eingehender auf die mit diesen assoziierten Kleinfunde eingegangen. V. MATOIAN stellt Keramikgefäße mit „Töpfermarken“ bzw. „Ritzmarkierungen“ vor („*Données récentes sur les céramiques avec 'marques' d'Ougarit*“, 123–157). Sie aktualisiert und komplementiert damit eine ältere Studie von N. Hirschfeld, die sich bereits mit diesen Objekten beschäftigte.³⁾ In seinem Beitrag stellt J.-Y. MONCHAMBERT eine mit einfacher Bemalung dekorierte Keramikgattung vor, die vermutlich von einem lokalen Workshop in Ugarit produziert wurde („*Une école de peintres-céramiques à Ougarit?*“, 159–166). R. PRÉVALET beleuchtet die unterschiedlichen Techniken der

spätbronzezeitlichen Schmuckherstellung anhand ausgewählter Funde aus diversen Fundkontexten in Ras Shamra („*Techniques de la bijouterie d'or de Ras Shamra-Ougarit: filigrane et granulation*“, 167–184). Zwei Herstellungstechniken von Goldschmuck werden dabei detaillierter vorgestellt: die sog. „Filigrantechnik“ und die „Granulation“. Besonders bedauerndwert scheint dem Rezensenten hierbei jedoch die Tatsache, dass die wichtigen Funde aus der Königsgruft von Tell Mišrife/Qatna in keiner Weise berücksichtigt werden. Die Schmuckobjekte aus der Königsgruft und ihre Herstellungstechniken wurden bereits mehrfach und ausführlich in verschiedenen Artikeln bearbeitet.⁴⁾ F. ONNIS analysiert die Goldplakette RS 15.277 aus dem Königspalast, die bereits 1951 gefunden wurde („*Une plaque en or à décor figuré du Palais royal d'Ougarit*“, 185–220). Die stilistische und ikonografische Analyse ist detailliert, jedoch fehlt leider auch hier jeglicher Hinweis zu den chronologisch, ikonografisch und herstellungstechnisch sehr ähnlichen Funden aus der Königsgruft von Tell Mišrife/Qatna.⁵⁾ Ein letzter Beitrag behandelt schließlich die Produktion und Verwendung des Materials Blei anhand von ausgewählten Funden aus Ras Shamra/Ugarit und Ras Ibn Hani („*Le plomb dans les productions métalliques d'Ougarit*“, 221–239).

Der vierte Teil des Bandes behandelt philologische und soziohistorische Fragestellungen („*Ougarit au Bronze récent: études épigraphiques*“). G. DEL OLMO LETE beschäftigt sich mit der politischen Person des Königs von Ugarit, seiner Machtstellung und spezifischen Verehrung in einer diachronen Perspektive („*Littérature et pouvoir royal à Ougarit. Sens politique de la littérature d'Ougarit*“, 241–250). R. HAWLEY und D. PARDEE stellen eine Neubearbeitung des Textes RS 15.111 vor, der eine königliche Gunsterweisung darstellt. Auf der Basis dieses Textes werden anschließend auch generelle Aspekte in Bezug auf dieses Textcorpus vorgestellt („*Les dons royaux en langue ougaritique: nouvelle étude épigraphique de RS 15.111*“, 251–273). Mit dem Thema Pferdezucht bzw. –austausch beschäftigen sich F. MALBRAN-LABAT und C. ROCHE („*Les chevaux en Ougarit. Élevage et commerce*“, 275–281). Sie kommen nach der Analyse diverser Textgattungen zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Aufzucht und das Training von Equiden größtenteils von den Eliten Ugarits getragen wurde, obgleich die Rolle des Palastes in diesem System bisher unklar definiert bleiben muss. Der überregionale Austausch der Tiere wurde hingegen auch auf der Empfängerseite von hochrangigen Mitgliedern des Hofes organisiert. E. BORDREUIL analysiert schließlich die unterschiedlichen metrologischen Systeme, die im spätbronzezeitlichen Ugarit Verwendung fanden („*Poids et mesures dans les textes administratifs en ougaritique: unités pondérales et quantification du cuivre*“, 283–296).

Thematisch ein wenig außerhalb des eigentlich behandelten Gebietes steht der letzte Beitrag von M. AL-MAQDISSI, der die Ergebnisse der Grabungen in Tell Sianu in der südlich von Ras Shamra/Ugarit gelegenen Ebene von Jablé zusammenfasst

²⁾ Dieser Befund wurde nun auch bereits ausführlicher im dritten Band der *Études ougaritiques* publiziert (s.o.): B. GEYER et al., *Le "pont-barrage" du Nahr ed-Delbé (Ras Shamra-Ougarit, Syrie)*, 1–46.

³⁾ Vgl. N. Hirschfeld, *Marked Late Bronze Age Pottery from the Kingdom of Ugarit*, in: M. Yon, V. Karageorghis und N. Hirschfeld (Hrsg.), *Céramiques mycéniennes, Ras Shamra-Ougarit XIII (Paris 2000)*, 163–200. Eine aktuelle und umfassende Studie zu dieser spezifischen Thematik, dabei jedoch primär in Bezug auf Keramik der Frühbronzezeit aus dem Gebiet des Mittleren Euphrats, bietet nun auch: P. Sconzo, *Pottery and Potmarks at an Early Urban Settlement of the Middle Euphrates River Valley, Syria*, *Final Reports of the Syrian-German Excavations at Tell el-'Abd*, Vol. II, *Altertumskunde des Vorderen Orients* 16/2 (Münster 2013), bes. 223–324.

⁴⁾ Vgl. dazu jetzt aktuell: E. Formigli – M. Abbado, *Die technologische Analyse der Goldobjekte aus der Königsgruft*, in: P. Pfälzner (Hrsg.), *Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Königsgruft von Qatna, Qatna-Studien 1* (Wiesbaden 2011), 191–234.

⁵⁾ Vgl. dazu: P. Pfälzner, *Goldplaketten und andere prestigehaltige Einzelobjekte aus Gold, Silber und Bernstein aus der Königsgruft von Qatna im Kontext von Bestattung und Ritual*, in: P. Pfälzner (Hrsg.), *Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Königsgruft von Qatna, Qatna-Studien 1* (Wiesbaden 2011), 137–190.

(„Notes d'archéologie levantine XXVII. Vingt ans de fouilles archéologiques à Tell Sianu dans la plaine de Jablé, [1990-2009]“, 297–315). Die Grabungen in Tell Sianu erbrachten eine stratigrafische Abfolge, die den Zeitraum vom Chalkolithikum bis in das 19. Jh. n. Chr. abdeckt. Von besonderer Bedeutung ist der Fund einer mittelbronzezeitlichen Tontafel (18. Jh. v. Chr.), die offenbar Kontakte des Ortes bzw. der Ebene von Jablé mit dem nördlichen Mesopotamien (Subartu), Zypern und Ägypten belegt.

Insgesamt betrachtet bietet der besprochene Band ein interessantes und breites Spektrum der archäologischen Forschungen in Ras Shamra/Ugarit. Nicht alle der Beiträge sind dabei von gleicher Qualität und inhaltlicher Stringenz, teilweise ist die zitierte Literatur zudem veraltet und hätte für die Drucklegung noch einmal aktualisiert werden sollen.⁶⁾ Indices, die das gezielte Suchen nach bestimmten thematischen Gesichtspunkten stark erleichtert hätten, wurden leider nicht erstellt. Die fehlende inhaltliche und konzeptionelle Ausrichtung der Beiträge führt unweigerlich dazu, dass der Band als Ganzes die allgemeine Kenntnis und den Blick auf den Fundort Ras Shamra/Ugarit kaum verändern können wird, dennoch ist aus den einzelnen Beiträgen eine große Menge an Informationen und neuen Erkenntnissen zu zahlreichen Themenkomplexen zu ziehen; den Herausgebern ist deshalb dafür zu danken, dass sie dieses Material publiziert und für die archäologische und historische Forschung der nördlichen Levante zugänglich gemacht haben.

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SERHAL, C.D. — The Klat Collection. Near Eastern Models and Figurines. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford 2009. (30,5 cm, 197, 3 plates). ISBN 978-9953-0-1425-8. \$ 60.00.

Claude Doumet-Serhal with this study revises her previous volume on the private collection of terracottas by a Lebanese entrepreneur, Michel Klat, collected between 1978 and 1993.

The first edition, in French, was published in 1995 and included 98 objects; in this second version new pieces have been added and the bibliography updated. The collection now includes 53 wheeled vehicles, 3 architectural models, 1 table, 1 basin, 48 anthropomorphic figurines and 40 zoomorphic figurines.

The origin of the objects is unknown, but their overall good conditions allow to believe that they mostly come from looted tombs in Northern Syria. This aspect, raising some ethic concerns, goes unnoticed in the book (the first edition at least destined revenues to the National Museum in Beirut). Published terracotta figurines date from the third and second

millennium BC: most of them are comparable to archaeological materials found in the Euphrates region, while some may actually be compared with specimens originating from Orontes valley sites (or rather from northern Inner Syria) and even as far as south-eastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia.

The volume consists of an Introduction, 6 chapters and a bibliography. In the Introduction there is the presentation of the material in general terms, with attention to their function and the history of studies about figurines. The material of the collection is treated in the first 5 chapters and these are divided into a part of text, a part of the notes, immediately followed by a catalog tables (this organization is pretty good, in order to quickly find the illustrations without searching the end the book).

Each chapter discusses a single class of figurines, detailing the terminology used to describe the individual parts of the object and the typology. The evaluation and interpretation can be found in the introductory part of the chapter, with specific references to comparisons (endnotes are not very helpful however for checking references). The material is divided in the catalog according to the types identified: each piece has a catalog number assigned within the chapter itself, but numbering starts again in every chapter of the book. In succession are described and given the color, painting, drawing, measurements and description of each object, in some cases also being offered the thermoluminescence dating. The many photos and drawings are to be commended, but in some examples of wagons drawings are, however, not scientific, in other words they have been taken from photos in perspective and are therefore missing essential information. It would have been appropriate, particularly in the chapter on wheeled vehicles, to produce technical drawings with different views. As for chronology, I suggest below some precisions on the basis of a more accurate archaeological terminology (as for example EB IVA-B, MB I, etc.).

Starting from the first chapter, wheeled vehicles (for this typology, see now Raccidi 2012a-b) are divided according to their shape into five categories, numbering with a letter from A to E. The first type, A, include Four or Two-wheeled 'war' or 'parade' wagons composed by a parapet, made by double arch resting on the wagon's rectangular chassis; the chassis was covered, at the rear, by a rectangular platform, a sort of seat or stool with panted corners. This type is known from the Early Dynastic period onwards and is comparable to examples from the Euphrates region dating to EB IVA-B. Type B include Four-wheeled arched wagons for long distance travel, introduced in the Middle East from the Caucasus in the third millennium BC and similar to those of the Euphrates region dating from EB IVA. This type of wagon is formed by a framework (platform) supporting a carriage, which is sometimes fitted with an arched cover or canopy. The model was turned or modeled and the various parts of the wagon were fashioned separately and then assembled. Type C is defined as a Two-wheeled 'bench' or 'rolling bed' dating from EB IVA. Type D is represented by Zoomorphic terracotta receptacles, mounted on four wheels and dated to EB IVA-B and early MB IA. Type E is the Four-wheeled anthropomorphic wagon (No 53), probably a household production dating from EB IVA.

In the second chapter are three architectural models. Model 1 belongs, according to its morphology, to the same family of houses with an upper chamber with a terrace and rectangular openings on the walls. This group, specific of the

⁶⁾ Nachweislich wurde zumindest der Artikel von G. Del Olmo Lete bereits im Jahre 2004 zum Druck eingereicht. Für den Rest der Beiträge des vorliegenden Bandes könnte ein solches Datum zwar nicht gesichert angegeben, jedoch ebenfalls vermutet werden.

Middle-Euphrates region, can probably be dated around EB IVA thanks to some examples found at Mari and Ashur. Model 2 is shaped like an open rectangular box with two rooms divided by a portico that evokes a dwelling. A similar internal division, but in a house rounded in shape, was found at Mari and dated to EB IVB, and this type is similar to those found in Cyprus which A. Caubet (1979:98; see also Leclère 2001:101) identifies with the Egyptian 'soul houses'. Model 3 is shaped like a circular receptacle (box and lid), decorated by a wavy incised pattern on the box and lid.

The third chapter only includes a table and a basin. The circular table is fitted with three legs, likely animal (bovine) legs, and on its top there is a decoration with an incised cross and stamped chevron patterns: the table, which possibly imitates metal prototypes, is comparable with examples from the Euphrates region and dated to EB IVB. The small basin is comparable with northern inner Syria specimens and must probably be dated to MB I.

In the fourth chapter 48 anthropomorphic figurines are well presented. Most of these figurines present features common to the Euphrates and Balikh regions (Meyer 2007; Sakal 2013), which mostly date from EB IVA-B, while only few examples do come from Inner Syria and these are to be dated from MB I-II (Di Michele 2010; Pruß 2010). The figurines with column-shaped bodies (with the exception of no. 38, a typological *unicum*) are hand-modelled and were executed in several phases. They were manufactured on a horizontal surface, and finished with a concave or flat base, often perforated. Several elements including pellets, strips, pigtails and a swept-back hairstyle are all carried out in a final phase; within the bird-like face, eyes are mostly made by applied pellets, generally perforated or sometimes ringed or similar to 'coffee beans'. The adornment consists of one or several necklaces composed by incised bands applied at the front, decorated with different patterns. In the catalogue, figurines are divided in four types A-D and types A-B are further subdivided according to the shape and position of the arms, but they could also have been divided for the type of hairstyle. Type A are Figurines with arms folded on the chest, with a subdivision in A.1 Figurines with arms folded horizontally; A.2 Figurines with arms folded horizontally, the hand rising on the chest; A.3 Figurines with arms folded vertically. Type B are Figurines with stumps for arms; Type C are Figurines carrying one or two children; Type D are Horsemen. At the end of this chapter there are some brief considerations about the sex of the figurines, not identified in the catalogue, and on problems regarding the identification of sex in pottery figurines, as in general there are no clear gender-distinguishing features (sex, beard, etc.).

In the fifth chapter, 40 zoomorphic figurines are presented. The typology is made according to animal species, i.e. bovines, equids, canids, goats and rams, hedgehogs, birds, plus three figurines defined as hybrid creatures and three seated figurines (see Peyronel 2006 for this typology). In the introductory section of the chapter the author explains the types of animals identified, but no date is given for them, except giving — but is far too broad — thermoluminescence dating in the catalogue (one could instead have made good use of Hauser 2007 for example). The bovines group is homogeneous and it must probably be dated to EB IVB, presenting particular features common to the Euphrates region; in the equids group some examples are to be dated to EB IVA-B of the Euphrates region (Nos. 14-16, 22-23), some

examples to MB IA-B of the same area (Nos. 17-20), while a specimen must probably be dated to MB IB-IIA finding comparisons in northern Inner Syria (No. 21). The dog example is difficult to date, perhaps EB IVB although there are similar examples from Tell Halawa dated to MB I. Within the caprids group, No. 25 dates from EB IV of the Euphrates region; No. 26 dates from EB IVB of northern Inner Syria; and finally No. 27 dates from MB IB of the Euphrates region. The hedgehog group is probably dated to EB IV and finds comparisons in the Euphrates region. The birds group and the hybrid creatures one are similar to specimens from the Euphrates region and are to be dated to EB IV (No 33 is probably similar to some bird examples from Tell Khuera with wings), except No. 31 which probably dates from MB I. Finally, the last three seated figurines are probably to be dated to MB IB-IIA, with features similar to specimens from northern Inner Syria.

In the sixth chapter D. R. Griffiths (London) and A.I.M. Seruya (Lisbon) present their study on "Compositional Analysis of Painted Decoration," in which they analyze paints from objects within the book: after a brief general introduction to the technology and materials used for painting ancient pottery, there are the results of the element analyses of the paint from some of the chariots and of one animals figurine. As an introduction to technological aspects of ceramic coloring is of considerable value.

This book is an excellent presentation of chrotoplastic materials from a private collection: perhaps its main shortcomings concern the non-scientific drawings (one can instead refer to standard, excellent drawings in Marchetti 2001), the presence of few color photos (only six, but the photos in b/w are excellent because they show generally the three sides for each object), and the kind of dating and attribution employed, sometimes based more on thermoluminescence analysis, rather than on a typological division and geographical attribution (cf. instead Marchetti 2007).

Vigodarzere (Pd) — Italy
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DÜRING, B.S., A. WOSSINK, P.M.M.G. AKKERMANS (eds.) — *Correlates of Complexity. Essays in Archaeology and Assyriology dedicated to Diederik J.W. Meijer in Honour of his 65th Birthday.* (PIHANS, Vol. 116). Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, Leiden, 2011. (27 cm, XIV, 268). ISBN 978-90-6258-327-0. ISSN 1571-5728. € 61,48.

Correlates of Complexity is a tribute to the multiple aspects of Diederik J.W. Meijer's impact on Near Eastern archaeology. The book cannot exhaustively treat the scope of his insights: this becomes clear from the list of publications and

the foreword to the book, but also through personal memories, anecdotes and accounts about the honoree in almost every chapter.

The title of the book harks back to another recent *Festschrift*, *Artefacts of Complexity*. „Complexity“ became a focus of research with the advent of processual archaeology in the late 1960s; following a downturn in interest in the late 1980s through the end of the last century, it has recently become a mainstay of interest again. The second element of the title, „correlates“, is another matter entirely. In archaeological discourse, the word implies that an explicit effort is made to link abstract notions such as “state”, “transport system” or “household” to concrete materials; or, to put it in processualist vocabulary, an approach that uses correlates is in most cases deductive.

In the reviewed volume, complexity in and of Near Eastern archaeology appears under six broad themes: architecture, seals and their imagery, the inevitable reports on sites and finds, economy, intergenerational transmission, and relations between past and present. Instead of discussing contributions according to the usual and inexplicable alphabetical author-ordering scheme of *Festschriften*, I take the six themes as my guideline to assess the ways in which they relate to the two central concepts of the volume, complexity and correlates.

The first issue, dealt with in three papers, is architecture. Peter Akkermans elaborates an element of Sabi Abyad houses, the occurrence of platforms on which they were built. The use of platforms occurs regularly early in the sequence but decreases over the course of the seventh millennium BCE. Originally thought to be a mark of distinction, the ubiquity of the platforms now suggests to Akkermans that they express “common identities, experiences and ideas of place” (p. 6). Here, the built environment is a correlate for the social-cultural *Handlungsraum* of ancient inhabitants. This assumption, underlying innumerable archaeological writings, conforms with Walter Gropius' conviction that architecture is the “*Gestaltung von Lebensvorgängen*” (designing of life processes). It seems to me that the status of architecture as a correlate for social practices often remains unperceived; architecture is taken to have an evidentiary status. We have the means to test this assumption with the methods of micro-archaeology: were the practices that were carried out in various houses on the Sabi Abyad platforms all similar? Bleda Düring's paper also discusses architectural features, the fortifications that are supposed to be a hallmark of early Anatolian urbanism. Düring shows convincingly that none of the pre-Early Bronze Age „fortifications“ can be shown definitively to have had a defensive character. Even those from Early Bronze II and later tend to segregate settlements internally, separating elites from lower towns. Effective protection for civilian populations appears for the first time in the Middle Bronze Age at sites such as Alaca Höyük. Assyrian urbanism is discussed by Hartmut Kühne in a contribution that takes up his work at Tell Shech Hamad and the surrounding steppe. He suggests that the strict settlement organization in the Lower Khabur region is symbolic for the special historical achievement of civilizing the steppes. Here, archaeological evidence functions as a correlate for *Ordnungspolitik*. It would be interesting to consider what the interpretation would look like if one read the data as a correlate for Foucauldian disciplinary power. A last paper focusing on architecture is Klaas Veenhof's ingenious attempt to

describe the unexcavated house architecture from Old Assyrian Assur, based on correspondence of the traders in Anatolian Karum Kanesh with the family seat at Assur itself. Important details of building materials and construction, of structure and repair of houses can be gleaned from the tablets found in the Anatolian highland.

Complexity is also analyzed in three papers on cylinder seals. Jesper Eidem and Paolo Matthiae elaborate on the details of two Middle Bronze seals. Eidem describes a recently found impression of a seal with seven registers, from the northwestern Syrian site of Qala'at Halwanji. His somewhat cursory description sees in the main fourth register a prominent depiction of the goddess Ishhara, with a snake underneath and a leash in her hand. In my view, the scene could just as well be the product of hybridization and syncretism: some elements, such as the "snake", would rather find parallels in older southern Mesopotamian seals of Shamash in his boat, and the strange "leash" in his attribute of the saw-toothed key. Another complex seal image from the Erlenmeyer collection is convincingly interpreted by Paolo Matthiae as depicting a fundamental *rite de passage*. His close reading suggests the enthronement of a new king after another's death and funeral. In her contribution, Dominique Collon discusses a Kassite seal found in a burial in Metsamor, Armenia. She describes the seal's iconography and, through a number of complex comparisons with other items, interprets it as a wedding gift by a Western Syrian king, perhaps Niqmaddu II of Ugarit, to Kurigalzu II. The seal's "social life" can be traced from Egyptian-influenced Syria to Babylonia to Armenia, where it may have ended up in another exchange of prestige goods so typical of Late Bronze Age Western Asia. These three contributions illustrate the complexity of correlates: the iconography of seals is mainly read as a materialization of worldviews, while that which is *not* depicted remains outside of consideration.

Equally concrete, but much less complex are three site-specific papers. Joan Oates reports on the pottery sequence at the transition from LC 1 to LC 2 at Tell Brak, noting the frequent occurrence of Coba bowls in these phases and providing support for the (disputed) existence of LC 1 as a distinct phase. In an interesting hint at the larger picture, unfortunately not further elaborated, Oates claims that the earliest Coba bowls stem from Tell Uqair in Southern Mesopotamia (p. 178). Ferhan Sakal's contribution on Jebel al Hammam is a brief notice of salvage work at an Early Bronze Age fortified site near Meskene. Finally, Michel al-Maqdissi and Eva Ishaq contribute an important if short paper on ephemeral traces which they interpret — rightly, in my view — as the remains of a temporary late third millennium nomad camp. The few and eroded sherds from the site do not allow a precise dating, but more work in this vein, and especially its publication, is needed to get a better sense of the rural landscape at the time of the first cities in Syria.

A set of four papers addresses economic issues. Perhaps typically, the two contributed by archaeologists (Bintliff and Warburton) deal with the large scale, while two philologists (Dercksen, van Soldt) are concerned with subjects that are highly specific historically and spatially. John Bintliff's reflections on the "Neolithic Revolution" come across as rather old-fashioned. This is an account of major innovations in the realm of subsistence economies that led to the "secondary products revolution", irrigation and other technological changes. Findings at Göbekli Tepe, but also Jacques

Cauvin's and Ian Hodder's works have led to the recognition that neolithization processes need to be set in a framework that includes ideological, epistemological and ontological issues. Complexity always needs to be reduced to be intellectually manageable, but Bintliff takes this principle to an extreme. David Warburton's lengthy polemic is problematic for very different reasons. He starts from a principle that frames his whole argument: modernity, its material culture, underlying rationalisms and ideologies do not differ as substantially from pre-modern and pre-capitalist forms as most scientists, and especially archaeologists, believe. Therefore, modern economic theories are applicable to antiquity. From there Warburton proposes that an exchange-centered, market-driven model of modern economies is the one and only one that can be reasonably applied to the past. In order to convince the reader of such an approach, he trashes Marx, Weber, Finley, Polanyi and others, among them also archaeologists including the author of this review. Polemics are a fine way to sharpen discussion. However, when one reads: "This is typical of archaeological theory: an obsolete theory based on a mistaken understanding of developments in Antiquity is adopted by archaeologists and applied to the material as a template for interpretation.... A fundamental debate about the data is disregarded" (p. 255), it becomes clear that correlates as a mediator between theoretical terms and empirical evidence do not exist for Warburton. Why not establish some correlates for the notion he almost obsessively circles: the "market" with its two different meanings? What are archaeologically visible materializations of locations for barter and exchange? And, much more challenging, what are archaeological materializations for instrumental reasoning characterized by profit-making that objectivizes one's neighbors and their possessions?

An example of the complexities of exchange is provided by Jan G. Dercksen, who analyzes the ritual called *litum* in the Old Assyrian colony of Kanesh, the ancient Western Asian community where instrumental reasoning is most prominently on display. Even here, the sacrifice of a sheep as a gift on the occasion of long-range travels is only bound to expectations of reciprocity when someone of similar status was on the receiving end. Dercksen's account could be read in the framework of a "ritual economy" as elaborated in southwestern U.S. archaeology in order to understand more fully the complexities of the arrangement. Wilfred Van Soldt's brief paper is a new reading of parts of a letter found in Ugarit. Again, by addressing "proper behavior" among persons who would be rated in a modernist language as business partners, it is clear that past peoples' goal-oriented reasoning was embedded in cultural frames that often took precedence over a goal orientation.

Two contributions discuss aspects of intergenerational transmission. In an intriguing paper, Arne Wossink articulates some basic problems of oral genealogies, stating that because of their propensity to be modified according to current needs, they are indicative of the time of narration rather than of the narrated time. Being aware of this, people with such oral histories resist their written documentation. Wossink shows the use of the past as a legitimization for a present order in reference to early second millennium examples from Hammurapi to Shamshi Adad I and the Mari kings. A very different take on transmission is taken by Folkert van Straten, whose paper discusses the pictorial and textual evidence for torch races in Athens. The proverb "passing the

torch”, applicable to the honored archaeologist to whom the book is dedicated, developed from races where teams had to hold burning torches. Such races were part of Athenian political-religious festivals from the late 5th century BCE on.

A final set of contributions addresses relations between past and present, a subject that has become pressing and extremely sad for Syria, Meijer’s chosen region of fieldwork. After the cultural heritage disaster in Iraq, rampant looting in Afghanistan and large -scale sale of antiquities from the West Bank, Syria is the next country in Western Asia whose past is both destroyed and auctioned off on the international art market. While this constitutes a major problem, it happens in the framework of far graver humanitarian catastrophes. Whoever has seen war hospitals from the inside will likely agree that the loss of archaeological objects as witnesses of a society’s past is an almost negligible concern compared with the suffering of present victims. A book such as the one under review is also a reminder that all of us who have worked in Syria have made acquaintances, colleagues and friends who are perhaps endangered, have become refugees or simply try to keep away from the conflicting parties. Our privilege of working closely with the living to reconstruct the lives of the dead turns nowadays into a duty to support the living and only secondarily to document the vanishing remains of the long dead.

The above comments are not meant to chastise Uwe and Brigitte Finkbeiner for their statement: “We developed an emotional relation to the object of research - a phenomenon familiar to many archaeologists” (p. 97); to this reviewer as well. The Finkbeiners describe their attempt to restore part of the Byzantine and Bronze Age remains of the site of Emar/Barbalissos, looted several times prior to their work and likely again since the current civil war in Syria started. A chapter entitled “Demuddification” by Ben Coockson describes in detail the process of decay of mud brick buildings. This is a small but welcome contribution to general principles of taphonomy. However, it takes a stance where Syria and its vernacular architecture of past decades is too much depicted as a laboratory for studies of the deep past, rather than asking about the reasons why Syrian villagers might aspire to new building materials and shapes. Theo De Feyter’s paper is one of the most interesting contributions to this volume. He explores the artistic elaborations of diachronic (present - past) relations in Western Asia. Of specific interest is art that has the “Orient” as a theme, since this is often orientalist (in Edward Said’s sense). According to de Feyter, Walter Andrae is the Near Eastern archaeologist who most convincingly incorporated art into his work, especially in his expressionist paintings. Gerrit van der Kooij contributes the longest paper in the book, providing a history of Dutch scholarship in Near Eastern archaeology from the 17th to the early 20th century. Several subsections treat each separate periods such as the 17th to 18th century, all subdivided in the same way. The focus is on the Levantine regions, and it is therefore understandable that the influence of Biblical scholarship is given much attention. Van der Kooij shows a core of Biblical scholarship, around which he traces the increasing use and reference of extra-Biblical textual sources, and later on an increasing reliance on material culture as well; importantly, he also is concerned with the relations to a general public.

Overall, this book is perhaps less a reflection of Diederik Meijer’s own work than of the state of Near Eastern archaeol-

ogy in general. Contributions cover a discipline that is characterized by discussions, disputes, and disarray. A depressing, but perhaps also a promising point for a dynamic (un)disciplinary future.

Berlin, Freie Universität, 21.3.2014 Reinhard BERNBECK

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POTTS, D.T. (ed.) — *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran*. (Oxford Handbooks in Classics and Ancient History). Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013. (25 cm, XXX, 1021, 166 illus., 16 maps). ISBN 978-0-19-973330-9. £ 115.00.

Until now, students of the archaeology of Iran were required to start their research by browsing through numerous journals and edited volumes. The *Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran* at last provides a comprehensive overview and bibliography of the archaeology of pre-Islamic Iran. Fifty-one chapters in seven sections arranged chronologically offer regional and topical introductions from the Paleolithic to the Islamic conquest. The scope of the volume is therefore by far the most ambitious in the Oxford Handbook series.

Potts has done a remarkable job bringing together scholars from every country that has played an important role in the archaeology of Iran. As such the volume reflects the tremendous international cooperation of the discipline and the importance of Iranian heritage to the world. The aim of the volume is to illustrate the immense diversity of human culture throughout the history of Iran while at the same time to demonstrate that Iran has always formed a connected whole worth studying on its own terms. Potts is well known for his insistence that the history of Iran forms one long trajectory that should not be rigorously divided into earlier and later periods, which is reflected in the enormous breadth of his scholarship. Having early periods such as the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age in the same volume as a period as late as the Sasanian Empire is meant to demonstrate the continuity and deep history of Iran.

Part one of the volume provides a short introduction for the reader to the history of archaeological research in Iran and the difficulties of reconstructing the ancient environment. For an overview of the complex geography of Iran the reader is expected to look elsewhere. This is unfortunate because the premise of the book of Iran as a coherent unit despite its immense geographical diversity and uneven distribution of raw materials requires further explanation. Then follows a solid overview of the Paleolithic in Iran by Conard, Ghasidian, and Heydari-Guran, who demonstrate the enormous potential of research on the earliest human occupation in the region. They set the tone by illustrating the diversity and at the same time the interconnectedness and mobility of human communities across Iran that ought to be the common thread in any volume on this region. In the fourth and last chapter of part one, Weeks has the ungrateful task of summarizing the major developments that took place during the long Neolithic period. A glance at the bibliography shows that this chapter had to be written at a time when new data and studies are being released. Clearly the Paleolithic and Neolithic of Iran have been sacrificed for the sake of space in this volume, and both deserve much lengthier treatments.

Nevertheless the authors have succeeded in producing a solid introduction to these periods and they have provided the bibliographic means for further individual exploration.

Part two consists of four chapters on the Chalcolithic periods in northern Iran, the Central Zagros, Khuzestan, and southern Iran. Part three on the Bronze Age is twice as long and consists of eight chapters, six of which are organized regionally, while the other two discuss early writing and the use of the Mesopotamian Akkadian language in Iran. Part four on the Iron Age is even longer with nine chapters, only five of which focus on a specific region while the other four chapters deal with historical issues such as the arrival of Indo-Iranian groups and the relation between Elam, Iranian peoples, and Mesopotamia.

Part five deals with the first Persian Empire under the Achaemenids. Two chapters have a regional scope on south-western and eastern Iran. The remaining six chapters present various topics of Achaemenid culture and imperial organization. Likewise, part six provides an overview of the history, royal iconography, and languages during the sequence of empires and kingdoms after the conquest of Alexander the Great. Finally, chapter seven contains ten chapters dealing with Sasanian imperial organization, iconography and art, and finally the Islamic conquest.

While the intention of Potts and the editors of the Oxford Handbook series to bring together the history of pre-Islamic Iran and to argue for the need to study the history of Iran as an unbroken trajectory is admirable, the book can clearly be divided in two very different components. The pre-imperial, archaeological periods that span about five thousand years take up the first half of the volume, while the historical era of the great Persian empires that lasted just over one thousand years occupies the second half. Contrary to their intention, the book highlights the differences between the scholarly traditions and methodologies employed to study the earlier and later periods of the history of Iran. This discrepancy is not only a result of the different nature and amount of evidence available to scholars, but also of the deep social and political changes that took place throughout the first millennium BCE. The Chalcolithic, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age are studied based on archaeological evidence such as settlement patterns, stratigraphic sequences, and distribution of material cultures. During these periods, societies occupying the Iranian highlands were politically independent from the rest of the ancient Near East, while participating in wider interaction spheres. During the Iron Age migrations from the Eurasian steppes, technological developments, shifting exchange networks, and the formation of highly centralized and militarized Near Eastern empires set in motion processes that changed the world beyond recognition.

The traditional academic divide between the study of the pre-Achaemenid periods and the era of the great Persian empires exists for good reasons, which are not being addressed in this volume. The establishment of the Achaemenid Empire politically and economically united for the first time in history large regions with radically different landscapes and resources ranging from the Mediterranean Sea to the Central Asian steppes and the Indian Ocean. This had profound repercussions on local social organization, economic developments, routes of communication, and settlement patterns and urban landscapes. From a methodological perspective, scholars focusing on pre-Achaemenid periods tend to have their educational backgrounds in Near Eastern

studies and archaeology while researchers of Persian Iran usually come out of a more linguistic or historical focus and a background on Indo-Iranian scholarship. This discrepancy is reflected in different methodologies, different language requirements, different datasets, and a different scale of the units of analysis.

This divide is strongly reflected in the content of the different sections of the book, which severely disrupts its coherency. The first half provides archaeological summaries of regions, while the second half consists of a wide range of topical essays with a strong emphasis on royal and elite culture. An archaeological discussion of the Persian periods would have been very useful and such an approach would have provided the methodological consistency and general coherency the volume is lacking. On the other hand, ending the volume with the conquests of Cyrus would have allowed for a more detailed treatment of the earlier periods instead of grouping together all the subdivisions of the Bronze and Iron ages into fifteen pages per region. In addition, it would have been possible to include more topical studies for the pre-Achaemenid periods, which are now regrettably lacking. Examples of topics that could have been interesting to explore in more detail are: ethnicity and identity, iconography, historical geography, the indigenous rise of social complexity and state formation, interaction with neighboring regions such as Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Central Asia, and the Indus, exploitation and processing of raw materials, mobility, tribalism, etc. Such essays have been valuable contributions in other volumes in the Oxford Handbook series. Instead, the few topical papers on early periods are distributed among chronological sections despite the fact that their content often pertains to the entire ancient history of Iran. Likewise, a separate book devoted to the Persian periods could have incorporated thorough archaeological overviews alongside the many fascinating and high-quality contributions that now share one volume with unrelated essays. Such a volume could demonstrate the connection and useful collaboration between archaeological, textual, linguistic, and art historical studies when dealing with periods considered primarily historical.

A second issue that needs to be raised is the lack of images. The first half of the book contains enumerations and descriptions of many pottery traditions and other elements of material culture, while the second half contains many contributions dealing with various media carrying imagery. It is then frustrating to observe that many chapters do not contain a single drawing or photograph. Valued exceptions in the first half are the chapters by Thornton (Bronze Age north-eastern Iran), Álvarez-Mon (Iron Age Elam), and especially Danti (Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age northwestern Iran). The latter is by far the longest and most detailed paper with forty-nine pages, compared to an average of fifteen to twenty pages, despite that northwestern Iran certainly does not have the most and best-understood evidence. The lack of illustrations continues in the second half of the volume. For example, the chapter by Garrison on royal Achaemenid iconography and the chapter by Rezakhani on post-Achaemenid coinage do not provide a single image. In contrast, the chapters on rock reliefs by Kawami (Parthian and Elymaean) and Canepa (Sasanian), and on Sasanian coinage by Schindler offer ample illustrations and documentation to clarify their detailed textual treatments. The enormous amount of references and bibliography provided consistently throughout the

book does refer the reader to the necessary publications and illustrations. Nevertheless, illustrated material assemblages and examples of artistic imagery would have been very useful in a volume that calls itself a handbook.

The strength of the volume is the gathering of the present state of knowledge and updated bibliographies on ancient Iran at a time when students and young scholars need to inform themselves in preparation of renewed fieldwork in the country. The archaeology of Iran is notoriously difficult to master due to the fragmented nature of the literature and the lack of comprehensive studies. The *Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran* certainly fills this gap and it is therefore an invaluable contribution for which we need to be very grateful. This book will certainly become the first source to turn to when embarking on a study on aspects of ancient Iran. However, other sources such as the online *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, the *Bibliographie analytique de l'Iran ancien* (started by Vanden Berghe and Haerinck in 1976), Voight and Dyson's contribution to the *Chronologies in Old World Archaeology*, and the recent volume *Eighty Years of Iranian Archaeology* (in Persian) edited by Hassanzadeh and Miri have certainly not been rendered obsolete and should be consulted for more in-depth treatments and detailed bibliographies. At the same time, for topical studies on ancient pre-Achaemenid Iran the volume will need to be used in conjunction with other sources.

The *Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran* works best when treated as a collection of short introductions to the entire history of pre-Islamic Iran. It is a wonderful experience as reader to discover aspects of ancient Iran for which one would have otherwise never looked. The chapters are accessible yet dense, and mostly of high quality, written by experts. The problems outlined in this review suggest that there is a missed opportunity to have on the one hand for the first time a comprehensive collection of detailed studies on various aspects of pre-Achaemenid Iran and on the other hand an overview of the wide range of sources, both archaeological and historical, for the study of the society and history of ancient Persia. However, despite these issues, the volume will certainly be consulted regularly by students and scholars for years to come, and it will inspire curiosity in the readers about periods and aspects of ancient Iran he or she otherwise would not have considered.

University of Pennsylvania
January 2014

Steve RENETTE

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VÖRÖS, G. — Machaerus I. History, Archaeology and Architecture of the fortified Herodian Royal Palace and City overlooking the Dead Sea in Transjordan. Final Report of the Excavations and Surveys 1807-2012. (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio Maior, 53). Edizioni Terra Santa, Milano, 2013. (28 cm, 399). ISBN 978-88-6240-168-5. € 120,-.

Machaerus, the impressive site near the modern village of Muqāwir, is popular among tourist companies and Bible experts but did not receive much attention from archaeologists. This lack of interest is primarily caused by limited publications in internationally renowned journals since the first

spade was put in the ground in 1968. The reviewer is therefore extremely happy about this extensive volume dedicated exclusively to the site of Machaerus. Finally, archaeologists and historians can join the mainly Biblical discussions about the site. Overall, it is a luxuriously rendered, extensive work with superbly illustrations and a calm layout. Vörös has done an excellent job in bringing together sparsely published information from older projects and results of renewed research. Almost each page shows one or more high resolution colour images and text that is well written and with only a few minor typographical errors (e.g. *Architecrural* instead of *Architectural*, p. 137). This book is a pearl on every bookshelf.

The volume starts with a foreword by Massimo Pazzini, OFM, Dean of the *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum* in Jerusalem. Franciscan archaeologists have dictated the research at Machaerus and surroundings and it is a logical choice to start with Pazzini's introduction. It is followed by a rather superfluous recommendation on the author written by the late professor Imre Makovecz, one of the founders of the renewed excavation at Machaerus. On page 15, we hear Vörös for the first time, the author of this volume and the coordinator of a team of Hungarian, Jordanian and French archaeologists and architects, who worked on the site between 2009 and 2012. In this introductory chapter, Vörös explains the reason for including the archaeological historiography: "I felt it would have been impossible to write the first volume of the Machaerus final report series on our excavations and field surveys, as it is only the result of the last four years." (p. 15). There are many scholars who should take an example to Vörös in this respect. What is missing is a brief excerpt of the content of this monograph; a short description of the different chapters and an explanation for including certain specialized studies and omitting others (e.g. pottery studies). Based on the last two sentences of this introduction, Vörös seems pretty confident about his work and final conclusions: Machaerus *is* the site where Salome danced and John the Baptist was beheaded, and his reconstruction *is* the best what is possible at the moment. The reader (as well as the reviewer) is triggered to look for arguments against these hypotheses. It might be a provocative way of presentation in order to advance in science, but Vörös seems to forget that several uncertainties still exist about the historicity of the dancing Salome and the beheading of John the Baptist at Machaerus. Furthermore, the volume has a more biblical, historical and architectural, rather than an archaeological focus blurring the reconstruction of this site.

The first chapter concerns written sources in relation to Machaerus. The content is detailed, but the reviewer is somewhat lost in numerous sub-chapters and sub-sub-chapters of which the relationship remains obscure. Moreover, the author leans heavily on Biblical sources even though Machaerus is never mentioned in the New Testament. He names the Gospels indirect sources, but these accounts are dealing with the beheading of John the Baptists, not with the history of Machaerus. The reviewer agrees with the author that he is doing 'Gospel Archaeology' (p. 21). A separation between the history of the site of Machaerus (e.g. architecture, building phases, destructions) and an event that might have happened on the site, would have been preferable according to the reviewer. The choice of this chapter at the beginning of the volume is logically, but Vörös' firm conclusions, before the archaeology has spoken, seem some-

what premature (pp. 42-43). Nevertheless, this chapter contains a lot of information and the use of blue text colour for citations is excellent.

Throughout the following chapter, “History of the Memory of Machaerus”, John the Baptist remains the main focus. Vörös explains why the site did not become a pilgrimage destination in the past, in contrast to many other Byzantine sites in Transjordan. The title of this chapter could also be called “The Memory of John the Baptist”, since Machaerus plays only a secondary role. The next chapters are composed archaeologically. The history of research is extremely important during site-investigation and Vörös recognizes this. He has chosen to publish not only written documents but also scans of notebooks (p. 86), original drawings (e.g. p. 67, 83, 85, 89) and list of finds (pp. 69-77). A rare but extremely useful idea.

Following the rediscovery of Machaerus by the German orientalist Seetzen in 1807, the site was visited by numerous scholars with different intentions and interest. The French professor Abel was one of the first who concentrated primarily on the architectural and archaeological remains. He discovered the lower city which had been lost since the first century AD. It took 59 years before a new scholar checked Abel’s conclusions: E. Jerry Vardaman. During three weeks in 1968, this scholar from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary encountered important architectural remains and showed that the historical buildings were “still on the site” (p. 68). Vörös is to be congratulated for publishing Vardaman’s result in such a coherent manner. Vardaman saw Machaerus as an important Jewish site, a conclusion that was not very much welcomed by the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. The next scholar who explored the site was August Strobel, in 1973, although he did this without permission. Strobel concentrated his survey work mainly on the Roman remains in the vicinity of Machaerus.

From 1978 onwards, the site was in the hands of the Franciscan archaeologists Corbo, Lofferda and Piccirillo. The first excavation and survey project lasted until 1981. Corbo confirmed the accounts of Josephus regarding the Hasmonean and First Jewish Revolt presence at the citadel. Although the photographs are of minor quality, this chapter contains extensive information about the excavation itself. Remarkable is the enormous soil removal during the few years of excavations (pp. 118 and 122). The second series of Franciscan excavations started in 1992 under the direction of Piccirillo, but did already end one year later. During reconstruction work, they used a false architectural design which received mixed reactions in the world. Vörös correctly put this mistake into a larger picture: “he [Piccirillo] abandoned Machaerus for the future academic generations” and “he had several extremely successfully received excavations in Jordan” (p. 135). The reviewer agreed that the late Piccirillo was an excellent archaeologist and has to be honoured for his work in Jordan. In 2000 part of the cemetery on the southern slopes was excavated by the Jordanian archaeologist Jasser in co-operation with the Swiss scholar Genequand, after construction works did discover one of the hypogeum. The finds were dated between 30 BC and AD 72. Most of the cemetery still remains “a virgin archaeological site” (p. 146).

The next chapter, “Optical Connections”, concerns the military network. The reviewer did not understand why Vörös has chosen to divide the archaeological historiography in two parts by bringing this topic at this point. It contains

hardly any text, but is understandable and a nice study due to the many excellent photographs of the environment. After a beautiful picture of Jerusalem, the history of archaeological research at the site continued. In 2002, the Hungarian and Jordanian team under the direction of the author started a new mission. As Vörös explains, “they were not motivated by military history, but (...) inspired to start archaeological excavations on Biblical grounds” (p. 177). They wanted “to have a better understanding of a Gospel scene” and accepted the historicity of the imprisonment and beheading of John the Baptist. These statements put the monograph in a different light, since Vörös seems not to have evaluated the historical relation between John the Baptist and Machaerus. Archaeology and architecture can certainly bring in background information about the time of the Gospels, but hardly about a Gospel scene. Reading further, we get to know Vörös as a very talented building-archaeologist. Using beautiful coloured and shaded drawings, he unravels the difficult stratigraphy step by step. A large number of astonishing pictures and clear drawings makes this chapter certainly the highlight of this volume.

The excellent study about the ostraca (by Misgav) breaks the Biblical and architectural based chapters and shows that some of the team members did deal exclusively with mobile artefacts. However, it remains just a short intermezzo. On page 319, Vörös continues his architectural survey, now concentrating on the reconstruction of the different buildings. For the first time the reader receives some insight information about the date of the three main architectural periods at Machaerus (pp. 319-20). Vörös did use three dating pillars: parallel structures, the pottery assemblage and the coin assemblage. However, it is followed by a paragraph in which he mentions that *no* Herodian pottery or coins were found in the Herodian palace complex. This architectural phase was thus either dated by parallel structures or, and that seems more likely, on textual evidence (Josephus mentioned that John the Baptist was beheaded in the palace during the Herodian Period). The, according to Vörös, brilliant explanation by Loffreda for the absence of Herodian material culture — “In such a palatial environment you could hardly hope to find an accumulation of vessels or even potsherds, lying around on its mosaic floors.” (p. 320) — seems not very plausible to the reviewer. It contradicts finds at many other sites in the Southern Levant.

One of the concluding chapters, “The Golgotha of Saint John the Baptist”, is once again drenched with Biblical arguments (p. 343). It primarily discusses the connection between John the Baptist and the site of Machaerus. The reviewer disagrees with the fact that Josephus is consistent with the Gospels and with the statement “we have formidable arguments that lead us to assert that the lower city is the very place where the prison of John the Baptists had to be situated” (p. 343). Of the seven arguments there is only one that relates John the Baptist to Machaerus (pp. 348-50). All others simply state the importance and beauty of Machaerus and proof that John the Baptist wasn’t imprisoned in the Galilee. Nothing more, nothing less.

This first monograph dedicated solely to the Machaerus archaeological site has its shortcomings due to the primary focus on Biblical events. Nevertheless, it still is a great piece of work, essential to read for archaeologists, Biblical archaeologists and Bible experts. It gives the reader a good insight in the site history, former excavation- and survey results, and

future recommendations. Whether or not John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded at Machaerus, we have to thank Vörös and his team for making this beautiful site known to the world.

National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden Lucas PETIT
March 2014

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NOVACEK, G.V. — *Ancient Israel: Highlights from the Collections of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*. (Oriental Institute Museum Publications). The Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, 2011. (29 cm, XV, 127). ISBN 978-1-885923-65-3. \$ 41.95.

The book *Ancient Israel: Highlights from the Collections of the Oriental Institute* is the second volume in a series highlighting significant objects from the Institute's permanent collections. The website of the Oriental Institute announces that other volumes are in various stages of development. The publication under review corresponds closely with the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery that was opened on January 29, 2005 (p. xiii). Numerous extraordinary artefacts from the pioneering Oriental Institute excavation at Tell al-Mutesellim (Megiddo) supplemented by a few highlights from the rest of the southern Levant are presented to the public, some of them for the first time. This volume, composed and written by Gabrielle Novacek, the guest curator of the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery, showcases many of those unique discoveries including the beautiful Megiddo ivories. The result is a well-illustrated volume containing descriptions and photographs of more than 50 objects.

The publication begins with a few introductory chapters: a foreword, an acknowledgment, a short history of the Oriental Institute's research in the Levant and an introduction about the ancient site of Megiddo. The rest of the book is compiled chronologically starting with the Early Bronze Age and ending in the Byzantine Period. Each chapter provides a brief overview of the major historical developments, followed by the highlights of the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery from that particular period. Novacek did an excellent job by choosing objects that are spread evenly in time and at the same time covering themes and topics that dominates the archaeological and historical research in the southern Levant. The objects are divided chronologically, except for a few such as the Late Bronze I golden headband that finds itself back in the Late Bronze II (p. 39). A bibliography, two appendices and, surprisingly, no less than four different indices conclude the volume.

Each object is presented by a photograph, an extended object entry and a short dataset including title in capitals, material, period, absolute date of the period (see also below), place and strata of discovery, size, and museum number. The descriptions of the objects are positioned close to the photograph and dataset. The calm layout is excellent and the reader can focus on one highlight at the time. Most illuminating and the major strength of this publication are those object entries in relation with the coloured, high-quality photographs enabling the reader to discern details with ease. The different numbering systems of the photographs are, however, confusing. It is also a pity that the objects were not re-studied.

Some of the information is outdated (Jifna is situated in the Palestine territory and not in Jordan, p. 102) and measurements are missing or erroneous (e.g., the four-horned altar is certainly larger than is published, p. 84). Except for one, all objects are already published elsewhere and a new vision on those objects would have been desirable (pp. 116-119, appendix II).

The book is arranged like a catalogue but wants at the same time to be a comprehensive book on the history and archaeology of the southern Levant. This can be explained by the fact that the Oriental Institute considers its collection to be art as well as archaeological evidence. An interesting and rewarding effort which is possible while the museum of the Oriental Institute, in contrast to many other museums with Near Eastern-collections, houses a beautiful collection of excavated objects from the southern Levant (p. xi). A historical overview, a chronological table and a map showing the excavated sites (although Khirbet al-Mafjar and Yaqush are not mentioned, pp. 1-2) make it a user-friendly publication for a broader public.

The combination of material culture and the big historical and archaeological picture is its strength but at the same time its weakness. While objects illuminate at some distance trends in Levantine art and history, Novacek has chosen to interlink excavated material culture from Megiddo and the history of the southern Levant. However, there are a few problems with this way of presentation, besides the danger of oversimplification and superficiality. First of all, it points to the gaps in knowledge of the author. On several occasions, recent theories and ideas were not included, and information was taken directly from broad (but older) over-viewing works like Mazar's *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*¹) and Amiran's *Ancient Pottery*²). This was also not helped by including two recent discussions: 'Where did the Israelites come from?' (p. 66) and 'Who built Royal Megiddo?' (p. 83). Those topics are somewhat unattached pieces in this publication, unsatisfactory in that they do not bring answers, new information or own readings. Are there any alternatives? Yes. This publication could have been told from the view of Megiddo. Most of the objects arrived from this site (p. xi), the site can be served as a model for major cultural trends in the past while being a crossroads of cultures (p. 47), and Megiddo is an excellent place to examine the movement of goods and ideas from the Early Bronze Age till the late Iron Age (cf., p.39). Reading the work of the Oriental Institute and looking at the pictures is fascinating (pp. 2, 3, 46-47). The text passages, like the one on the Megiddo ivories (p. 46), include new information, useful black and white photographs, and exciting stories. Background information about the discovery of the different objects would certainly amuses the reader more than a generalized historical chapter that can be taken from many other publications.

Linking material culture and archaeology in a museum-catalogue causes another problem: the use of absolute dates. Since most of the objects are found at the site of Megiddo, the book starts with a simplified stratigraphic scheme of the

¹) Mazar, A. (1990) *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000 – 583 B.C.E.*, New York: Doubleday.

²) Amiran, R. (1970) *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land: From Its Early Beginnings in the Neolithic Period to the End of the Iron Age*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

excavated strata and the associated periods and absolute dates (p. xv). Throughout the publication, the author labels the objects with the date of the stratum in which it was found or the date of the period in which the stratum was found. However, the date of the object does not have to be equal or the date of the period of the stratum in which it was found. The chocolate-on-white jar on page 28 (called a jug) was found in tomb 1100A dated to the Late Bronze I, ca. 1550-1400 BC. This ware, however, was manufactured “from the late Middle Bronze II to the Late Bronze I period (1600-1400 BC)” (p. 28). The pottery vessel can certainly be older while found in a funeral context. On page 31, Cypriot milk bowls, like no. 14, were used particularly during the 14th century BC, but in the dataset the bowl was generally dated to the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC). The object from the Oriental Institute was, by the way, discovered in Tomb 50 at Megiddo, dated by the Chicago Expedition to the Middle Bronze II and Late Bronze II Period³). It would have been preferable if the absolute dates always refer to the objects *only* and not to the layers or periods in which it was found. This was done in one case: the Egyptian statuette that was encountered in Stratum VII (1300-1200 BC), but was nevertheless dated to the Middle Bronze IIA, ca. 1900 BC (p. 27).

The reviewer has the impression that this publication was made out of short, individual text passages. Those passages are well written and contain information interesting for a general audience. However, combining them in one volume causes many repetition, which should have been noted by an editor. This is not a problem if the book is used as source book, but it is a little annoying if the book is read as a whole. On page 7 it is said “the Oriental Institute excavations uncovered the remains of a double temple....” One page later this paragraph is repeated. On page 15 the Intermediate period between the Early and Middle Bronze Ages is described, on page 17 again, and on page 19 another time. What the reader is left with is an aesthetically attractive and lavishly illustrated book, but which is neither a catalogue with a thoroughly analysed body of data, nor a history book that can be read from the start till the end. It hangs in between and this is a pity recalling the beauty and importance of the material culture.

A last word must be said about the tricky title of the book: *Ancient Israel*. Novacek has used the term ‘Israel’ almost exclusively when describing the kingdom Israel from the Iron Age. It is to be honoured that she uses the more political undisputed term ‘southern Levant’ throughout the rest of the publication. Recalling the fact that neither all objects are from the territory of modern Israel, nor from Iron Age Israel, the decision to call this book *Ancient Israel* is not understood by the reviewer.

Besides those point of critics, the reviewer sees the value of such volume for the public. Museums all over the world are hiding large collections of objects in their basements and publishing only occasionally. Museums should share their collections with the public. This is more and more done by putting the collections online, but combining highlights from a collection by an expert is a much better way. This has been done by Novacek. She and the Oriental Institute can therefore be congratulated by publishing the book *Ancient Israel*:

³) Guy, P.L.O. (1938) *Megiddo Tombs*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Highlights from the Collections of the Oriental Institute. This publication is available for purchase or as a free pdf download on the website of The Oriental Institute.

National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden Lucas PETIT
January 2014

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JACOB, R. — *Kosmetik im antiken Palästina*. (Alter Orient und Altes Testament, 389). Ugarit Verlag, Münster, 2011. (25 cm, IX, 418). ISBN 978-3-86835-060-9. € 87,-.

This book investigates cosmetics (perfumes, unguents) in ancient Palestine; mainly Israel. There are three sources of information: ancient written sources (the Bible), iconography (particularly in Egyptian tombs), and archaeology (excavated vases and workshops).

The book begins with aromatic plants: cinnamon, cassia, nard, “Süßgräser” (*calamus*, “Kalmus”), myrtle, henna, balsam (p. 11-19). Oil and animal fats, mixed with the odorous parts of the plants, are discussed next, with an excursus on the olive tree and its oil (p. 22-25, cf. 286). A survey of the uses and qualities of salves and perfumes according to the ancient texts follows, including the Holy Ointment in Exodus 30 (p. 33 f.). Here, the author presents an impressive amount of information, mainly culled from Classical sources, like Theophrastus, Pliny, Athenaeus. The ancients considered this as the ideal body-cure: “oil outside, wine inside” (*intus mulso, foris oleo*) (p. 34 f., 38 f.). Anointing a person conveys “Heilkraft”, we read (p. 34-37, 277). This may be true but it will be good to recall the opinion of D. Pardee: it marks a change of status; *BiOr* 34 (1977) 14-18. Then follows a discussion of women in the Bible whose cosmetics are described: Esther, Judith, Susanna, Ruth, and the woman who anointed Jesus with nard (p. 39-52). Then the anointing of gods, kings, and the dead (p. 75-82). Special topics are pouring oil on the hair of the head (p. 32-55), make-up of the face (red ochre, p. 60, 279), lips, and eyes (p. 55-65, 81-84, 279, 290). For the mysterious “lips dripping honey”, consult p. 64, 289.

After the discussion of what the ancients tell us, the author turns to the physical evidence they left in Egyptian “Bild-dokumente”: people handling cosmetics and perfume vessels (p. 65-92). In chapter IV she presents an extensive survey of the many vessels excavated in Megiddo (in total 1166; p. 93-104) and Hazor (533; p. 104-113), in chronological order, with drawings, of course, and followed by a typology (alabastron, pyxis, p. 195-212) and comparisons (p. 114-213). All this is new, important, and welcome. Exciting is chapter IV.4, on the excavations on the shores of the Dead Sea, in the oases En-Boqeq (p. 214-241) and Engedi (p. 241-266). Here date palms and balsam trees were grown, the latter on terraces, and the buildings where the perfumes were manufactured have been excavated. Now the procedures seen on Egyptian wall paintings are helpful and thus the author reconstructs the various activities in the buildings (p. 266-273); she even made her own experiments in working with date syrup and unguents (p. 237, 240). The fabrication of salves and perfumed oils is described on p. 31-33 and 266-273; of myrtle oil according to Theophrastus on p. 32 f., cf. 40 f.

In the conclusions of the book (Ch. V) a detailed summary of the rich contents of the book is given and here more attention is paid to the international trade, Egypt and Palestine (p. 282 ff., cf. 84-88), wars waged for obtaining perfumes (p. 285), or social differences.

The book has full indexes (p. 409 ff.). Some noteworthy concepts: *Balsam*, p. 17-19 (Hebrew *bošem*, *šorī*), 42 f., 48 (in Greek, *mûron*), 237 f. (*opobalsamum* and *xylobalsamum*), 266, 287; *Fayence*, p. 92; Egyptian *Gravidenflasche*, p. 134; *Kohl*, p. 81-83; the land *Punt*, p. 85-87, 283; Egyptian *Salbkegel* on the head, p. 71-75; *Stakte*, p. 16; *Wine made of dates*, p. 234-237, 245.

A remark: Pliny's word *susinum* for oil of lilies (*lirinon*) (p. 268 f.) can perhaps be related to Hebrew *šōšan* "lily" ("Susanna"). However, E. Paszthory, *Salben* (see below), connects *susinum* with the city Susa (p. 61 note 58).

The book leans on Egyptian and Classical sources for additional information and, indeed, Palestine belonged to their world. Still, there is another source of information: the second millennium Middle Assyrian prescriptions for making perfumes. This is mentioned in passing in a footnote (p. 28 n. 54; cf. p. 291, "Ebeling"). They were published by E. Ebeling in *Orientalia NS* 17, 18, 19 and reprinted separately as *Parfümrezepte und kultische Texte aus Assur* (Rome 1950) (with another page-numbering). One of these texts was edited and translated afresh by Stephan Jacob, *Mittelassyrische Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur* (2003) 480-484. Myrtle and *calamus* oil are the most important ingredients. This text is *KAR* 220 an earlier translation of which (by Ebeling) was reproduced in E. Paszthory, *Salben, Schminken und Parfüme im Altertum* (1992) 29 — a book often cited by the author. For an evaluation, see M. Jursa, "Parfüm(rezepte)", in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie X/5-6* (2004) 335 f., with this observation: "Man kann diese technische Tradition, die von Mesopotamien ihren Ausgang nahm, oder doch zumindest dort zum ersten Mal belegt werden kann, im gesamten östlichen Mittelmeerraum und im Vorderen Orient bis in das Mittelalter nachweisen". The detailed Middle Assyrian prescriptions could have been helpful for the author of this otherwise excellent book.

Leiden, March 2014

M. STOL

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ELAYI, J., ELAYI, A.G. — *The Coinage of the Phoenician City of Tyre in the Persian Period*. (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, 188). Editions Peeters, Leuven, 2009. (24,5 cm, 517, 50 plates). ISBN 978-90-429-2202-0. € 85,-.

Josette and Alain-Gérard Elayi here publish the second of the four books they intend to devote to the coinage of the Phoenician cities issued during the Achaemenid period. The first opus, published in 2004 in French, dealt with Sidon, this one with Tyre. The next two will be about Arwad and Byblus. With Sidon and Tyre, the two main Phoenician mints are now covered. The authors mention two other Phoenician mints according to their classification: Tripolis, the coinage of which is unpublished and tiny, and Ascalon. However, it must be questioned if this last mint is to be considered Phoenician. A recent book by H. Gitler and O. Tal presents that

city as part of what they call 'Philistia', showing convincingly that it shares common features with Ashdod and Gaza and is part of a common cultural area¹). J. and A.G. Elayi, basing their interpretation on a quotation of Pseudo-Scylax *Periplus* 104, see Ascalon as part of Tyre's possessions.

The attribution of a coinage to Tyre is not obvious since there are no clear mentions of the mint on the coins. However (p. 14), the reader learns that the letters *Š* and maybe *R* (i.e. Sour, Tyr in Phoenician) could be read on coins no. 667 and 668. The descriptions of these coins do not confirm that reading and they are not illustrated. Nos. 658 and 659 do have a *Š(?)R* inscription on the reverse, but that series shows other letters too: are *ŠR* the signature of the mint or simple control marks? Whatever the meaning of these letters, hoards and bronze coins found on the territory controlled by Tyre provide confirmation of the attribution of these series to the mint of the city.

Two pages summarise the numerous articles written by the authors about Tyre or related topics (p. 10-11). The corpus of coins is the result of a classical numismatic enquiry, based on 37 public collections (list on pp. 431-433), a long list of private collections, some being in fact housed in public institutions, and auction catalogues until 2006 (index of auctions with Tyrian coins on pp. 437-451). 1814 coins are presented in the catalogue, predominantly struck in silver, never in gold. Only 81 are bronze. The classification is by type, following the chronology established by the authors. Compared to the variety of other Phoenician city coinages during the same period, Tyrian typology is limited to two main groups. The oldest shows on the obverse a dolphin jumping above a wave, with a shell in exergue. On the reverse, an owl with a hawk's body stands to right, head facing, with a crook and a flail on its shoulder (245 coins). On the second group, the largest by far (1294 coins), a bearded god rides a winged seahorse to right above waves and a dolphin. On the reverse is represented the same owl as in group I. A third group gathers unclassified series (275 coins), including several coins whose attribution to Tyre is uncertain. It mainly consists of interesting silver fractions and bronze coins.

The catalogue is based on a large number of minute technical observations on the techniques of minting and the decentring of the dies. It could have been simplified by the omission of numerous observations, such as 'slightly decentred to left' or 'border of dots partly off the flan', which contribute nothing to the understanding of the coinage. Cautiously, J. and A.G. Elayi have avoided Greek names for the denominations, preferring to refer to the shekel and its fractions. However, in choosing to call some of them fractions of fractions ('halves of sixteenth of shekel', for instance, instead of 1/32), they have made the nomenclature sometimes difficult to use. The die study is especially important since this activity is one of the bases of modern numismatics and it should allow the creation of statistics on the output of Tyre and useful comparisons with other mints. However, the numbering of the dies is not always clear. For instance on p. 70 (series II.1.1.3), obverse 34 is followed by obverses 65 and 66, without any explanation for the gap between these figures. In fact, the numbering of series II.1.2.2 starts from

¹) H. Gitler, O. Tal, *The Coinage of Philistia of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.: a Study of the Earliest Coins of Palestine*, Milan, 2006.

the end of the series II.1.1.3 and shares some die links with it, but it is not easy to understand this since there is a series of shekels inserted between them and the die numbering of all the preceding series starts at 1. Whatever the complica-

tions, the catalogue is the first to gather such an important collection of coins of Tyre and will remain for decades the reference in Tyrian numismatics. The following chart provides a synthesis of the number of coins and obverse dies.

Tyre Silver Issues: number of coins (n) and obverse dies (d, in brackets)

Groupe	Shekels	Quarters	Sixteenth	Halves of sixteenth (1/32)	Tenth of sixteenth (1/160)
I. c. 450-425	160 (22)	47 (19) ²	21 (9)	13 (7)	3 (1)
II.1.1. c. 425-333/2	155 (53)	29 (8)	183 (36)	0	0
II.1.2. c. 393-358	102 (33)	0	81 (28)	0	0
II.2. c. 357-333	744 (133)	0	0	0	0

Tables of the obverse and reverse dies are provided at the end of the book (figs. 34 and 36). It must be observed that it is not simple for the reader to form his own opinion with the classification as it is: the die study is not the basis of the catalogue and is not easily followed; the plates show a selection of pictures illustrating the dies, which is a good choice. But they often show only one side of a coin or provide only enlargements of small denominations but not actual size pictures to enable comparison.

Chapter II is an important one since it discusses the die study and the relative chronology built on it. J. and A.G. Elayi devote much space to the discussion of the criteria used to discriminate between two different dies. The discussion is not uninteresting but largely without use since there is only one picture per die in the plates and the reader cannot form his own opinion. The classification is largely based on criteria of fabric that can be considered subjective. For instance, series II.1.1.1 is separated into 'flat fabric' (a), 'thick fabric' (b) and 'rather indistinct' (c). As there are only 92 coins in that series, such distinctions are useless since the die study should give the succession of coins on an objective basis. Fortunately, many series are inscribed, often with figures that help the classification but do not fix it permanently, the complexity of the issues leaving some shadow on the general organisation.

Many coins bear Phoenician inscriptions in both groups I and II. They are studied in detail in chapter III, which also includes discussion of the control-marks, the inscribed countermarks and the graffiti. The monetary inscriptions are particularly valuable in this case since Tyrian inscriptions on stone are scarce during the Achaemenid period. The long detailed treatment of developments in the shape of the letters drowns the commentary and could have been limited to the necessary epigraphic parallels. Most of the inscriptions of group I are usually read as mentions of weights, but this is still a matter of debate. Group II bears Phoenician letters and figures generally considered as initials of kings' names and regnal years, but their interpretation is difficult and J. and A.G. Elayi could not solve these tricky problems. Only the last letter can be attributed to king 'Ozmilk who was ruling when Alexander conquered Phoenicia. Graffiti are rare and most of the time have no clear meaning. Seven coins out of 1814 were countermarked. One countermark in Aramaic could be a personal name. The chapter ends with two sections on the paleographical study of the inscriptions and a tentative evaluation of the degree of literacy based on the numismatic inscriptions.

A full chapter is devoted to the monetary iconography of Tyr. The owl has a hawk body probably influenced by Egyptian art. J. and A.G. Elayi have tried to discover the exact breed of the owl and the dolphin and provide some thoughts about the style and its evolution. The seahorse is a motif common to Arwad and Byblos too. The god riding the seahorse is carefully described and analysed as a syncretistic scene witnessing an evolution in Tyrian religion (pp. 268-269). This interpretation comes from the seahorse considered as a symbol of power over the sea, the air and the earth. The shell represented on many coins is not a murex. Several minor types (head of lion, head of ram and rosette and a crescent-shaped countermark) are also discussed.

One technical chapter gives a profusion of details on the monetary workshop: the metal, the flans, the dies and their engraving, the die axis, etc. 34 coins out of 1814 proved to be plated and are considered by the authors as forgeries maybe struck by secret illegal mints. One might equally suggest that they were the production of some disloyal workers of the mint — the practice is well attested in more recent periods — or even a semi-official output of the mint allowing for the completion of production required by the authorities when new stocks of bullion were lacking. 653 of the coins collected in the catalogue were issued by 'Ozmilk (nos. 887-1539, 102 obverse dies, with an average output estimated around 7 obverse dies per year, p. 307), which makes that reign the most productive in the history of the mint during the Achaemenid period.

J. and A.G. Elayi, using their personal methods, reconstitute the theoretical weight of each denomination as follows (figs. 40-56):

Shekels	13,56 g then 8.77 g
Quarters	3.16 g
Sixteenths	0.57 g
Halves of sixteenth	0.32 g
Tenths of sixteenth	0.06 g
Bronze	0.67 g

²) J. and A.G. Elayi suspect the existence of eighth of shekels on the basis of one coin with non classifiable weight (no. 222).

They cautiously point out that the new standard of the shekel is commonly called Attic but that an Attic didrachm should weigh 8.66 g. They keep the name but prefer to write it with inverted commas to draw attention to the fact that it is probably not an appropriate designation.

The last chapter offers a reconstitution of the history of Tyre during the 5th and the 4th centuries through a numismatic perspective. Some parallels with Mesopotamia allow the authors to suggest a reconstitution of the means of exchange used in Tyre before the adoption of coinage. They date the first strikes to the mid-5th century, just after Byblos, which they consider to be the first Phoenician mint. The beginning of coinage would be related to the participation of the Phoenician fleets in the Persian wars. It would also be of fiscal benefit to the cities that derived a fee on the metal struck, and would be a sign of their autonomy as well. It is difficult to link coinage to political history before 349 BC since written sources are scanty, but J. and A.G. Elayi give a full account of the general historical context of the area, mainly based on Greek sources, particularly of the participation of Phoenician cities in the Satraps' revolt and a modification of the political system of Tyre. They see a relationship between the degradation of the Tyrian coinage and the agitated context between the end of the 5th century and the first half of the 4th century. Around 357, the debasement of the silver standard would have been related to economic difficulties and would have happened a few years after a similar debasement in Sidon. The influence of the Persian satrap Mazday in Phoenicia would be visible in the monetary policy of the cities of that area. The last coinage of the city is that of 'Ozmilk, issued from year 3 to year 17, i.e. c. 347-333/2 according to J. and A.G. Elayi. Figure 38 sets out the annual obverse dies for this reign. The output of this short period being quite superior to the rest of the 4th century, and no less than 9 hoards witnessing the circulation of these coins (considered as "exports" of coins), the authors conclude that "during the reign of 'Ozmilk, Tyre was much more prosperous than previously" (p. 374). Some caution is needed here. All numismatic studies tend to relate noticeable increases of coin output to military events (payments to technicians and mercenaries), especially in cities where the use of coinage remained mixed with other means of exchange such as barter or use of weighed metal. It is thus highly speculative to relate such a phenomenon of increased output to the economic health of a region. The development of coin circulation can simply be related to the quantity available and a wider acceptability in neighbouring areas. The troubled political context encourages us to link Tyrian monetary output to military payments. The closing of the mint after Alexander's victory in 332 assumed by J. and A.G. Elayi probably requires further discussion since the city kept a king and current historiography tends to revise the complete collapse of Tyre long repeated by the historians.

Overall, this deep investigation of Tyrian monetary history during the Persian period will remain for years the reference book for numismatists and historians. It provides an impressive quantity of new data now easily available. Some conclusions of J. and A.G. Elayi will probably be debated by other specialists of Phoenicia or of the numerous fields represented in the discussions. I would personally not agree with one particular sentence (p. 252), suggesting 'monetary anarchy'

in the 5th century because of the various contemporary systems of exchange (barter, weighed metal, merchandise coins used in monetary economy). These are no different from the system well attested in Babylonia during the same period and perfectly efficient in a developed economy where credit and banks played a great role. But I take this as a sign that the authors have probably achieved their goal: they have provided a valuable synthesis on Tyrian coinage and opened up important areas of debate.

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TÖRÖK, L. — Hellenizing Art in Ancient Nubia 300 BC - AD 250 and its Egyptian models. A study in "Acculturation". (Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, 53). Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2011. (24,5 cm., XXVI, 358, 160 Plates). ISBN 978-90-042-1128-5. ISSN 1566-2055. € 161,-; \$ 221,-.

In this important book, the well-known Hungarian scholar László Török continues his exploration of (what perhaps should be characterised as) the "cultural status and character" of Nubian civilisation. He does so by studying ancient Nubia during a crucial period of transition, between 300 BC and 250 AD, when increasing connectivity brought about by the Hellenistic and Roman empires (and the networks that came with them) forced Nubia to define its position towards modernity.

Nubia's relation to Egypt and its (material) culture has always played an important role in regard to questions about Nubia's own cultural status and character. From our scholarly 21st century perspective, many Nubian things often look Egyptian. But were they also perceived as Egyptian at that time? What can be said about the relation between Egyptian and Nubian civilisation, if both often had an Egyptian appearance? Then how should we define the meaning of what we call "Egyptian"? From the middle of the first millennium BC onwards such questions become even more complicated. This is not only because Egyptian-Nubian interaction in itself already knew a long history by that time — the kingdom of Kerma, for instance, already made extensive use of "the Egyptian" as early as the mid-second millennium BC (see D. Valbelle, The cultural significance of iconographic and epigraphic data found in the kingdom of Kerma, in: T. Kendall (ed.), *Proceedings of the IXth International Conference of Nubian Studies (Boston, 21-26 August 1998)* (2004) 176-183) — but also because more cultures and cultural models now came into play; again as a result of increasing processes of connectivity. Most remarkable is the prominent role that cultural and visual models originally from Greece start to play all over the *oikumene*. This process is commonly described as Hellenisation, which was to acquire an enormous additional dynamic through Alexander the Great and both his Hellenistic and Roman successors — and thus likewise had an impact on Nubia. It is through these developments that during the period under study in this book (300 BC - 250 AD) the three main cultural elements to be interpreted are "Nubian", "Egyptian" and

“Hellenising” — and this interpretation is what Török sets out to do under the heading “a study in acculturation” (with the latter term between inverted commas).

In trying to understand the relation between Egypt and Nubia (and the “Egyptian” face of “Nubian” civilisation) the notion of Egyptianisation has always been dominant. During large parts of the 19th and 20th century this relation was perceived from a colonial perspective, in the sense that Egyptian culture, simply out of its superiority alone, would have transcended all that was Nubian. The past decades have seen a reversal of this paradigm: scholars are now looking for a “native” Nubian understanding of all these Egyptian-looking concepts and styles. Török aligns himself prudently with the latter paradigm by aiming at a Meroitic reading of borrowed forms. It would concern, as he puts it, reception *with* understanding: the media were Egyptian but the messages would be firmly Kushite (p. 40). It is interesting to note a parallel here with the Hellenisation and Romanisation debates. Where in earlier (colonial) days Hellenisation and Romanisation were regarded as civilising processes from the part of a superior culture, their present (postcolonial) understanding often argues in terms of Native agency, for instance through resistance or elite-negotiation (for a recent overview of this debate and its consequences, see the discussion article in *Archaeological Dialogues* 21.1 (2014) 1-64). For the Romanisation debate in particular this has, not infrequently, resulted in a strengthening of the Roman *versus* Native dichotomy. However, the outcome of recent research, especially in the domain of visual material culture, has shown that the categories Roman and Native are, to a great extent, both contextual and social — and therefore not at all exclusively ethnic or cultural. “Code-switching” is the key word to this new approach (for which see, for instance, A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome’s cultural revolution* (2008) and M.J. Versluys, *Material culture and identity in the late Roman Republic* (c. 200 BC – c. 20 BC), in: J. DeRose Evans (ed.), *A companion to the archaeology of the Roman Republic* (2013) 429-440). Török’s book would have profited from drawing in these discussions — and thus looking (even) more widely at other parts of the (Hellenistic and Roman) world that Nubia belonged to — not in the least because this debate has incited a critical reappraisal of the notion of acculturation, which is also central to the analysis of culture contact in this monograph. To briefly summarise this (emerging) critique: especially when it concerns material culture, thinking in terms of acculturation seems to strengthen the dichotomy between categories like Roman (or Egyptian) and Native (or Nubian), while a contextual and social understanding of them in terms of code-switching — thus changing these categories from ethnic or cultural ones to semantic ones — implies a theoretical model that achieves the opposite.

But perhaps this would be asking too much of a book that is already laudably explicit in its theoretical point(s) of departure and that has bravely put complicated interpretative questions on the meaning of “Nubian”, “Egyptian” and “Hellenising” central to its analysis. After an Introduction that sets the (Nubian) scene, Chapter One discusses the modern discovery of Hellenising art in Meroe. Rightly underlining the importance (still) of Steffen Wenig’s 1978 essay “A History of the Art, Architecture, and Minor Arts of Nubia and the Northern Sudan”, Török defines his aim as an explo-

ration of why the Meroites adopted certain motifs and chose to ignore others. Chapter Two outlines his theoretical framework: understanding Nubian art is not about Egyptian or Hellenising “quotations”, on the contrary: “What we have to do with is a dialect of Egyptian art spoken by a different autonomous society (-)” (p. 40). Chapter Three takes this theoretical framework one step further and reviews (with authority and a variety of new insights) the debate on Egypt’s “multicultural identity” in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, especially in relation to material culture. Here we indeed find a similar discussion to the question of how to understand categories like “Egyptian”, “Hellenising” and “Roman”; and with much more (and more extensively debated) data than in case of Nubia. Although this discussion in fact moves into the direction of code-switching (and rightly praises, therefore, Christina Riggs’ important *The beautiful burial in Roman Egypt* from 2005), Török does not discuss the (radical) step towards a purely semantic understanding of categories like “Egyptian”, “Hellenic” or “Roman” (for which see M. Bergmann, *Stile und Ikonographien im kaiserzeitlichen Ägypten*, in: K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel, S. Pfeiffer (eds.), *Tradition and transformation: Egypt under Roman rule* (2010) 1-36) and M.J. Versluys, *Understanding Egypt in Egypt and beyond*, in: L. Bricault, M.J. Versluys (eds.), *Isis on the Nile. Egyptian gods in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (2010) 7-36).

Chapter Four plunges into a discussion of case studies; this relatively short chapter deals with “Early contacts with Ptolemaic Egypt and the early imports”. Telling examples of connectivity and the (consequent) semantisation of styles include the Attic plastic rhyton by Sotades from around 470 BC found under pyramid *Begarawiya South 24* (perhaps a gift by the Persian (!) satrap in Egypt to the king of Kush); the bewildering depot find of Addi Gelamo and the Tuh el-Karamus treasure with several pieces that combine Egyptian, Achaemenid and Hellenistic elements. The far more extensive Fifth Chapter is concerned with Hellenising architecture and sculpture from Meroe City and focuses on the so-called water sanctuary and its sculptural finds in Hellenising style. Reappraising and rephrasing, perhaps sometimes in too much detail, his earlier ideas on this fascinating complex (and his criticism on some of the interpretations through the recent work at the site by the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut*), Török interprets the sculptural program as including Greek and Egyptian elements simultaneously and, being multi-layered, referring to the *troupe* of the inundating Nile — a rather general interpretation that, concerning things Egyptian, will probably always be true in one way or another. Chapter Six discusses the great enclosure at Musawwarat es Sufra, arguing for an interpretation as desert palace rather than as an ensemble of temples — and as far as (styles of) material culture are concerned, especially in terms of what Török calls “the freedom of imitation”. With also Achaemenid forms being part of the *koine*, he argues that “What they did was a liberal use of not-traditional architectural elements and forms borrowed from Ptolemaic Egyptian architecture, on the one hand, and a creative modification of traditional Egyptian/Meroitic forms in a Hellenizing manner on the other.” (p. 215). As such the Nubian *bricoleurs*, like their counterparts all across the Mediterranean and Near East, were highly innovative, as the creation of column bases in the form of both lion and

elephant figures shows (see p. 227-236: “Innovations in architectural sculpture” as well as Török’s earlier paper *Archaism and innovation in 1st century BC Meroitic art: Meroe temple M250 revisited*, *Azania. Journal of the British Institute in Eastern Africa* 39 (2004) 203-224). Chapter Seven discusses decorated fine pottery and Meroitic vase painting (“From mass-product to luxury and back”) and shows that processes of what one could call “hybridisation” or “innovative eclecticism” are not at all restricted to the “high arts” alone. Volume 2 (2013) of the recently established *Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture (HEROM)* entitled *Artefact variability, assemblage differentiation, and identity negotiation. Debating code-switching in material culture* eloquently makes the same point more in general. The use of different styles (with their distinct materialities) point to something of a semantic system in this domain as well — with black, handmade wares with impressed figures in an “African” style being part of the repertoire (see plate 88). The very short Chapter Eight discusses the Hellenistic Egyptian style kiosk at Naqa, which would be an exceptional case because “it was built on the basis of an imported plan *without* any Meroitic addition in design or execution” (p. 308). It can therefore be seen as an example, Török argues, of Nubian copying and imitation without further ado — an interpretation that can certainly be contested (see, for instance, the arguments brought forward by D. Wildung, *Kushite religion: aspects of the Berlin excavations at Naga*, in: D.A. Welsby, J.R. Anderson (eds.), *Sudan. Ancient treasures. An exhibition of recent discoveries from the Sudan National Museum* (2004) 174-185, 176). Is the choice, in this period and context, for a purely Pharaonic concept (with or without innovations) perhaps to be interpreted as a (typically Roman-period) form of archaism?

Chapter Nine is entitled “Media and messages. The autonomy of Nubian ‘acculturation’” and serves as a general conclusion. Török argues that Nubia is not like other (what he calls) Hellenistic peripheries because there were no Greek or Hellenised-Egyptian communities in the area. The Meroitic adoption of elements from the classical idiom would therefore be part of a (longstanding) Nubian cultural tradition that “may be described as a continuous formation of a special *dialect of art* that was destined to articulate Nubian messages and not repeat Egyptian ones” (p. 310). In that sense it would not really concern a process of acculturation — in its traditional definition acculturation regards the phenomena resulting when groups of individuals from different cultures come into continuous first hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups — and that is the reason why Török only uses the term between inverted commas. From that point of view, interestingly, *Hellenizing Art in Ancient Nubia* can be read as an (other) argument *against* the feasibility of acculturation as an explanatory concept to understand processes of “hybridisation” and “innovative eclecticism” in Hellenistic and Roman material culture (cf. for these questions also the important overview presented by M. Baud, *Culture d’Afrique, modèles Égyptiens et influences méditerranéennes*, in: M. Baud (ed.), *Méroé. Un empire sur le Nil* (2010) 76-94 in which, unfortunately, there is little anthropological and sociological theory discussed to understand, in the formulation of the preface (p. 7) to this important exhibition catalogue, *l’image d’un multiculturalisme accompli*).

Michael Rostovtzeff (*The social and economic history of the Roman Empire* I. (1957) 302) characterised Meroe as “a little Nubian Alexandria” — and much more than Török eventually does, I am inclined to argue that this indeed should be our perspective in order to gain understanding of it. *Not* in the sense that the ethnic or cultural make-up of Alexandria and Meroe would be alike, or that Meroe would become Egyptian and/or Greek and lose its own Nubian identity. But rather in the sense that Meroe was, like Alexandria, Antioch, Rome and many others places, a hub in the Hellenistic and Roman network that spanned large parts of Egypt, the Mediterranean, the Near East and also Africa and Europe. In a similar vein, Dietrich Wildung once characterised its monumental buildings as “abbreviated world architecture” (cf. M. Baud (ed.), *Méroé. Un empire sur le Nil* (2010) 85). Within that network some visual languages, like Greek and Egyptian, were particularly strong. Also in view of its geographical position and Nubian history itself, it is therefore only logical that Hellenizing and Egyptian models were appropriated and strategically used in Meroe. As such, I think Török is certainly right in concluding that the Nubian reception of Egyptian, Hellenic and Hellenising art was directed inwards throughout (as he defines the main aim of the book on p. xviv): everything we see happening in Nubia is indeed *Nubian* — as Frederick Naerebout has effectively shown for another Nilotic context (see his article *The Temple at Ras el-Soda. Is it an Isis Temple? Is it Greek, Roman, Egyptian, or neither? And so what?*, in: L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys and P. G. P. Meyboom (eds.), *Nile into Tiber. Egypt in the Roman world* (2007) 506-554). However, this reveals little about the cultural status and character of Nubian society in terms of Greekness or Egyptianess or “Nubianess”, but merely shows to what extent Meroe was connected and whether or not it was willing (or able) to participate in global developments. Therefore, we could say that Meroe is simultaneously local and global — as is Alexandria. The difference between Meroe and Alexandria, then, lies in their degree of connectedness and the place they hold within the network; in that respect geography as well as ethnic and cultural identity certainly matter. Regarding Nubian Egyptianism, for instance, Michel Baud (*Culture d’Afrique, modèles Égyptiens et influences méditerranéennes*, in: M. Baud (ed.), *Méroé. Un empire sur le Nil* (2010) 76-94) has argued that it is heavily influenced by Napata and its archaising tendencies on the one hand and, on the other, by the hellenising forms of Egyptianism emanating from the Ptolemaic court. This, of course, is different in Alexandria, and again different in Delos, or Rome, etc. — although these places show Egyptianism(s) comparable to Meroe simultaneously.

In this book, therefore, Nubia is presented as both a consumer and producer of Hellenistic *koine*: an innovative and promising perspective (also in view of the proximity of Saharan and sub-Saharan networks and their (styles of) material culture). What makes Nubia a particular interesting case study is the fact that things Egyptian are shown to play an important role within this shared visual language — in fact, as we increasingly keep finding out, not unlike Alexandria (see for instance K. Savvopoulos, *Alexandria in Aegyptio*. The use and meaning of Egyptian elements in Hellenistic and Roman Alexandria, in: L. Bricault, M.J. Versluys (eds.), *Isis on the Nile. Egyptian gods in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (2010) 75-86) or Rome (for which see the recent overview

by G. Capriotti Vittozzi, *La terra del Nilo sulle sponde del Tevere* from 2013). Where Hellenism is a driving force in large parts of the network, Egyptianism clearly is one as well (while Persianism, as also this book shows, needs much more attention). Egyptologists, of course, clearly recognise this principle from Egyptian history — but they usually do not deal with the Hellenistic period as being truly Egyptian history. Hellenists and Romanists, on the contrary, are still reluctant to take Egyptianism serious as one of Antiquity's most important cultural commodities. The great merit of this book is that it opens up these important and fascinating intersections.

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