

ASSYRIOLOGIE

REY, S. — For the Gods of Girsu. City-State Formation in Ancient Sumer. Archaeopress, Oxford, 2016. (24,5 cm, VIII, 76). ISBN 978-1-78491-389-2. £ 25.00.

For the Gods of Girsu. City-State Formation in Ancient Sumer is a dense and synthetic work focused on the site of Tello, ancient Girsu, in Southern Iraq. The author is indeed codirector (together with Fatma Husain) of the Tello-Girsu excavations since 2015 and since 2016 he is involved in the Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Program (IEHMTP) addressed to the Iraqi heritage professionals and promoted by the British Museum of London and the Iraqi State Board for Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH).

The first archaeological campaigns at the site of Tello-Girsu, the first Sumerian site to be explored, date back to the time-span between 1877 and 1933, for a total of 20 campaigns. After a 82-year gap, Rey's work had the opportunity to benefit from the more comprehensive and, at the same time, more rigorous modern approach of the new archaeological techniques and methods of investigation.

As stated by the author (Preface, p. v), this book represents an expanded and enhanced assembling of the papers presented by him in conferences and workshops in the past few years, some of which prepared in collaboration with the philologist Camille Lecompte.

Both archaeological and epigraphic data are extensively used to investigate broader issues such as the formation and development of the Sumerian city-states and the role of the cult in secular phenomena, in the light of a scientific approach

which aims, through the combination of different sources of information, at the development of a 'total history' (Preface, p. vi). The main focus of this work is the history (and configuration) of Girsu in the Early Dynastic period (2900-2350 BC), that is, at the time when the city-state was the main sociopolitical form of organization in the Mesopotamian alluvial plain.

In spite of being the compilation of different contributions, this book presents a unitary structure which follows the centrifugal logic of the ritual procession of the tutelary city-god, and therefore introduces material data according to a physical and ideological geography: the sacred city (Chapter 2), the countryside (Chapter 3), and the city-state border (Chapter 4). The religious interpretation of spaces and events is consciously chosen by the author, as it would reflect the perspective of the ancient Sumerians, the actual actors of that part of history we want to understand and reconstruct.

The books starts indeed by briefly presenting the issue of the Sumerian city-state and the Sumerian theological concept of space and order (Introduction), followed by the *status quaestionis* (Chapter 1), which encompasses the history of the discovery of Girsu, the pioneering archaeological campaigns, and the role their finds had in the development of theories about the early state formation and model (e.g. The Myth of the Archaic Temple-City, p. 12). In the final section of this chapter (Standing in the Shadows of Giants), one may now add the name of G. Benati (see his 'Re-modeling Political Economy in Early 3rd Millennium Mesopotamia: Patterns of Socio-Economic Organization in Archaic Ur [Tell al-Muqqair, Iraq], *Cuneiform Digital Library Journal* 2015:2), among the scholars who in the last decades and with a fresh approach have treated the subject of the early state organization and structure.

Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the core of the work, which follows the above-mentioned centrifugal logic. It in fact describes the city of Girsu proper offering a concrete updating or a re-discussion of the previous archaeological works, also thanks to the recent availability of space photography, such as Corona satellite images, and modern remote-sensing techniques of analysis.

In this regard, the discussion about the localization of the main watercourses in the city-area (especially the section: The logistical Infrastructure of the Ancient Waterways, pp. 31-36) is really interesting. As Rey states in the preface (p. vi), his investigation relies on the support of various sources of information and in this chapter we can find a broad use of epigraphic sources, in particular, of the contemporary (ED IIIb – Lagaš I, ca. 2500-2350 BC) royal inscriptions. Also interesting is the interpretation of the Sumerian term ^{ĝes}keš₂-da/ra₂, usually translated as "dam", "reservoir" or "weir" (see e.g. M. Civil [1994] *The Farmer's Instructions: A Sumerian Agricultural Manual*. Aula Orientalis, Suppl. 5. Barcelona, p. 129), as 'bridge' (pp. 32-34), a term for which, so far, definitive proposals are lacking. The Sumerian verbal root 'keš₂' (corresponding to the Akkadian *rakāsu*) can be interpreted as "to bind", hence an interpretation as 'bridge' for the derivated noun ^{ĝes}keš₂-da/ra₂ would be suitable. In this regard, see also the correspondence between the Sumerian ^{ĝes}keš₂-da/ra₂ and the Akkadian *erretu(m)* reported in the AHW (s.v. *erretu* II: 'etwa Uferverbauung'). Some remarks can be made instead about the interpretation of the name of one of the Girsu city gates, 'ka₂ me', which Rey reports as "battle gate" (p. 25), on the basis of

D. Frayne's translation (D. Frayne [2008] *Presargonic Period [2700-2350 BC]. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. The Early Period I*. Toronto, p. 90), who tentatively interprets 'me' as a phonetic writing for 'me₃', that is, the usual Sumerian term for "battle". Since there is no sure correspondence between 'me' and 'me₃' (in this regard, see also Å.W. Sjöberg [1975] 'Three Hymns to the God Ningišzida', *Studia Orientalia* 46, p. 313) a more cautious 'ME-Gate' would be preferable.

As already mentioned, Chapter 3 deals with the Girsu countryside. Also in this case, the availability of space photography and modern investigation techniques allowed a better knowledge and understanding of the spatial organization in the region of Girsu. What emerges is a complex setting of the city-state with an important density of settlements and watercourses (p. 42), a situation confirmed, on epigraphic basis, by the recent study of C. Lecompte (C. Lecompte [2015] 'Untersuchungen zu den Siedlungsstrukturen und den ländlichen Siedlungen in der FD-Zeit. Auf der Suche nach den verlorenen Dörfer in den altsumerischen Urkunden', in R. Dittman and G. Selz (eds.) *It's a Long Way to a History of the Early Dynastic Period(s)*, pp. 211-246). Thanks to the support of these combined sources of information, the map in Fig. 18 (Map of the Early Dynastic Settlement Pattern of the Girsu-Lagaš City-State, p. 44) and the map in Fig. 19 (Map of the Early Dynastic Network of Watercourses and Marshland of the Girsu-Lagaš City-State, p. 45) are of particular value; equally interesting is the map in Fig. 20 (Reconstruction of the Early Dynastic Ritual Procession-Ways of the Girsu-Lagaš City-State from Offering Lists, p. 47), mainly obtained through the information of textual data from the archive of the Lagaš I queens (p. 46). In support of the connection between the goddess Nanše and elements such as water, marshlands, and aquatic birds, stressed by the author (p. 52), one may add the work of N. Veldhuis (2004) *Religion, Literature, and Scholarship. The Sumerian Composition: "Nanše and the Birds"*, *Cuneiform Monographs* 22, Leiden.

Chapter 4 deals with the last step of the centrifugal structure of this book, that is, the city-state border, with a particular focus on the well-known Lagaš-Umma border conflict and relevant ideological implications. This chapter offers a useful overview on the political balance of the area (especially the section: Contextualizing the Lagaš-Umma Border Conflict, pp. 54-59), and an interesting discussion on the Gu'edena territory and the contextualization of the Sumerian term for border 'ki-sur-ra' (especially the section: Characterizing the Presargonic Gu'edena frontier, pp. 60-64). The discussion on the territorial border ends by introducing the chronological border of this work, that is, the fall of the city-state network of the Early Dynastic Period and the rise of the Mesopotamia Imperial State.

A final section (Conclusion: Morphogenesis of an Archaic City-State, pp. 67-69) briefly describes the city of Girsu and its territory, by summarizing in a clear and succinct way the main points analyzed in this work. At the end of the book (p. 70) we find a chart (not notified in the List of Figures or Contents) showing the contemporary rulers from the Early Dynastic city-states of Ur, Uruk, Girsu-Lagaš, Umma, and Kiš. Unfortunately, the book does not include any indexes.

Interspersed typos (e.g. 'shinning groves' at p. 37; 'Lugal-anada' at p. 46; 'Namninda-kiğara' at p. 58) do not affect the fluidity of the reading.

As a whole, this book is a useful instrument which crowns the beginning of works in the site after many years of impasse. It has the particular value of being a concise and clever synthesis of the works previously conducted on the site of Tello enriched by the new data and modern methodology, which, at the same time and in a linear way, tries to respect the Sumerian perspective on the surrounding landscape.

Bari, Italy
September 2017

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MIEROOP, M. VAN DE — *Philosophy before the Greeks. The Pursuit of Truth in Ancient Babylonia*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2016. (24 cm, VIII, 297). ISBN 978-0-691-15718-4. £ 24.95.

This book essentially deals with what Assyriologists call "Mesopotamian science or scholarship", but the author makes a case to regard its underlying principles as a philosophical system in its own right. He targets a larger audience than just Ancient Near Eastern scholars (which is, of course, a good thing) and this is probably also the reason why he chose the title "Philosophy before the Greeks". Most modern readers associate philosophy with something else than the endless lists of words, laws, and ominous events that characterize Mesopotamian scholarly and scientific pursuits. The Mesopotamians did not formulate any general statements concerning the world like the ancient Greeks did. Instead, they present us with huge amounts of data that seem to be collected, categorized, and interpreted according to rules that were never written. The core argument of the author is that these underlying rules represent a unique way of structuring the world. This is what he means when talking about Mesopotamian philosophy. To develop his argument, the author draws on three major fields within Mesopotamian science and scholarship: language and philology, divination, and law.

The first section (ch. 1) is devoted to Mesopotamian epistemology. A crucial aspect was the cuneiform writing system and its two main languages, Sumerian and Akkadian. They were, according to the author, at the heart of how Mesopotamian scholars interpreted their world. An excellent example is provided by the sophisticated philology behind the fifty names of Marduk at the end of *Enūma eliš*, where each name is written in Sumerian, followed by an Akkadian exegesis of the signs used to write the name.

The second section (ch. 2 and 3) deals with word lists: Mesopotamian lexicology and philology. These lists present us with a certain ordering of the Mesopotamian world but were also intended to learn the cuneiform writing system together with the Sumerian language. In the debate surrounding the function of the word lists, the author takes a clear position: the lists were not solely used for education, but present us with a deeper, Mesopotamian, way of understanding the world. An important point made about the lists is that they were not as fixed or canonical as we first thought (exemplified in the *Materials for the Sumerian Lexikon* series), but that the lists were subject to a continuous process of editing and that a certain series (like *Ura=hubullu* for example) could exist in different recensions at the same time.

Ancient (anonymous) scholars were at liberty to change and edit the lists as they saw fit. A substantial part of this chapter is furthermore devoted to a historical overview of Mesopotamian word lists. Chapter 3 then delves into the underlying principles of the lexical material. The author argues, based on a structuralist premise, that the ordering and inclusion of words in the lexical lists represent a certain underlying logic. Even if this logic is not always apparent to modern day readers.

The third section (ch. 4 and 5) can be considered as one of the core parts of the book because it deals with what the Mesopotamians considered as their most important science: divination. This “science” is often considered irrational and superfluous by modern people, but the author carefully points out that these “irrational” pursuits also gave rise to Babylonian mathematical astronomy, whose influence and achievements reverberate to this day (just think about the article that M. Ossendrijver published in *Science* 351 (2016), 482-484, receiving wide press-coverage). In chapter 4 the author sets the stage in detailing the practices of Mesopotamian divination and its specialists, as well as providing a historical overview of the genre. Then in chapter 5, he applies the same structural analysis to the divinatory texts as he did on the lexical material.

The fourth section (ch. 6 and 7) deals with Mesopotamian collections of laws, whose “If..., then...” structure inspired that of the omen lists. Mesopotamian laws rarely give general rules, but state distinct cases for which a specific solution is provided. The organization of the law codes often defies modern logic, but the author draws a parallel with the lexical and omen lists stating that a legal paragraph is only clear in its broader context within the code. He suspects that laws were added and elaborated upon according to the same principles that he identified for the lexical and omen lists. This is probably also the reason why the author rejects the possibility that some laws might have their basis in actual royal jurisprudence: on p. 163 we read: “*Just as we need not see actual observations at the core of the omen corpus, there is no need to see a collection of genuine cases at the basis of the law codes*”. This is the author’s own opinion, but strong evidence against this opinion is not mentioned in the book. For example, we can mention the letter of “Samsuiluna and the Hungry *Nadītums*” (C. Janssen (1991), *Northern Akkad Project Reports* 5, 3-39). This letter, found in multiple copies, unequivocally shows a Babylonian king giving legal precepts according to the same paradigm as the laws from the Codex Hammurabi. This makes it credible that at least in a number of cases actual jurisprudence of Hammurabi was inserted into the Codex, even though we can agree that this does not hold for the majority of cases. Much later, on p. 190 the author again argues that actual cases or observations played a negligible role in Mesopotamian scholarship: “*...we can easily doubt it played a role at all*”. I understand that this tenet is at the heart of the author’s argument, but I believe he argues for this too strongly. Another example showing that empirical observations can be found in Mesopotamian scholarship are the “Venus tablets” (from the omen series *Enūma Anu Enlil*) that describe actual observations of the planet Venus during the reign of Ammi-šaduqa around 1640 BCE. I do not want to prove that the majority of entries in divinatory and legal lists were based on actual observations or cases, but just that we cannot discount the possibility that some of them were.

The majority of the law collections are perhaps mostly symbols of royal propaganda (p. 173), they show an ideal of justice and the way things should be. I would like to point to an additional little-known example from the Old Babylonian period. Ideal prices for commodities are not only seen in the law codes, but also in several inscriptions from early Old Babylonian kings from Larsa and Uruk (cf. E. Von Dassow (2009) “*Narām-Sîn of Uruk: A New King in an Old Shoebox*”, *JCS* 61, 63-91). The kings probably wanted to show that the justness of their rule had led to such ideal prices, even though contemporary texts show that these ideal prices were not always realistic. In the same vein, the famous Old Babylonian *mīšarum* edicts were intended to restore the land to the status quo, the way things should be. The Codex Hammurabi, and perhaps other law collections also fit somewhere in this scheme. This shows the enormous complexity of interpreting the law collections: there are many layers and their resemblance to omen and lexical lists are just one aspect.

Finally, in part five (ch. 8 and 9), the author returns to the issue of Mesopotamian epistemology (first studied in ch. 1). Texts were at the heart of the Mesopotamian endeavor to understand the world. We can agree with the author that lexicography is perhaps the “purest of Babylonian sciences”, followed by divinatory sciences and law. Chapter 8 provides perhaps one of the best overviews of Mesopotamian intellectual history from the Old Babylonian period to the end of Mesopotamian culture. Chapter 9 starts with the originally German notion (going back to the early 19th-century *Bildungsideal* propounded by F.A. Wolf and the politician W. von Humboldt) that language shapes a culture’s attitudes and achievements. This idea has been debunked, but still influences the Humanities and is even responsible for the fact that Greek and Latin are taught in our schools today. The author points out the difficulty with this notion because Mesopotamian literate culture was essentially bilingual. Instead, the author pleads, as he did throughout the book, to understand Mesopotamian literate culture not from its languages, but from its script: cuneiform writing. Or, to be more specific, cuneiform writing in lists as the basis of the Mesopotamian scholarly and scientific pursuit. This endeavor followed its own line of reasoning with its own internal logic. This is not always appreciated or acknowledged by modern scholars. However, we should not forget that we too operate from within our own Kuhnian paradigm with our own convictions and epistemology. Who are we to say that ours is universally the best? This is the biggest merit of the book: it shows us the originality and uniqueness of the Mesopotamian way to understand the world.

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September 2017

Rients DE BOER

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GABBAY, U. — *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods: Sumerian Emesal Prayers of the First Millennium BC.* (Heidelberg Emesal-Studien, 1). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2014. (30 cm, XX, 356). ISBN 978-3-447-06748-5. ISSN 2195-7037. € 78,-.

The tradition of prayer was a long-lasting phenomenon in the Ancient Near East; many scholars have therefore been

interested in studying the genre.¹⁾ So far, books on this topic have focused on the major Ancient Near Eastern languages, Akkadian and Sumerian. The prayers written in Emesal have, to date, remained an under-studied group of texts. The subject of this review, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, therefore usefully fills an editorial gap. However, it is for its quality that it will be regarded as a milestone.

A long tradition, ranging from the third to the first millennium, underpins these texts. Those contained in the volume date back to the first millennium, and are studied from a religious point of view rather than from a literary or historical perspective (p. 3).

The volume represents the most up-to-date edition of the Emesal prayers, encompassing new texts and related materials in its scholarship. It is a revised and expanded version of Gabbay's 2007 PhD dissertation from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and is the first volume in the new Heidelberg Emesal-Studien (HES) series. The second (from the same dissertation) is entitled *The Eršema Prayers of the First Millennium BC* (HES 2)²⁾.

The idea around which the volume is constructed is to give an identity to this textual typology. While it clearly shares formulas with prayers written in Akkadian and Sumerian, it possesses individual characteristics that entitle it to occupy a separate category.

The book consists of 11 chapters followed by a list of abbreviations, references, and indices of the names of persons, deities, places, temples, museum and excavation numbers, text publications and editions, and compositions.

The discussion focuses on the texts' formal aspects in chapters 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10; and on their contextual aspects in chapters 5, 6, and 7. A discrepancy arises between the numerous chapters about the textual aspects, and the sparser ones about the context. It is very difficult to reconstruct contexts in the Mesopotamian field, so the effort made by the author and the profundity of the chapters on this topic must be mentioned. However, it would have been better to divide the two aspects more clearly. Perhaps to disguise the discrepancy between the abundance of textual analysis and the sparsity of contextual content they have been placed together in the middle of the book.

The general coordinates of the field are considered in Chapter 1 (pp. 1-3), where a history of earlier studies is offered along with a description of the methodology and organisation of this work. The religious context of the texts, namely that they are included in the performance of *kalû* ('lamentation / prayer priest', Sumerian *gala*),³⁾ is also revealed in the first paragraph. By so doing, the author clearly frames the volume in the editorial landscape.

Chapter 2 (pp. 5-14) carefully addresses the prayers written in Emesal and proposes the main groups: Balaġ, Eršema,

Eršahuġa and Šuila. Most were written in Emesal, but there are also prayers written in Sumerian or in mixed forms, with translations into Akkadian. This chapter highlights the lack of a consistent definition of Emesal throughout the volume. Initially, the term is aligned with the word 'register' (p. 5), and then 'dialect' (p. 5), and later 'language' (p. 10). This lack of clarity is repeated throughout the whole volume, creating confusion. It would help to clarify the term Emesal at the opening of this chapter and to standardise terminology throughout the volume.

That the purpose of Emesal's prayers was to quench the irate soul (literally the 'heart') of the gods is revealed in Chapter 3 (pp. 15-20). In order to achieve this, the unfortunate turned to the *kalû*. The *kalû* communicated with the divinity through melodious sounds produced by musical instruments (*lilissu* and *halhallatu* respectively, p. 18). The addressed god would then intervene on behalf of the supplicant and calm the angry deity. Gabbay's thesis, according to which the texts would have a daily ritual use, is convincing.

The theological themes of Emesal prayers are traced in Chapter 4 (pp. 21-62). Theophany is the main theme in Emesal compositions, and underlies all compositions. The technical term used is *è*, 'to go out' which means to appear in the natural world. The god can manifest him/herself both for beneficent and malevolent events, and he/she appears in two steps: (i) God's announcement of his/her decision to appear and what his/her apparition implies; (ii) the apparition itself, often connected to (disastrous) events, such as 'storm' (*u₄*) (pp. 22-23). Not only the modes of the divine manifestation, but also motifs of sin, revenge, the enemy, and the role of divination, are discussed.

Theology is also considered through images found in the prayers. For example, body parts are used as images of divine concealment and withdrawal during a catastrophe, whereas animal imagery portrays cities and events. While the volume aims to provide a religious contextualisation of the texts, they would benefit from a slightly more detailed analysis. For example, a study of body parts to discover whether there are parts associated just with anger and others with mercy would have been fruitful.⁴⁾

The 'heart pacification unit'⁵⁾ encapsulates the main purpose of prayers, that is, the conciliation of the heart of a divinity. All genres of Emesal prayers contain this textual element at the end of the text, perhaps for theological-cultural reasons (p. 33).

The standardisation of Emesal prayers as well as the diversity of texts is dealt with in Chapter 8 (pp. 193-227). Gabbay divides the argument into three different processes: (i) the standardisation of the content of the text, considering a minimum of variants; (ii) canonisation, namely the inclusion of texts in a group (or canon); (iii) the organisation of canonized texts and their sequencing. 'Canonical' compositions are divided into prayers to male deities and those to female deities for Balaġ, Eršema and Šuila prayers, whereas for Eršahuġa the evidence is not clearly deducible (p. 195). Textual standardisation goes hand-in-hand with the Babylonianization of the prayers (although not all of them), and

¹⁾ Renowned works are those of W. G. Kunstmann, *Die babylonische Gebetsbeschwörung* (Leipzig, 1932) and W. Mayer, *Untersuchungen zur Formensprache der babylonischen "Gebetsbeschwörungen"* (Rome, 1976). See also the recent volume by A. Lenzi, *Reading Akkadian Prayers and Hymns. An Introduction* (Atlanta, 2011) and the bibliography therein.

²⁾ This volume is an edition of Eršema prayers only and considers both types of Eršema from the first millennium BC, the longer compositions are known as Balaġ and individual Eršema prayers ("Ritual Eršemas"). Overall, the volume collects 80 prayers in consonance with the ancient catalogue of Niniveh, and on the basis of over one hundred tablets and fragments from various sites (in particular Babylon, Nineveh, and Uruk). It offers transliterations, translations, and philological notes, as well as evidence for the ritual performance of each Eršema.

³⁾ It should be noted that in the volume *kalû* never appears in italics despite being an Akkadian word. In this review, however, it is given in italics.

⁴⁾ The use of parts of the body to define the theology of the divinity of Marduk can be seen in the hymn to Marduk at the beginning of the poem *ludlul*. For more about this see Piccin/Worthington, 'Schizophrenia and the Problem of Suffering in the /Ludlul/ Hymn to Marduk', *RA* Vol 109, 1 (2015), pp. 113-124.

⁵⁾ The term was coined by M. E. Cohen in *Sumerian Hymnology: The Eršemma* (Cincinnati, 1981), p. 21.

is linked to the political dominance of Babylon's Marduk theology. Against this phenomenon there was the composition of new Balaġ and Eršema for Marduk and Nabû as well as the preservation of older traditions such as a return to local traditions in some cities during the Late Babylonian period.

Information related to the cuneiform tablets is illustrated in Chapter 9 (pp. 229-276). Their formats, catalogues, arrangements, the scribes and families associated with the *kalû*, and detailed provenance information are all made available.

Clarifications on the Sumerian and Akkadian dialectical features of the Balaġ and Eršema are given in Chapter 10 (pp. 281-286). An analysis of Akkadian translations and interpretations of Sumerian texts is offered. This reveals a strong conservatism in Emesal prayers, so that antiquated elements were preserved. As result, there was a gap, sometimes too broad, between these elements and contemporary beliefs. Nevertheless, new elements were merged by exegesis, syncretism, and similar tools.

Besides giving an identity to the textual typology, the ritual context and the ritual operator are investigated in chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Chapter 5 introduces the main performer of Emesal prayers the *kalû* (pp. 63-79). From time to time the king was also personally involved in the repetition of the *kalû*'s words and the recitation of Eršaġuġa prayers. Following Gabbay's interpretation, based on evidence from the first millennium, it was possible only for men to become *kalû* – in contrast with his original third-gender identity. His main function was to hand down ritual and sacred knowledge.

The musical context of the Emesal prayers is explained in Chapter 6 (pp. 81-154). Various musical instruments are discussed, but just three were used in the performance of Emesal prayers. Each has their own theological meaning: balaġ-lyre; ūb-drum; *lilissu*-kettledrum (p. 153). The balaġ-lyre and ūb-drum were used in the third millennium with the aim of reconciling the heart of the deity. From the end of the third millennium or the beginning of the second millennium, they were both supplanted by the *lilissu*-kettledrum.

The ritual context of Emesal prayers is considered in Chapter 7 (pp. 155-191). Extrapolating from Emesal prayers, for example, we can reconstruct the time of the performance "the end of the night, just before dawn" (p. 186) and the topographical context "Enki's temple in Eridu" (p. 187).

The conclusions drawn in Chapter 11 (pp. 287-290) elegantly weave together all the previous chapters, ultimately concluding that the function of Emesal prayers within Mesopotamian religion was to help the king in the performance of his religious duties.

To sum up, the book, with his great detail, scholarship, and accuracy in presentation, does justice to these literary masterpieces and it will invariably elicit either approval or a bemused nod of the head from its reader. Gabbay has produced a major contribution to Emesal prayer scholarship, one for which all students and scholars of Mesopotamian literature will be grateful.

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July 2017

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JUSTEL, J. J. — Mujeres y derecho en el Próximo Oriente antiguo. La presencia de mujeres en los textos jurídicos cuneiformes del segundo y primer milenios a. C. Libros Pórtico, 2014. (24 cm, XXVI, 334). ISBN 978-84-7956-133-8. € 36,-.

J. J. Justel s'intéresse à la place des femmes dans la documentation juridique, comme l'a montré son premier livre *La posición jurídica de la mujer en Siria durante el Bronce Final. Estudio de las estrategias familiares y de la mujer como sujeto y objeto de derecho*, Zaragoza, 2008. Le présent ouvrage étend la recherche à l'ensemble du Proche-Orient et couvre une période bien plus longue, puisqu'il offre un choix de 251 textes des II^e et I^{er} millénaires av. J.-C., jusqu'à l'époque séleucide incluse. Tous les textes sont traduits en espagnol (pour la plupart d'entre eux, pour la première fois) et font l'objet d'une présentation précise, même s'ils ne sont pas commentés chacun en détail. Le but, expliqué dans l'introduction, est de fournir à la communauté scientifique de langue espagnole un ensemble représentatif des textes juridiques de la pratique quotidienne. L'ouvrage se place à la jonction de deux types d'études, celles portant sur le droit cunéiforme et celles relevant de l'histoire des femmes, qui sont brièvement rappelées. Les sources sont en majorité des contrats, dont les formulaires, variables selon les époques, contiennent cependant à peu près tous les mêmes éléments de base : mention des parties du contrat, clause(s) opératoire(s), clauses annexes (circonstances, conséquences de l'engagement), éventuellement date et lieu de rédaction, témoins, sceaux (des témoins, de l'une des parties, ou des autorités). Ces documents sont conservés par la personne dont elles établissent les droits et ont valeur de preuve en justice. L'auteur fait un bilan historiographique des études sur les femmes et le droit et souligne que, si les femmes sont moins souvent présentes que les hommes dans la documentation, cela ne correspond pas cependant à une moindre capacité juridique, celle-ci étant identique à celle des hommes. Puis il présente, pour les différentes périodes définies selon les découpages chronologiques habituels aux assyriologues, les corpus, leur origine géographique et les principales études sur les femmes dans le droit cunéiforme. Le volume comprend surtout des textes traduits de l'akkadien et un de l'ougaritique (T 251). Les sources hittites, qui ne comprennent pas d'archives privées, sont exclues. Il y a également quelques textes d'époque paléo-babylonienne traduits du sumérien, provenant de Nippur ou Kisurra, et même des modèles de contrats trouvés à Nippur et relevant du matériel scolaire pour l'apprentissage des formulaires juridiques sumériens (T 52, T 129) : ces tablettes ne sont peut-être pas suffisamment commentées dans l'introduction (p. 10-12), or elles pourraient refléter un droit différent de celui de la Babylonie du centre et du nord à la même époque.

L'organisation du volume est résolument thématique et non chronologique, les traits caractéristiques de certaines époques étant cependant soulignés au fil de la lecture, comme la forme dialoguée des contrats d'époque néo-babylonienne et perse. Les textes sont présentés de façon systématique, introduits par une ligne de résumé donnant les noms des personnes impliquées, la référence du texte (*editio princeps* ou numéro de musée), l'époque et le lieu de provenance, et une bibliographie succincte.

Dans le chapitre consacré au mariage (43 textes), une introduction en rappelle les principales phases, telles qu'elles

ont été définies notamment par R. Westbrook pour l'époque paléo-babylonienne, et souligne que les mariages ne font que rarement l'objet d'un contrat écrit, la rédaction d'une tablette ayant plutôt pour objet l'enregistrement des transferts de biens qui leur sont liés. Quelle que soit l'époque, le contrat indique soit que le mari prend sa femme comme épouse auprès du père (ou de la mère, ou du frère) de celle-ci, soit que le tuteur légal de la femme la donne à son époux. C'est en général le tuteur de la femme qui prend l'initiative du mariage, très rarement la femme elle-même : en plus des textes provenant d'Emar (T 6 et 58) et de Nuzi (T 7), il existe un exemple paléo-babylonien de Nippur (BE 6/2 40), voire plusieurs indiqués par N. Pfeifer, « Das Eherecht in Nuzi : Einflüsse aus altbabylonische Zeit », dans G. Wilhelm (éd.), *General Studies and Excavations in Nuzi III/2*, SCCNH 18, Bethesda, 2009, p. 355-420, spécialement p. 365 n. 59. Viennent ensuite les textes relatifs à la donation matrimoniale et à la dot, qui garantissent la protection économique de l'épouse. Sur la *terhatum*, on ajoutera désormais l'article de S. Démare-Lafont, « Le mariage babylonien – une approche historiographique », *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 18, 2012, p. 175-190. Le mariage est monogame, sauf dans certaines circonstances : la stérilité biologique, toujours imputée à l'épouse, ou la consécration qui lui interdit d'avoir des enfants ; une seconde épouse est alors choisie par la première. Les marchands assyriens faisant du commerce en Cappadoce ont souvent une épouse à Assur et une autre en Anatolie. La partie sur le divorce inclut les ruptures de promesses de mariages (mariages inchoatifs). La plupart des divorces sont demandés par le mari, mais de rares textes (là encore du royaume d'Ar-raphe et d'Emar, T 32 et 33) montrent une initiative de l'épouse. Enfin est envisagé le cas particulier des adoptions matrimoniales de divers types, attestées surtout au II^e millénaire : une jeune fille est adoptée pour être mariée, souvent à un fils des adoptants. Le couple réside en général dans la famille du mari ; l'inverse est quelquefois attesté, un homme étant adopté par un autre, sans fils, qui lui donne une de ses filles comme épouse et garde son gendre dans sa maisonnée.

Les adoptions (32 textes) sont des fictions juridiques qui créent un lien de filiation entre deux personnes. La situation la plus courante est celle d'hommes sans enfants, qui adoptent un fils, soit un adulte, soit un enfant auprès de ses parents biologiques. Mais des femmes aussi adoptent ou sont adoptées. Les adoptions de petites filles sont d'ailleurs souvent le fait de femmes. À l'époque paléo-babylonienne, certaines adoptantes sont des femmes consacrées qui ne doivent pas avoir d'enfants. À l'époque néo-babylonienne, des femmes ou des couples adoptent de petites filles, soit auprès de leurs parents, soit parce qu'elles ont été abandonnées. Dans les mariages avec un conjoint ayant déjà des enfants, la reconstitution familiale associe au mariage l'adoption de ces enfants par leur beau-parent. D'autres situations existent au sein des familles, une tante ou un oncle adoptant ses neveux. Des femmes ou des hommes peuvent adopter une fille ou une femme adulte, pour diverses raisons, par exemple pour qu'elle s'occupe d'eux lorsqu'ils seront âgés. De façon générale, la fiction recouvre toutes sortes d'opérations dont certaines s'apparentent à des ventes.

L'héritage (34 textes) est en général transmis par le père à ses fils, les filles recevant une dot composée de biens

meubles, d'un montant inférieur à la part d'héritage de leurs frères, et il n'est pas nécessaire alors de recourir à l'écrit. La plupart des textes présentés dans ce chapitre sont des testaments, qui documentent donc plutôt des situations inhabituelles. Des femmes ont laissé des tablettes dans lesquelles elles disposent de leurs biens. Par exemple à l'époque paléo-babylonienne, les religieuses-*nadītum*, sans enfants, reçoivent des dots considérables, qu'elles gèrent de façon autonome. Leurs biens reviennent à leurs frères, sauf si elles ont obtenu de leur père le droit d'en disposer librement ; dans ce cas, elles adoptent souvent d'autres *nadītum* dont elles font leurs héritières. D'autres testaments de femmes sont attestés à Emar, à Nuzi et dans la documentation néo-babylonienne. Inversement, les femmes peuvent recevoir des biens. Des maris font des donations à leur épouse pour la protéger si elle devient veuve, même si les épouses, en règle générale, ne sont pas héritières : elles jouissent des biens jusqu'à leur mort, avant que ceux-ci ne reviennent aux enfants du couple. À Emar, ces donations sont appelées *kubuddā'u* ; sur ce terme, p. 116, T 90 et 97, on ajoutera l'article récent de M. Yamada, « The *kubuddā'u*-Gift in the Emar Texts », dans B. Lion et C. Michel (éd.), *The Role of Women in Work and Society in the Ancient Near East*, Boston et Berlin, 2016, p. 388-415, qui reprend toutes les références. La veuve obtient parfois « l'autorité paternelle » sur les biens et les enfants (*abbūtu*, à Nuzi), ou le statut de « père et mère » (dans la documentation paléo-assyrienne, à Emar et Ekalté). Des filles héritent, spécialement en l'absence de fils et, à Emar, elles reçoivent un statut masculin de père et mère, femme et homme, ou sont adoptées comme fils, cette dernière pratique étant également attestée à Nuzi et permettant à la fille d'assurer le culte funéraire. Le père de famille peut choisir de déshériter une fille qui ne s'est pas occupé de lui (T 106, Emar), ou au contraire léguer une prébende à sa fille qui a pris soin de lui (T 101, époque néo-babylonienne). Des donations sont attribuées à des mères ou à des sœurs.

Les femmes se trouvent impliquées dans des litiges qui, s'ils ne trouvent pas d'issue dans une conciliation, donnent lieu à la rédaction d'un compte rendu du procès ; de plus, des lettres font allusion à des procès (36 textes). Les femmes ne sont jamais juges, mais dans toutes les autres circonstances, elles ont la même capacité juridique que les hommes : elles sont attestées comme demanderesses, défenderesses, objets du litige ou témoins. Les procès initiés par des femmes portent souvent sur les biens qui font partie de leur dot. Inversement, certaines sont accusées de détenir indûment des biens, comme des terres ou des esclaves. Une femme est quelquefois elle-même l'objet du litige, par exemple s'il y a vol d'une esclave. Le litige peut aussi porter sur le statut : esclave, fille adoptée, etc. Le témoignage des femmes est recevable, il en existe plusieurs attestations au II^e millénaire. À Assur, elles doivent prêter serment par le tambour d'Ištar, alors que les hommes prêtent serment par le poignard du dieu. Dans un procès de Nippur portant sur la filiation d'un individu, plusieurs hommes et femmes de son entourage témoignent sur les circonstances de sa naissance. D'autres cas sont connus à Nuzi et Emar. Une femme peut être fournie à titre de pénalité, par exemple comme prix du sang après un meurtre (T 143, néo-assyrien). À l'époque paléo-babylonienne, une enquête porte sur le statut d'une femme, mariée ou non, qui est décisif pour établir celui de ses fils (T 144)

et une femme et un homme jurent de ne plus avoir de rapports sexuels (T 145).

Dans le chapitre sur l'économie (49 textes), la première partie concerne les contrats de vente, rédigés tantôt du point de vue de l'acheteur, tantôt de celui du vendeur. Les femmes sont attestées comme vendeuses ou acheteuses, y compris de biens immobiliers ou de personnes, soit seules, soit conjointement avec une autre personne (frère, époux, fils). À la bibliographie sur Emar (p. 176-177), on ajoutera l'ouvrage de L. Fijałkowska, *Le droit de la vente à Emar*, Wiesbaden, 2014. Les textes de Nuzi attestent des acquisitions de terrains qui recourent au formulaire de l'adoption. À Ougarit, le roi procède à une donation de terrain et de maison en faveur d'une femme (T 194 ; il en va de même à Nuzi : une des rares lettres du roi du Mittani, HSS 9 1, montre qu'il attribue des terres à une femme de la famille royale d'Arraphe). Des femmes procèdent à des échanges de maisons ou en donnent en location. La deuxième partie traite des dettes. Les femmes sont créancières ou débitrices, là encore seules ou avec leur époux, ou garantes de dettes contractées par un membre de leur famille, ou par leur propriétaire si elles sont esclaves ; leur travail pour le créancier représente alors l'intérêt de la dette (antichrèse). Ce chapitre inclut enfin des contrats de mise en nourrice, l'un des métiers féminins les mieux attestés. Les membres de l'élite ont recours aux nourrices, de même que les parents adoptant un bébé qui laissent alors l'enfant à sa mère biologique jusqu'au sevrage. Les contrats sont établis soit avec la nourrice elle-même, soit avec la nourrice et son époux, soit avec son père.

Le dernier chapitre est consacré aux esclaves, en tant que biens meubles pouvant être achetés, vendus, mis en gage ou transférés de diverses façons (57 textes) ; plusieurs exemples de ces situations ont déjà été rencontrés dans les chapitres précédents. La femme elle-même peut prendre l'initiative d'entrer en esclavage, si elle se trouve dans une extrême pauvreté liée à l'endettement ou dans des circonstances économiques critiques, lors d'une guerre par exemple. Dans les mêmes circonstances, il arrive qu'une femme soit donnée ou vendue comme esclave par une personne ayant autorité sur elle : époux, père et/ou mère, ou autre membre de la famille. La vie sexuelle de l'esclave dépend de ses maîtres : elle peut devenir la seconde épouse du maître si la première est stérile, ou être donnée en mariage à un homme libre ; le maître peut même louer à d'autres ses services comme prostituée. Ces aspects concernent spécifiquement les femmes esclaves, il n'existe pas de documentation équivalente – et probablement pas de situations équivalentes – pour les hommes. On pourrait souligner ici que d'autres aspects de la vie sexuelle des esclaves échappent probablement à l'écrit, comme les unions entre les esclaves d'une maisonnée ou les relations avec le maître non officialisées par un contrat ; les esclaves nés à la maison doivent être issus de telles unions. Suivent plusieurs achats d'esclaves, surtout du I^{er} millénaire. Les esclaves sont aussi transmis dans les dots ou les héritages et font l'objet de dons, notamment aux temples aux époques néo-babylonienne et achéménide. Les documents de ces époques font référence aux tatouages que portent les esclaves et qui indiquent leur propriétaire. Du I^{er} millénaire également datent nombre de prêts garantis par une esclave, qui travaille pour le créancier. Il existe des cas d'affranchissement d'esclaves, d'autres de rachat d'une personne devenue esclave par l'un de ses proches qui soit verse une somme au propriétaire, soit lui

fournit une esclave en remplacement. Certaines de ces libérations sont liées à une adoption ou un mariage.

L'ouvrage est complété par une très abondante bibliographie (plus d'une cinquantaine de pages) et des index : textes classés par numéro de publication, puis en fonction de l'époque et du lieu de provenance, thèmes abordés.

Chaque chapitre se termine par une ou deux pages résumant les points essentiels. Il aurait peut-être été utile, dans ces bilans, de récapituler les données en ordre chronologique et par corpus, pour mieux souligner les différences éventuelles en fonction des aires géographiques, des corpus, et les évolutions dans le temps, et pour préciser certaines particularités. Par exemple, en ce qui concerne les activités économiques, les femmes propriétaires de terres sont très rares à l'époque paléo-babylonienne, du moins dans le nord de la Babylonie, si l'on met de côté le cas des *naditum* et il pourrait être intéressant de distinguer les biens immobiliers des autres types de biens. De même la possession de parts de prébendes par des femmes n'est attestée qu'au I^{er} millénaire ; encore reste-t-elle exceptionnelle, sauf à l'époque séleucide, à Uruk, où achats et ventes de prébendes par des femmes de l'élite se multiplient, le service réel demeurant cependant assuré par un substitut de sexe masculin (voir J. Monerie, « Women and Prebends in Seleucid Uruk », dans B. Lion et C. Michel (éd.), *The Role of Women in Work and Society in the Ancient Near East*, Boston et Berlin, 2016, p. p. 526-542). Une autre question est celle de la place des femmes par rapport aux hommes et de leurs rôles respectifs : dans quels domaines les uns et les autres se trouvent-ils dans des situations comparables ou différentes ? Si la visibilité des femmes dans les sources, plus faible que celle des hommes, correspond souvent à une moindre implication économique, y a-t-il des différences d'une autre nature ? Le mariage par exemple n'est, en général, pas égalitaire, même s'il existe des exceptions à cette règle. Certaines notations intéressantes, faites au fil des pages, mériteraient d'être regroupées et commentées : p. ex. les ventes d'esclaves, rares à l'époque médio-assyrienne et plus nombreuses à l'époque néo-assyrienne, concernent surtout des femmes (p. 233, p. 257) : qu'en est-il pour d'autres périodes et d'autres aires géographiques ? Une comparaison systématique demanderait cependant la maîtrise de quasiment tous les corpus de sources et n'aboutirait qu'à des résultats provisoires. En outre, le lecteur peut se reporter aux introductions des chapitres, qui renvoient à une bibliographie plus spécialisée par époques et fournissent un bilan historiographique.

Ce livre offre un ensemble considérable de sources et devrait être très utile à nos collègues de langue espagnole et à leurs étudiants ; et on espère qu'il contribuera à faire connaître la richesse des sources cunéiformes auprès d'un public plus large. Il témoigne, tout comme la récente traduction en anglais de l'ouvrage de M. Stol, *Women in the Ancient Near East*, Boston et Berlin, 2016 (dont plusieurs chapitres recourent les thématiques présentes dans ce volume), que les études sur les femmes et le genre en assyriologie continuent à se développer.

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DORNAUER, A.A. — Das Archiv des assyrischen Statthalterers Mannu-kī-Aššūr von Gūzāna/Tell Halaf. Ausgrabungen auf dem Tell Halaf in Nordost-Syrien. (Vorderasiatische Forschungen der Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung, 3, III). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2014. (35 cm, IX, 116). ISBN 978-3-447-10111-0. ISSN 1868-6095. € 54,-.

This book is the author's revised *Magisterarbeit* from 2007 which was part of his studies at the University of Munich. The publication deals with what is known as the archive of the Assyrian governor Mannu-ki-Aššūr, which was discovered close to the Northeast Palace in Tell Halaf in 1912. The author offers improved copies and readings based on his collations of the original texts in London (British Museum) and Berlin (Vorderasiatisches Museum), and on photographs made at the excavation.

Tell Halaf is situated at the source of the Habur river, between the ancient cities Harrān and Našibina. It was known to the Assyrians as Guzana, an Aramaic city ruled by a certain Abi-salamu of Bīt-Bahiāni when Adad-nerari II "marched to" it in 894 BC. Some time after that it became an Assyrian provincial capital. The governor Mannu-ki-Aššūr was the year-eponym (*limmu*) in 793 BC.

Max Freiherr von Oppenheim conducted excavations at Tell Halaf in 1899, 1911-1913, and 1927-1929, and discovered important statuary in the palace of the ruler Kapara (c. 900 BC), much of which was shipped to Berlin and displayed in the Halaf Museum. After a considerable break, archaeological research at Tell Halaf was resumed by a joint Syrian-German team in 2006, which concentrated its activities on the citadel and parts of the lower city. Details about these new excavations can be found at <http://www.grabung-halaf.de/> and in VFMOS 3, I and II (for these abbreviations see below).

The written material excavated at Tell Halaf for the earlier Neo-Assyrian period consists of the cuneiform archive of the governor Mannu-ki-Aššūr. From the 7th century there is a smaller group of tablets. Among these is an assemblage of Assyrian cuneiform documents and texts in Aramaic that once belonged to the merchant Il-manani, found all together in a jar. The post-Assyrian period is represented by three Neo-Babylonian letters and an envelope. Some tablets were stored in London and others in Berlin, where an aerial bombardment in 1943 destroyed most of the texts that were housed in the Halaf Museum. All these documents, Assyrian and Babylonian as well as Aramaic, were published by Weidner, Ungnad, and Friedrich in a single volume as AfO Beiheft 6 (1940). F.M. Fales published collations and joins of the texts in the British Museum in 1979.

The first part of this book ("A") deals with the archive of Mannu-ki-Aššūr and discusses the findspot of the texts, the language they are written in, the types of text (letters and legal and administrative documents), aspects of orthography, and a sign list. This is followed by a detailed overview of the chronology and the various geographical, political, and military aspects that the dossier contains.

The second part ("B") forms a careful edition of the 98 inscribed documents (or 81 texts with joins), including one bulla. Some texts are provided with extensive commentaries. The text numbers conform with those in AfO Beiheft 6 preceded by the abbreviation TH, but no concordance for TH,

Tell Halaf, BM, and VAT numbers is provided; the reader will need to consult the *editio princeps* (see AfO Beiheft 6, p.84) for this. In contrast to that first edition, the author now gives hand copies that represent the original sign forms more accurately.

After a short bibliography in which the most recent title is from 2010 this publication ends with indexes of logograms, Akkadian words, and of personal and geographical names. It is to be welcomed that the index (pp. 112-113) also includes the (sometimes improved readings of) personal names in the later cuneiform and Aramaic texts (Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian) from the site.

The author follows Weidner in identifying this group of texts as the archive of Mannu-ki-Aššūr and states that they presumably had been removed from the archive of the governor. Whether all the documents relating to Mannu-ki-Aššūr's governorship (which lasted according to the author's estimate from c. 808-764 BC) were suddenly removed from the *Statthalterarchiv* must remain uncertain. Recent archaeological research shows that the level onto which the tablets were thrown was sealed by the building of Level C7, which may date to 758 BC, after Guzana was retaken by loyal forces following a rebellion (see Novák and Abdel Ghafour in VFMOS 3, II, p.93; Becker and Novák in VFMOS 3, II, p.229). None of the texts contains a date, as happens with the later Neo-Assyrian evidence from the Governor's Palace archive in Nimrud (Room S, approx. second half 8th century) and with the archives from Nimrud and Nineveh (e.g., SAA 1, 7, 11, and 19). Omitting a date sharply contrasts with the practice of the Middle Assyrian provincial administration, where frequently a complete or partial date is added to official correspondence and administrative documents, as documents from Dur-Katlimmu and Tell Chuera show.

As for the documents themselves, the author notices that locally written texts are often rather crudely executed, which must reflect the level of training of the scribes employed at Guzana. The majority of texts deal with the administration of the province and the military (letters, lists of troops, animals, or weaponry, legal texts involving soldiers) and agricultural matters occur very frequently. Texts such as no.48 offer important details on the equipment of Assyrian military units. No.56 documents the receipt of silver from six individuals (1 and 1.5 minas each), persons not attested in other texts who had been exempted from service obligations. Apart from incoming letters from the King (1 copy, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) or the *turtanu* (9, 10), there are letters sent by the governor himself (13, 14, 15, 16), probably representing archive copies.

Remarks on some texts:

TH 1 – This well-known letter from the king, ordering the governor of Nusaybin to provide horses and to issue a document with orders to Mannu-ki-Aššūr, was recently translated by K. Radner in TUAT NF 3 (2006), 117. According to Radner, the object of the instruction *ana muhhi M. kaniku šabat u bil*, which she translates "Nimm das gesiegelte Dokument und bringe es zu M." refers to the letter itself. The letter found in Guzana would then be the original royal letter first sent to Nusaybin. Instead Dornauer renders *kaniku šabat* "fertige eine gesiegelte Urkunde aus", as is also done by N. Postgate, Iraq 73 (2011), 154 "draw up a sealed tablet", and remarks that the sealing will have been on the lost

envelope; in this view, the tablet found in Guzana represents a text made in Nusaybin. The text contains several erasures, which caused Dornauer to doubt the professional standards of the royal chancellery (p.4). Further on (p.5, note 55), he tentatively mentions the possibility that the royal letters in Mannu-ki-Aššur's dossier are copies. In my opinion TH 1 can be considered a copy of the original royal letter, written by a provincial scribe in Nusaybin. Apart from the erasures, this document has a slightly different format from the other royal letters. Moreover, a copy might explain the use of the logogram MAN instead of LUGAL, and possibly also the lack of horizontal rulings to separate sections of the contents of the letter. The governor of Nusaybin then did not transmit the original royal letter, but had a (poor) copy made of it and had that brought to Guzana.

TH 6 – The copy lacks the sign KUR in line 2 (cf. the copy in AfO Beiheft 6).

TH 13 – Line 10: *lu-še-rib* (as translated); also on p.107 Glossary.

TH 15 – Line 6 *iš-a-lu-šú-nu* rather preterite without vowel assimilation.

TH 20 – The quotation and its translation from King, Chronicles II (“Sarg Chron.”) are erroneous.

In conclusion, the author must be congratulated for this publication. The book is well edited with a clear layout and well reproduced hand-copies and photos. This edition provides a solid basis for further research.

Abbreviations

AfO Beiheft 6 = Friedrich, J., Meyer, G.R., Ungnad, A., and Weidner, E.F., *Die Inschriften vom Tell Halaf. Keilschrifttexte und aramäische Urkunden aus einer assyrischen Provinzhauptstadt*. Berlin 1940.

VFMO 3, I – Baghdo, A.H., Martin, L., Novák, M., and Orthmann, W. (eds.), *Tell Halaf: Vorberichte über die erste und zweite syrisch-deutsche Grabungskampagne*. Wiesbaden 2009.

VFMO 3, II = Baghdo, A.H., Martin, L., Novák, M., and Orthmann, W. (eds.), *Tell Halaf: Vorbericht über die dritte bis fünfte syrisch-deutsche Grabungskampagne*. Wiesbaden 2012.

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May 2017

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KORTE AANKONDIGINGEN

PARPOLA, S. — Etymological Dictionary of the Sumerian Language. Part I: Lexical Evidence; Part 2: Analysis and Indices. (Publications of the Foundation for Finnish Assyriological Research, 16). The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, Helsinki, 2016. (26 cm, Part 1: XLII, 426; Part 2: XXVIII, 436). ISBN 978-952-10-9492-7. ISSN 1798-7431. \$ 149.00.

“This dictionary has two principal objectives: 1. To establish the linguistic affinity of Sumerian by systematically comparing its vocabulary, lexeme by lexeme and morpheme by morpheme, with all major Eurasian language families (Indo-European, Uralic, Altaic, Kartvelian, Dravido-Elamite and Afro-Asiatic), and 2. To provide a reliable basis for further etymological study of Sumerian and a future in-depth analysis of the data presented” (p. xi). The data are presented in vol. 1: a list of 3030 Sumerian words and morphemes,

followed by etymologically related words in many languages. For the meaning of each Sumerian word its Akkadian equivalent is given, according to the indigenous Sumerian-Akkadian lexical lists. Every entry is followed by references to parallel words in the book, short remarks, and the “certainty” – or not – of the suggested etymology is marked. It turns out that the majority of parallels are those between Sumerian and Uralic (3030) and Finnic (2790); less Indo-European (952) and Afro-Asiatic (128). “Sumerian has by far the greatest number of lexical parallels with Finnic, but also a number of important isoglosses with the Ob-Ugric, Turkic and Kartvelian languages, which are not found in Finnic and the other Uralic languages” (Part 2, xxii). In the introductory pages the reconstruction of forms in Proto-Sumerian and Proto-Uralic is discussed (p. xvii-xxii).

Part 2 offers a “semantic analysis” of words and concepts, presented thematically: the body and its parts, kinship and social terms, cosmos and atmosphere, earth and geomorphology, etc., etc. Follow “adjectives” describing features and qualities of substantives (living beings or objects). Next come numerals, pronouns and all verbs (describing activities and situations), adverbs, conjunctions, etc., affixes and suffixes. Actually, all aspects of human life in this shared culture parade before the reader's eye.

The introductory pages to Vol. 2 are fascinating: the Sumerian homeland was situated in the eastern part of the Pontic-Caspian steppes, that of the Sredni Stog – Novodamlovka culture, 4500-3350 BC. Contemporary with the Uruk culture. The important site at that time was Maikop, with an impressive culture, as their *kurgans* show (3700-3200 BC). Maikop must have been part of the “Uruk world system” and in fact its military power was the force behind an invasion into the South, followed by the destruction of Eanna, the end of the Uruk system in 3350 BC., of “Uruk IVa” (xxv). The name “Sume ki-en-gi, originally *jengker*, must be identical with “Hungary”, Greek *Ougroi* (xxvi-viii).

The text on the back of the book concludes: “The relevant data have never before been put together, let alone analyzed, and they open revolutionary new perspectives to the origins and prehistory of the Sumerians and the Uralic and Indo-European language families”. Indeed, the book is impressive.

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ARKHIPOV, I. — Le vocabulaire de la métallurgie et la nomenclature des objets en métal dans les textes de Mari. Matériaux pour le Dictionnaire de Babylonien de Paris, Tome III. (Archives Royales de Mari, 32). Editions Peeters, Leuven, 2012. (30 cm, 538). ISBN 978-90-429-2620-2. € 67,-.

The palace archives of Mari, dating to the Old Babylonian period, contain a wealth of information on the handling and use of metal (copper, silver, gold, lead, tin, iron). The data are dispersed over several volumes of the series *Archives Royales de Mari*, as well as in volumes of *M.A.R.I.*, *Florilegium marianum*, *Revue d'Assyriologie*, and *N.A.B.U.*, which makes it difficult to consult the evidence, especially for scholars who do not have access to a well-stocked library. The often detailed source material has now been conveniently brought together by Ilya Arkhipov. The present book

provides either complete or partial transliterations of hundreds of (collated) texts from the reigns of several kings, Yahdun-Lim to Zimri-Lim (ca. 1810-1762 BC); many of the texts are hitherto unpublished. The textual evidence is preceded by a detailed discussion of the identification of metal objects and of the metallurgical terminology employed in Mari. This well-edited study and collection of primary sources forms an important tool for the study of metallurgy in the Ancient Near East and for expanding the Old Babylonian lexicon.

This book has been reviewed by J.G. Dercksen, *Babel und Bibel* 7 (2013) 353-369, and J. Pasquali, *OrNS* 83 (2014) 270-275.