

refer to the local deities of the open field. It appears that she attributes particular intrinsic virtue to ‘an interpretation that moves away from “epichoric” explanations’ (p. 160).

C. Marek focuses on Hellenistic personal names derived from names of luxury items, such as incense and precious stones. He proposes that this cluster reflected some ‘vague allusion to luxury’ (p. 194), but it seems at least equally likely that it represented a metaphor for the attachment of parents to their children. The second contribution of C. Curbera deals with a heterogeneous group of names whose etymology or functional interpretation causes difficulties, for example Χρύσωπος, lit. ‘watcher of gold’. The concluding paper by A. Chaniotis describes the extended Greek onomastic formula, common in Roman Aphrodisias, which was formed by adding a second name after a chain of patronymics. Chaniotis plausibly hypothesises that such a pattern reflects the influence of the Roman *cognomina* and *supernomina*.

The book was not designed as a reference source but rather represents a cross-cut of the current state of research in the field, as befits a conference proceedings volume. It bears witness to a growing interest for drawing sociolinguistic generalisations from the study of onomastic data and emerging collaboration between Classical and Ancient Near Eastern philologists in this domain.

Moscow State University Russian State  
University for the Humanities

ILYA YAKUBOVICH  
[sogdiana783@gmail.com](mailto:sogdiana783@gmail.com)

## GREEK–MESOPOTAMIAN DIALOGUES

HAUBOLD (J.) *Greece and Mesopotamia. Dialogues in Literature*. Pp. xii + 222, ill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Cased, £55, US\$95. ISBN: 978-1-107-01076-5.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14001668

The book is based on a set of three W.B. Stanford Memorial Lectures delivered at Trinity College, Dublin in 2008. Each lecture has become a chapter of 50–55 pages, and they are book-ended by an introduction and an epilogue. H. juxtaposes Greek and Mesopotamian texts from different periods, from the Archaic age to the Seleucid, with the aim of showing that the two peoples are looking from different viewpoints in similar directions, not without interaction.

The first chapter focuses on *Gilgāmeš*, *Enūma eliš*, Homer and Hesiod. H. does not dispute that the Greek poetic tradition underwent significant influence from the Babylonian. But he is less interested in hunting for sources and parallels than in interpreting the poems as expressions of a shared approach to problems of the human condition. ‘Epic . . . portrays intertextual relationships not as a matter of borrowing across distinct cultural domains but as a convergence around a set of universal concerns’ (p. 51). ‘Mesopotamian and Greek epic alike invites us to think hard about the relationship between creation and cosmic birth; and about flood and war as complementary ways of configuring the great catastrophe of humankind . . . Individual stories and traditions developed within the context of a very broad-ranging exploration about the world, the gods and human beings on earth. Epic texts aimed to say something true and important, and therefore gathered inspiration far and wide’ (pp. 70–1).

The second chapter moves into the period when Assyrians, Babylonians and Greeks were demonstrably aware of each others’ existence. The main topic is how they saw the

succession of empires from the Assyrian to the Persian. H. challenges Momigliano's view that the global-historical outlook was distinctively Greek. Herodotus' story (1.95–130) is that the Assyrians gave way to the Medes under Kyaxares, and the Medes to the Persians under Cyrus; he has no place for the Neo-Babylonian empire. The principal oriental source, the 'Babylon Stele' of Nabonidus, agrees that it was the Medes who sacked Nineveh, but represents their king as being a vassal of the Babylonian Nabopolassar. In another inscription Nabonidus describes the impious Medes' overthrow by Cyrus. Thus he recognises the Medes as having been a major force but not as having been the dominant power in the region. Cyrus himself boasts both of conquering the Medes and of liberating Babylonia from its oppressive rulers. So Nabonidus, Cyrus and Herodotus (and after him Ctesias) all tell more or less the same story, but from different viewpoints and with different emphases. The succession of empires was not just a construct of Greek historiography. But 'a conversation across cultural and linguistic boundaries' (p. 94, cf. p. 182) is hardly an apt description, since none of the speakers was addressing any of the others. The 'dialogues in literature' are still to seek.

In the latter part of the chapter H. shows how an originally Babylonian ideology of the all-conquering king who extends his power to the shore of the two seas, or even across them, was taken over successively by Assyrians and Persians. It was with the aim of ticking this box, he argues, that Xerxes sat himself on Mt Aigaleos to preside over the battle of Salamis.

Eventually the succession of empires brought Babylon under Greek rule. The third chapter looks at the reign of Antiochus I and the *Babyloniaka* or *Chaldaika* of Berossus. H. shows how Antiochus (like Cyrus before him) inscribed himself into Babylonian tradition, acting the part of a native king in various ways and acknowledging Nebuchadnezzar as a role model. We now have a Greek ruler putting up inscriptions in Akkadian and a Babylonian priest writing history in Greek, presenting the mythology of *Enūma eliš* in perceptibly Stoicising terms. Berossus' merging of Assurbanipal with the Sardanapallos of Greek story confirms, for H., his determination 'to bring together Greek and Mesopotamian perspectives' (p. 168). Or if you find such language congenial, he 'used Greek traditions about Sardanapallos in order to negotiate between Seleucid ambitions and Babylonian anxieties' (p. 172).

The book does not aim or claim to offer a complete overview of relationships between Greek and Mesopotamian literature. Reflecting its origin as lectures, it gives us rather three separate soundings. It does not, perhaps, open up any very new or unsuspected vistas, but it is an interesting read, especially the second and third chapters.

H. quotes Akkadian and Greek texts (and even an Armenian one) in the original languages as well as in translation. He is oddly inconsistent over whether Sumerograms are printed in upper or lower case (and on p. 130 he twice prints šà 'heart' as if it were a syllable of the Akkadian word). Sargon's Akkadian name was not *arkū* (p. 103), or even *Šarkū*, but *Šarru-kīn*.

All Souls College, Oxford

M. L. WEST  
[martin.west@all-souls.ox.ac.uk](mailto:martin.west@all-souls.ox.ac.uk)