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## Reviews of Books

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THE ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS OF TIGLATH-PILESER III (744–727 BC) AND SHALMANESER V (726–722 BC), KINGS OF ASSYRIA. ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS OF THE NEO-ASSYRIAN PERIOD, VOL. I. By HAYIM TADMOR and SHIGEO YAMADA. pp. 211. Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, 2011.  
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Earlier in 2011 students of ancient near eastern history welcomed the first volume to be published in the new Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period series, Erle Leichty's edition of the inscriptions of Esarhaddon. This event marked the rebirth of the great project of producing modern editions of the Assyrian Royal inscriptions, an undertaking now directed from Philadelphia by Grant Frame in succession to the earlier project directed by Kirk Grayson in Toronto. Following hot in the footsteps of that first publication comes Tadmor and Yamada's new edition of the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V. The importance of this volume can scarcely be overstated. Interest in the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III goes right back to the beginnings of Assyriology. In part this was due to the fact that Tiglath-Pileser was one of the kings mentioned in the Old Testament – the very confirmation of the name was a sensation in itself – though as the inscriptions were progressively deciphered it became clear that the deeds of this king were exceptional in their own right. Of course Shalmaneser (V) is also one of the kings mentioned in the Old Testament – for his invasion of Israel and laying siege to Samaria – with the result that scholarly and public interest was piqued in this monarch as well. Sadly the cuneiform world has not so far yielded extensive inscriptions of Shalmaneser V though it certainly has confirmed the Assyrian conquest of Samaria. The greater part of the present work is accordingly taken up with the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III. The tablets and monuments on which these are written are scattered across museums in London, Paris, Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna, Zurich, Istanbul, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Aleppo, Raqqa, Chicago, Yale and Detroit. Many were also left in situ (in Nimrud) and have been collated from photographs. In the case of inscriptions left in the field after being discovered in the nineteenth century a large number are currently known only from copies, squeezes and copies made from squeezes by Layard, Loftus, Rawlinson and George Smith.

Although there is a relatively modern edition of the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III already in existence – Tadmor's *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, King of Assyria* published in 1994 – numerous improvements have been made, the texts have been reorganised and significant new material added, particularly that from the tombs of the queens in Nimrud. But Tadmor's volume has a host of analytical material beyond the scope of the present volume and accordingly will, as the authors stress, remain an important resource to consult.

The principal inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III fall into two major categories – annals and display inscriptions – and there are numerous other pieces in addition. Creating an edition of the annals of Tiglath-Pileser III is no walk in the park; it is indeed no exaggeration to say it is an extraordinarily difficult and complex task. One reason for this is the fragmentary state of the material at our disposal.

The annals were inscribed on slabs in the Central Palace in Nimrud and the fate of these slabs was not straightforward: the palace was begun by Tiglath-Pileser III but never completed and was subsequently used by Esarhaddon as a source of material for his own new palace at Nimrud (the Southwest Palace), in the process of which many of the slabs were moved and damaged. Further damage occurred in the nineteenth century through the activities of excavators and it is likely that other slabs have been lost to lime burning. The result of all this is that although we have a large number of exemplars of the annals, the text remains very damaged and incomplete: the authors estimate that what we actually have comprises no more than one third of the original text. The gaps include the campaigns of the 4th, 5th and 6th *palû* (the siege of Arpad and the conquest of northern Syria), the 10th *palû* (the campaign to Mount Nal), the 12th *palû* (the campaign to Philistia) and the 14th *palû* (the second campaign against Damascus). In addition to this is the fact that the annals exist in three major variations, according to the number of lines in which they were inscribed – a 7-line version (“Series A”), a 12-line version (“Series B”) and a version in 20 or 30 lines (“Series C”). The problems posed by coordinating these versions are made substantially more difficult by the fragmentary nature of the exemplars. Other monuments preserving annalistic material include the Iran Stele (No. 35) which gives an account of the events of the first nine *palû*s, a badly damaged statue from Nimrud (No. 36) with an account of the 8th to 11th *palû*s and the rock relief at Mila Mergi in northern Iraq (No. 37) which gives an account of the 7th *palû* only. The combined effect of all these factors is that producing a user-friendly edition of the annals is an undertaking requiring intelligence, application and very careful planning; few will dispute that the present edition has benefitted from such qualities.

The Summary Inscriptions fall into two categories, inscriptions on stone slabs and those on clay tablets, the former inscribed on massive (probably paving) slabs which were carved with oversize images of the king and his attendants. The texts consist of an introduction giving the titles of the king, a summary of his conquests, a building section and a concluding formula. The major architectural activity of which Tiglath-Pileser boasts is the construction of his palace in Nimrud – the Cedar Palace – an enterprise on which he clearly expended lavish resources. The summaries of campaigns follow the order from east to north to west and finally south, i.e. recapitulating the achievements of the king in the Zagros, against Urartu, in northern Syria, southern Syria together with Philistia and Arabia, and lastly Babylonia. As the authors point out, this order follows the order of Tiglath-Pileser’s first campaigns and this may indeed explain how it arose. Although the information in the Summary Inscriptions lends itself less readily to the reconstruction of the historical sequence, the data they contain is, in conjunction with information from the Eponym Chronicle, nevertheless fundamental to filling the gaps in our knowledge left by the missing portions of the Annals. Other display inscriptions are the inscriptions on the stone bull from Arslan Tash (No. 53) and on a stone block from Assur (No. 54).

A small but interesting category is formed by the epigraphs on reliefs of the king. What they lack in expansiveness – they all consist of one word only – they make up for in the importance of the information they preserve. The first (No. 55) labels a city Upa, which is not certainly identified but likely to be in either Urartu or the Zagros<sup>1</sup>, while No. 55 and No. 56 label the cities of Ashtaroth and Gezer respectively. The significance here is that there is no other record that Tiglath-Pileser III attacked these cities, so that these epigraphs preserve unique information while at the same time allowing an identification of the scenes depicted<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Note that KUR *ú-pa-a* also occurs on the glazed brick panel from the Temple of Assur W Andrae *Farbige Keramik aus Assur und ihre Vorstufen in altassyrischen Wandmalereien* (Berlin, 1923) pl.VI.

<sup>2</sup>Note that Tadmor also identified one of the panels bearing the 12-line version of the Annals as depicting the submission of the king of Unqu: Tadmor *Inscriptions* Figure 12, giving a drawing of R. D. Barnett & M. Falkner *The Sculptures of Tiglath-Pileser (745–727 BC)* (1962) Relief 34 (Plates LXXXIX and XCV).

Smaller texts include the inscriptions on a stone duck weight, a bronze lion weight, beads, mud bricks and baked bricks, enamelled bricks and tiles, a stone plaque and a clay pot. Of these, No. 58 is of particular importance as it is the only inscription of Tiglath-Pileser in which he gives his genealogy, as son of Adad-nerari (III). Very useful is the inclusion in the volume of the basalt lions from the gates at Arslan Tash (text No. 2001), excavated by the French expedition in 1927 but still not fully published. Although damaged, these lions together bear inscriptions in Akkadian cuneiform, Aramaic and Hieroglyphic Louwian. They are actually inscriptions of Nergal-bel-ušur the governor of Kar-Shalmaneser (Til Barsip) and in all probability date to the period before the time of Tiglath-Pileser III, i.e. the reigns of Shalmaneser IV, Ashur-dan III or Adad-nerari V. The reason for the inclusion of these inscriptions here is that they had not appeared in RIMA 3. The inscriptions record Nergal-bel-ušur's founding of the city of Khadatu (Arslan Tash), presumably indicating that Khadatu was subservient to Kar-Shalmaneser. It is unfortunate that the text from the east gate could not be edited (it is not clear whether or not the inscriptions of the east gate are exemplars of the same text found on the west gate), but the result is that the passage in which Ninurta-bel-ušur identifies himself as eunuch of the *turt<anu* Íambi-ilu is left out.

Moving on to Shalmaneser V, the successor of Tiglath-Pileser III, the epigraphic remains of this king are famously limited. But although he was on the throne for only five years his rule nevertheless saw further consolidation of the Assyrian empire, most notably the final subjugation of Israel. Shalmaneser laid siege to Samaria, a siege which went on to last for three years (II King 17.5). Debate continues as to whether the city actually fell in the reign of Shalmaneser or that of his successor Sargon II (the evidence of the Babylonian Chronicle perhaps favours the former) and it is regrettable that we do not have Shalmaneser's own account of the campaign. Whether this is due to the chances of discovery or because no major inscriptions were commissioned cannot be certainly known, but it seems unlikely that no annals were composed or other historical records kept and we can in my view hope that such records will one day be discovered. The fact that Josephus in the *Jewish Antiquities* had access to a tradition preserving knowledge that Shalmaneser also laid siege to Tyre demonstrates that other material certainly existed. As it is, what we do have is a series of bronze lion weights from Nimrud with inscriptions inscribed in Aramaic as well as Assyrian cuneiform giving their weights as 5 *mina*, 3 *mina*, 2 *mina*, 1 *mina* 2/3 *mina*, 1/4 *mina* and 1/5 *mina*. Another weight which does not bear Shalmaneser's name but which can be ascribed to this series on the grounds of stylistic similarities weighs 15 *mina*.

Perhaps compensating for the above lacunae is the rich material recovered by Iraqi archaeologists in 1989 from the royal tombs in Nimrud. These were tombs belonging to Yabâ (queen of Tiglath-Pileser III), Banitu (queen of Shalmaneser V) and Atalia (queen of Sargon II). The objects belonging to Yabâ include a stone funerary slab and two gold bowls, those belonging to Banitu comprise a gold bowl and an electrum cosmetic container, and those belonging to Atalia a gold bowl, a crystal jar and an electrum mirror. The inscriptions on the objects belonging to the first two of these queens are edited here, those of Atalia will follow in the volume dedicated to Sargon. It is very satisfying to see once again the famous funerary inscription of Tiglath-Pileser's queen Yabâ – I well remember the news of the discovery of a royal tomb at Nimrud filtering through to us digging at Nineveh and later that same night the arrival of the inscribed slab in the Nineveh Dig House, brought thither for first deciphering. Evidently Yabâ's tomb was sealed – her inscription warns anyone in the future from breaking the seal of her tomb – and we know from the *Töd und Leben* text first edited by Ebeling describing a royal funeral that the tombs of Assyrian kings were similarly sealed<sup>3</sup>; it would be interesting to know whether the excavators found the remains of any such sealings.

<sup>3</sup>T Kwasman, "A Neo-Assyrian Royal Funerary Text" in M Luukko, S Svärd & R Mattila (eds.) *Of God(s), Trees, Kings and Scholars, Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola* (Helsinki), p. 117 ii.12' (and cf. p. 121).

As noted in an earlier review, a most welcome feature of the new series is its inclusion of comprehensive indices of names, in this case personal names, geographic, ethnic and tribal names, divine names and the names of gates, palaces and temples. And as with the earlier volume the full score of each text is given in the accompanying CD-ROM. In addition to this the scores are maintained online with Oracc (the Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus) in a form which is fully searchable and the transliteration from which is also supplied automatically to the CDLI (Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative).

In conclusion Tadmor and Yamada have given us a work of outstanding value for which it is difficult to find words of adequate praise. This magnificent new volume will without question serve for scholars in all fields and for years ahead as the standard edition of the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V, two kings whose reigns together constitute a period which can be considered the lynchpin in the formation of the Assyrian empire. It can be hoped that in the fullness of time the gaps in our knowledge of Tiglath-Pileser's annals may be filled and that historical inscriptions of Shalmaneser will come to light: when they do, this work will provide the foundation and the framework for their eventual incorporation. Assyriologists, archaeologists and historians must unite in the deepest gratitude for this exceptional contribution. [jmlll@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jmlll@cam.ac.uk)

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ON MUSIC: AN ARABIC CRITICAL EDITION AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF EPISTLE 5. Edited and Translated by OWEN WRIGHT. pp. 388. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.  
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First-rate primary scholarship in English that offers a window into the musical minds of learned medieval Arabs remains a relatively rare commodity. Owen Wright's new translation of and commentary on Epistle 5 of the tenth-century *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (Epistles of the Brethren of Purity) is a major contribution that, like many of Wright's other works, holds value for a wide variety of both general and specialised readers.

The third in a series of volumes that will eventually encompass the entire *Rasā'il*, Wright's contribution illuminates well a central theme of the whole work, namely, according to series general editor Nader el-Bizri, a worldview "oriented by an uncanny hermeneutic interpretation of the microcosm and macrocosm analogy: believing that the human being is a microcosmos and that the universe is a 'macroanthropos'". This hermeneutic transcends sectarian divisions and offers the pursuit of knowledge as "pure nourishment for the soul", while providing a platform for the discussion of music as an embodied activity, both in the construction and movement of the human body and in the design of instruments and sounds. This micro-embodiment also resonates with the musical macro-embodiment of the universe, a notion with which many western medieval thinkers were wont to agree.

Central also to the worldview revealed here is a clear understanding of music as, in Wright's direct translation from the Epistle itself, an "art which combines the physical and the spiritual". Physicality here consists of an emphasis on cosmological numerology while the musical product itself produces an "entirely spiritual" effect on the "the souls of those who listen to it".