

REVIEWS

THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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Middle Assyrian Texts from Assur at the Eski Şark Eserli Müzesi in Istanbul.

(Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 146. Keilschrifttexte aus mittelassyrischer Zeit 11.) x, 28 pp., 74 plates. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016.

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The present volume contains autographs of 131 Middle Assyrian administrative documents from the fourteenth to eleventh centuries BC, unearthed during the German excavations in the Assyrian capital Assur at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The drawings are accompanied by lists of toponyms and personal names as well as a catalogue with information about the place of discovery, a short summary of every text and, where appropriate, a transcription of relevant passages. From this it appears that the tablets come principally from two archives: a cluster found south-west of the Šin Šamaš temple, or more precisely, in the former office of the royal treasurer (M7; see O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur*, Uppsala, 1985, 68–81); and an archive from a private house (M13; Pedersén, 118–20) where, among others, the blacksmith (*nappāhu*) Šilli-Aššur played a central role.

These documents concern processes within or relating to several royal institutions in the Assyrian capital, e.g. distributing and processing raw materials, rations for palace employees, and animal feed. In addition, there are lists of textiles and other objects and letters between officials.

The author states that the editing of these texts was the fruit of his activity as a curator, while the copies were made after his retirement in 2004. Most of the texts are hitherto unpublished. Only some were cited in an article by the same author (Assur collection housed in Istanbul. General outlines, in S. Alp, Aygül Süel (eds.), III. Uluslararası Hititoloji Kongresi bildirileri, Ankara, 1998, 177–88).

Nevertheless, the current state of editing seems to be preliminary and requires further revision so that the reader does not have to contend with the discrepancy between the information from the catalogue and the corresponding hand copies.

Thus, the present edition will have to be considered provisional. Numerous examples could be cited to demonstrate that either individual signs or whole text passages cannot be correctly reproduced (e.g. no. 34 ll.1.3.6). Even an experienced scholar has to capitulate where the autography pretends to present a non-disturbed surface and completely preserved signs, but some do not correspond to any number on the sign list. It cannot be denied that scribal errors may occur through omission or confusion, for example, several elements of a sign, but the amount of defective or abnormal writing in the present volume is well above the average and should be checked again.

It is beyond the scope of this review to list the respective points in the cuneiform text in their entirety. Instead, attention will be drawn here to proposals for improved readings and different interpretations of particularly interesting passages. So, for example, there is no LÚ.GIŠ.GIGIR ša KUŠ in no. 6:5f. (cf. p. 1). Instead, one

should read *ša su-ḫi-ri* (“with foals”). In contrast, the second team (l. 12), consists of a pair of adult horses (*ša* ANŠE.KUR.RA.GAL.MEŠ). The reading *kakardinnu* (cook/baker, p. 1) in no. 8:10 is certainly wrong. It should be replaced by GAL^{lu}SIMUG.MEŠ, i.e. the “chief of the blacksmiths” (cf. the spelling of the SIMUG sign in no. 17:8). The name of the recipient of flour mentioned in 30:12.18 appears in the catalogue as “Adad-nāšir” (^{ld}IŠKUR-*na-šir*, p. 14), contrary to the author’s earlier view (1998: 185, Adad-naḫilu). The final element looks different in each case and differs considerably from the common appearance of the sign (cf. no. 44:7; 78:10). The personal name in no. 32:13 must not be read as Aššur-mušabši-**ṭaba** (cf. p. 14ndIM-*mu-šab-ši-DÜG.GA*[?]). Instead, the copy clearly shows the spelling *ḫi-tu*, which is derived from *ḫātu* “to weigh out” (see also ll. 4 and 6).

The first lines of tablet 52 are cited in the catalogue section, concerning an eponym and his official title. It is about a certain Sîn-apla-iddina, son of Bukruni, LÚ.UDU.SISKUR.MEŠ-*te ša É* x [x] “the official responsible for the offerings of the temple of [. . .]”. The following line with mention of the city of Niniveh does not start with *ša*, as assumed previously (op. cit., 187), but with *i+na*. That means the line cannot contain a part of the eponym’s title. Furthermore, we confidently think a collation of l. 3 would very probably reveal that we are allowed to read the first sign of the line [L]UGAL instead of LÚ. As a consequence, here we see the subject of the following sentence but not the title of the eponym Sîn-apla-iddina (cf. the form in no. 6:1–4). This is moreover supported by the fact that the reigning monarch is usually mentioned that way in administrative records from the Middle Assyrian period, simply as *šarru* and not by name (see also D. Prechel and H. Freydank, *Urkunden der königlichen Palastverwalter* (Wiesbaden, 2014), no. 3:9). It is regrettable that the name of the temple in question is seemingly lost now. An alternative interpretation of the damaged signs after *É* is definitely worth considering: the personal involvement of the king may also be an argument that the *būt šarrāni*, i.e. the royal tombs is meant here (cf. V. Donbaz, “The ‘House of Kings’ in the city of Aššur”, in H. Otten et al. (eds), *Hittite and other Anatolian and Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Sedat Alp*, Ankara, 1992, 119 f.). In this case, it would be reasonable to presume the reading *É* [LUGAL].[MEŠ-*ni*]. Add to this that “10 GU₄” in l. 5 would be theoretically possible, but the following determinative 𒄀A (see catalogue, p. 5) is not comprehensible in the copy. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to read for example *ul-t[a-al-lim*(?)] instead. Thus, we propose the following translation: “From the 15th day of the month of Kalmartu (in the eponym year of Sîn-apla-iddina, son of Bukruni the king h[as finished making] the sacrifices of the *būt šarrāni* in the city of Niniveh . . .”. Other parts of the copy also relate to an exceptional case. The mention of a *pariangu* in l. 13 (cf. RIMA 2, A.0.87.4:67 “harpoon”, CAD P 184 f. “a weapon”) in connection with arrows is well known from the text MARV I 10. In the present case, 12 arrows ([12]^{gis}*šil₄-ta-a-ḫu.M*[EŠ]) are directly linked to a weapon that is referred to as *nar’ amtu* ([*ša*]^{gis}*nār-’a-am-ti*) on the one hand and a *pariangu* on the other. At the end of l. 14 we would propose the reading [*kar*]-*ru* (cf. MARV I 10:14.18), differing from the apparent evidence of the copy.

N. 53 mentions an (Assyrian) princess in Babylonia. The emendation *uš(!)-te-li-a* seems unnecessary in view of the autograph, and anachronistic in a Middle Assyrian administrative document. Here we would like to propose the reading [*ul*]-*te-li-a* (*elū Š*).

Notwithstanding the inadequacies of this volume, we want to thank the author for presenting this valuable text corpus to a professional audience. As can already be seen, its importance for a deeper understanding of structures and processes within the Middle Assyrian economic administration is considerable. This also applies to its contribution to the dictionary of the Assyrian language of the second millennium

BC. It seems inevitable however to check the original tablets once again before the final editing state to avoid misinterpretation in many cases.

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HELMUT FREYDANK:

Assyrische Jahresbeamte des 12. Jh. v. Chr.: Eponymen von Tukultī-Ninurta I bis Tukultī-apil-ešarra I.

(Alter Orient und Altes Testament 429.) xiv, 251 pp. Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2016. ISBN 978 3 86835 179 8.

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This book is a welcome update to its author's earlier work on the Assyrian yearly eponyms of the late second millennium BCE (H. Freydank, *Beiträge zur mittelassyrischen Chronologie und Geschichte* [SGKAO 21], Berlin, 1991; hereafter *BMCG*). The present book is concerned with the eponyms of the period from Tukultī-Ninurta I to Tiglath-pileser I. Those eponyms are discussed mostly on the basis of administrative tablets from the Aššur temple archive (archive M4 in O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur I*, Uppsala, 1985, pp. 43–53).

The book comprises an introduction, seven chapters of discussion, alphabetical lists of eponym names with citations of cuneiform tablets mentioning them, a table presenting the absolute chronology of the Assyrian kings, concordances listing the tablets discussed in the book and indexes.

Freydank (p. 4) declines to adopt a definite position on whether the Assyrian calendar in the thirteenth–twelfth centuries BCE was purely lunar (without intercalation) or luni-solar. Listing the eponyms of the reign of Tukultī-Ninurta I, Freydank specifies (pp. 8–10) his regnal years as 1233–1196 BCE, which means that he considers the average length of the Assyrian calendar year as equal to that of the Julian year (365.25 days). Also, the dating of the beginning of the reign of Tukultī-Ninurta I to 1233 BCE is based on the low chronology of the Middle Assyrian period, assuming only 36 years of reign for Aššur-dān I – a number which is actually not mentioned in any manuscript of the Assyrian King List (AKL), and whose restoration in the Nassouhi manuscript is problematic. In his discussion of the problem (p. 1), Freydank leaves open the possibility that Aššur-dān I reigned for 46 years.

The sequence of the first sixteen eponyms in the reign of Tukultī-Ninurta I is commonly agreed. Freydank's discussion centres on the eponyms of the subsequent period. Most of the discussion is dedicated to Llop's proposal (*Time and History in the Ancient Near East* [CRRAI 56], Winona Lake, IN, 2013, pp. 549–59) to place the eponyms Bēr-nādin-apli and Ninu'āyu before Abī-ilī son of Katīri, hence in the late second decade of Tukultī-Ninurta's reign. Freydank is sceptical of Llop's proposal, observing that only the eponym Bēr-nādin-apli, but not Ninu'āyu, is attested in the archive from Tell Šēḫ Ḥamad. This objection would be valid if one could assume that the chronological coverage of the archive from Tell Šēḫ Ḥamad is complete. Yet it is possible that tablets belonging to some eponym years are simply missing from the archive.

More importantly, the recent publication of ration lists from Tell Šēḫ Ḥamad by Salah has demonstrated that several girls born no later than the eponym year of Abattu son of Adad-šamšī (the tenth regnal year of Tukultī-Ninurta I) were still considered to belong to the age-category *tārītu* – the penultimate pre-adult age-category, before *talmittu* “apprentice” – in the eponym year of Salmānu-šuma-ušur, which