

Many will surely dwell on the rich linguistic and onomastic evidence in CUSAS 28, and others might discuss its contribution to our knowledge of the geographical hinterland east and south of Nippur, where Yahūdu and Našar were very likely established (pp. 6–7). Presently, I wish to point out some succinct features of the documentation in each of the archival groups:

- (1) The Yahūdu archive is the family archive of Ahīqam/Ahiaqam (majority of spellings write initial šeš-*ia/iá*-. . .) son of Rapā-Yāma. He, his father, some of his sons and business partners are the principal actors in the archive, which is made up mostly of promissory notes for debts of barley and dates for the rental payments on the bow-fiefs of his colleagues in Yahūdu, as well as rental, sale and exchange of property (nos 26, 46), slaves (nos 5, 52) and livestock (nos 29, 31, 50–51); only two documents deal with family matters like inheritance (no 45) and marriage (K. Abraham, *A/O* 51, 198–219). The deeds issued under Darius I reflect advancement in his wealth and position within the local hierarchy of farms under the Achaemenids. Cambyses extended the settlement block around Yahūdu in 530 BCE. One small dossier (nos 41, 47–51) which is related to the larger Ahiaqam archive comes from a place named “Kingstown of the new bow-fief” (URU LUGAL ša qašti eššetū), first attested on the accession year of Cambyses.
- (2) The Našar archive is rather uniform in character, and concerned with the business affairs of Ahīqar/Ahiaqar son of Rīmūt and his brother Ah-immê. His deeds deal with several agricultural joint ventures to cultivate fields (*ana errēšuti*) and the cattle he acquired for these purposes (e.g. nos 62, 64, 67, 69, 76–80). In many promissory notes he is the creditor for a certain amount of dates against a pledge of the debtor’s field (e.g. nos 70, 72–3), which might have a similar background to instances in which he covered tax payments for certain individuals (e.g. nos 86, 91).

Marginal as they are in the Neo-Babylonian urban scenery, the chronological and onomastic intensity of Yahūdu and Našar allow these archives to advance a narrative thus far dominated by the Biblical account of exile and return on the one side, and the Late Achaemenid Murašû archive on the other. We should thank the authors for their efficient and beautifully presented publication of this part of the corpus, and await the full publication of the rest in due course.

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URI GABBAY:

Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods: Sumerian Emesal Prayers of the First Millennium BC.

(Heidelberger Emesal-Studien 1.) xx, 356 pp. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014. ISBN 978 3 447 06748 5.

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This book is the first volume in the new series Heidelberger Emesal-Studien (HES) under the editorship of Stefan Maul (henceforth HES 1). Emesal prayers are a very

significant yet under-studied group of texts in cuneiform studies. They are an invaluable source for Assyriology as well as other fields of the humanities and social sciences.

The book is a revised and expanded version of Gabbay's 2007 PhD dissertation from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The edition of Eršema prayers, comprising the second part of the same dissertation, is due as *The Eršema Prayers of the First Millennium BC* (HES 2). HES 3 is *Die Šu'ila-Gebete im Emesal* by D. Shibata. The work under review here is a reference book on Emesal prayers of the first millennium BC. Chapter 1 draws attention to Emesal prayers as part of a religious system with its recurrent themes, cultic contexts, and performance by the *kalû* ("lamentation/prayer priest", Sumerian gala).

Chapter 2 establishes the main genres of Emesal prayers: Balaĝ, Eršema, Eršaĝuĝa and Šuila. "Emesal prayers", a modern label, refers to prayers performed by the *kalû*, in Sumerian (mostly in the Emesal dialect but some are also in the main Sumerian dialect and/or with mixed forms) and usually with Akkadian translations. Šuila appears as a new genre in the first millennium BC. Details for the Šuila genre are relegated mostly to Shibata's HES 3. See also W. G. Kunstmann, *Die babylonische Gebetsbeschwörung* (Leipzig 1932) and W. Mayer, *Untersuchungen zur Formensprache der babylonischen 'Gebetsbeschwörungen'* (Rome, 1976).

Chapter 3 argues that the essential purpose of Emesal prayers was to pacify the heart of the gods. The *kalû* presented the supplicant's prayers with offerings: musical instruments yielding sounds pleasing to the gods. The god addressed would then intercede on behalf of the supplicant and calm the angry deity. Given their daily use in regular ritual, Gabbay's classification of Emesal prayers instead of laments is convincing.

Chapter 4 traces selected theological themes in Emesal prayers. Divine manifestation has two phases: the first is the god's utterance announcing his/her decision to appear and what will happen. The appearance itself, the occurrence of the (disastrous) event, is the second. Aspects of divine manifestation, along with what may constitute sin, the motif of revenge, the divine control of enemy forces, and the role of divination, are discussed. Images of natural phenomena express divine manifestation. Divine concealment, the withdrawal of divine favour during a catastrophe, is pictured with images of body parts. Key animal imagery describes cities and events. The "heart pacification unit" (a term coined by M.E. Cohen in *Sumerian Hymnology: The Eršemma* (Cincinnati, 1981), p. 21), a literary unit committed to the theme of pacifying the heart of the god, is then explored. A section is committed to a key line which ends the Balaĝ prayers: šud-dè še-eb TN(-ta) ki NE-en-gi₄-gi₄. Gabbay translates this as "May the prayer cause the heart to turn (away) from (-ta) the brickwork of TN (=Temple Name)" or "May the prayer (coming) from the brickwork of TN turn the heart". Gabbay then proceeds to four archetypical groups, based on Enlil, "the lamenting Goddess", Dumuzi, and Ninurta, through which Emesal prayers describe many gods. These and other groups of deities and/or cities are then traced in litanies.

Chapter 5 introduces the *kalû*, the main performer of Emesal prayers (occasionally the king repeated the dictation of the *kalû* and recited Eršaĝuĝa prayers). Much detail about their profession and activities is provided. Gabbay's view is that by the first millennium, *kalû* became exclusively male (as opposed to his original third gender identity). His role was to transmit sacred ritual knowledge.

Chapter 6 details the musical context of the Emesal prayers. Profitable information is given about the instruments and their performance. The deified instruments were part of temple cult. By the first millennium BC, the *lilissu*-kettledrum replaced both the balaĝ-lyre and the ùb-drum as the main accompaniment of the Balaĝ-prayers.

Chapter 7 explores the ritual context of Emesal prayers from the text of the prayers and other texts. Details regarding phraseology and terms are presented.

The calendrical cult and the special cultic events are described. Aside from their original intent, Emesal prayers served in other rituals and became part of regular procedures. By the first millennium BC, they were performed mainly in the temple's inner shrine and rarely outside the temple.

Chapter 8 deals with the textual standardization of Emesal prayers, the fixing of text groups and the sequenced organization of standardized texts. Gabbay calls this the “canonization” of Emesal prayers. “Canonical” compositions were divided into prayers to male deities and those to female deities, each with Balaġ, Eršema and Šuila prayers. The evidence is unclear about the Eršaġuġa prayers. Textual standardization went together with the Babylonianization of the prayers (not all of them) due to the political dominance of Babylon's Marduk theology. New Balaġ and Eršema prayers were composed for Marduk and Nabû. Older traditions were also preserved. There is a return to local traditions in some cities in the Late Babylonian period.

Chapter 9 concerns the cuneiform tablets underlying present knowledge of Emesal prayers. Their formats, catalogues, arrangements, the scribes and families associated with the *kalû*, and detailed provenance information are made available. Chapter 10 clarifies the Sumerian and Akkadian dialectical features of the Balaġs and Eršemas in particular. A detailed typology of Akkadian translations is then provided.

Chapter 11 concludes the book with comments on the role of Emesal prayers within Mesopotamian religion: they served the king in fulfilling his religious responsibilities. Strong conservatism pervaded the Emesal prayers. New circumstances were incorporated by syncretism, exegesis and similar tools. Antiquated elements were preserved. Eventually the gap between these elements and contemporary belief was far too wide.

The indexes for names of persons, deities, places, temples, museum and excavation numbers, text publications and editions, and compositions are very useful. The footnotes also contain a wealth of information but must be read carefully.

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ISAAC KALIMI and SETH RICHARDSON (eds):

Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History, and Historiography.

(Culture and History of the Ancient Near East.) xii, 548 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2014. €181. ISBN 978 90 04 26561 5.

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This rich, innovative, and well-edited collection of twelve new essays and updated summaries seeks to fill the gap of studying the “world event” of Sennacherib's third campaign from the point of view of historiography and reception history (pp. 1–2). The first of its three sections is dedicated to the “early sources”, providing the reader with a chronological and factual point of departure. In the first study Isaac Kalimi discusses in detail the Chronicler's account, considering his source material, literary means and ideology (pp. 11–50). In the second study, Mordechai Cogan reassesses the Assyrian report in the Rassam Cylinder and, delineating the limits of the data transmitted, he offers a detailed cross-examination of the earliest Assyrian account of Sennacherib's third campaign (pp. 51–74). David Ussishkin then presents a useful, detailed and updated summary of the archaeological evidence for Sennacherib's war in Judah, uncovered at Lachish, Jerusalem, and other Judaeian cities, as well as at Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh (pp. 75–103). In the study that closes this