

Neo-Assyrian Specialists: Crafts, Offices, and Other Professional Designations. By HEATHER D. BAKER. The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, vol. 4, pt. 1, Professions Index. Helsinki: THE NEO-ASSYRIAN TEXT CORPUS PROJECT, 2017. Pp. xvii + 397. \$94 (paper). [Distributed by Penn State Univ. Press, University Park, PA]

A brief introduction is provided by the author outlining the aim of this volume as a supplement to the *Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* series, with a focus on named individuals and their offices or professions. After a detailed presentation of her method of organization, H. Baker discusses different aspects in three concise subsections. In the first, “Specialization in Assyria,” several spheres are distinguished, each represented by an exemplary text that offers a contemporary perspective: 1) *urban* (edict appointing an official from Assurnasirpal II’s era), 2) *scholarly* (lexical professions lists from Nineveh and Huzirina), and 3) *provincial* (Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon).

The section “Terminology” is limited to the examination of rank order. There are three different terms that qualify the position of an individual within the hierarchy: *dannu* ‘strong’, *rabiu* ‘great’, and *šaniu* ‘second, deputy, assistant’, whereby the first two are often interchangeable.

In the following section, “A Note on Slaves,” the term *urdu* is discussed. It is clear from the sources that this word had a wide range of meanings in Neo-Assyrian times. *Urdu* could designate a ‘slave’, but also a ‘servant’ or a ‘subordinate’, who was not object of sale, inheritance, etc. This means that the term *urdu* does not necessarily determine a priori the social status of the title holder.

The main chapter is clearly structured. In the introductory section, offices and professions are treated in alphabetical order of the Akkadian terms. Each paragraph contains the various attested writings of a lemma, including variants and ideographic writings in reference to the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (CAD). This is followed by the names of title holders, each complemented by a concise description of his/her professional environment. Cross-references to other offices or professions of the individual concerned are given in bold type.

It is worth noting that the collection of titles and vocational specializations also contains certain designations of persons that are not professions in the narrow sense. Examples are, among others, the *bēl dāmē* (“owner of blood-money”), explained as a “close relative of a murder victim,” or the *bēl dēni* (“legal adversary”). The next section containing “Places of Origin” is structured similarly to the preceding (lemma, writings of lemma, list of individual officers and professionals connected to a town or land).

The main chapter is followed by three appendices. Appendix 1 refers to the abovementioned “Neo-Assyrian lexical professions lists.” Professional designations from these texts are marked in bold typeface if they are attested in connection with a named individual. This category comprises more than fifty percent of all entries in the lists. There are, however, attestations of offices and professions in the Neo-Assyrian text corpus without any named bearer. These are collected in Appendix 2. It seems worth noting that these also include professions/offices like *ararru* ‘miller’, *rab urāsi* ‘chief mason’, or *zarrīqu* ‘sprinkler’. Appendix 3 provides the reader with a “Concordance of Published Post-Canonical Eponym Sequences.”

The final part of the book is reserved for some useful indices (logograms, personal names in alphabetical order, Akkadian words and phrases, place names, deities and temples, and texts cited). To summarize, the present volume is a very useful addition to *Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, a really excellent result of meticulous work.

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Ausgrabungen und Forschungen in der westlichen Oberstadt von Hattuša II. Edited by ANDREAS SCHACHNER. Boğazköy-Hattuša, Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen, vol. 25. Berlin: W. DE GRUYTER, 2017. Pp. xi + 401, illus., 2 plans. €129.95.

Continuing their exploration of the Upper City area of the broad expanse of the Hittite capital Boğazköy-Hattuša, from 2006–2009 German archaeologists uncovered an impressive house on a plateau to the southwest of the Sarikale rock outcropping. The volume under review, edited by the expedition’s director but the work of many hands, contains the thorough final report on the excavation and an extensive evaluation of the significance of the structure and its meager contents for our understanding of Hittite culture and history.

The building, which contains twenty rooms, was built on a virgin rock surface (p. 22) in the late sixteenth or early fifteenth century BCE, slightly remodeled in the first half of the fourteenth, and abandoned by the close of that century (p. 289). It was emptied of most of its contents (pp. 15, 29, 65, 300) and its entrances blocked up (p. 67) a short time before it was totally destroyed by fire. That is, it was not looted but intentionally taken out of use. Nonetheless, two of its rooms did yield substantial finds: Raum 1/2 (pp. 72–73, 118–22) contained a collection of pottery including two special ceremonial vessels, while at least twenty sets of banqueting dishes were stored in Raum 6 (pp. 74, 122–24, 311). Both

of these storage areas had also been sealed before the abandonment of the house.

Andreas Schachner shows that the edifice was not only large, but constructed of the best available materials, as seen in comparison with nearby contemporary buildings (p. 55). He also observes that its symmetrical layout (p. 302) situates it midway in the development of Hittite building practice from the “add-on” jumble of traditional Anatolian architecture to the more regular monumental structure of the Hittite empire period (pp. 303–5).

Although many small temples have been found in the Upper City, the internal organization of this building precludes its use as a Hittite shrine. It seems, rather, to have been an impressive residence and the center of an economically self-sufficient household, as Schachner notes (pp. 52, 308). But whose—since the members of the ruling family no doubt dwelt on the citadel Büyükkale? The answer is suggested by one of the few textual finds (pp. 268–80, edited here by G. Wilhelm and also available as KBo 62.29–36): a letter (pp. 270–72; KBo 62.29) in Middle Hittite script sent by the Chief of the Palace Servants to the GAL *MEŠEDI*, the latter title customarily rendered as “Chief of the Royal Bodyguard.” Letters are usually kept in the possession of the recipient, so it is likely that the house was the seat of the GAL *MEŠEDI*.

This office (whose role, duties, and incumbents are studied by Metin Alparslan, pp. 287–98) was most often held by a brother of the reigning king, so the presence of its occupant in this house would explain its monumental size and first-class materials. Perhaps the GAL *MEŠEDI* was accommodated at some distance from the rest of the royal family to discourage his participation in the kind of palace coups that marred the earlier history of the Hittite kingdom.

In reconstructing life in the house (pp. 306–14), Schachner calls our attention to one of the special ceramic products stored there—an enormous amphora-like vessel with four handles and a narrow spout in the shape of the head of a bull (the sacred animal of the Storm-god) and an estimated capacity of 127 liters (pp. 118–20, 223–28). If it was used to dispense an alcoholic beverage for a ritual meal in honor of the Storm-god, presented on the “table service” stored in Raum 6—cf. the *šalli ašeššar*, “great seating,” of Hittite festival texts—there may have been cultic use of the structure after all.

As the definitive report on the dig, this book duly contains sections describing and evaluating each category of find. In addition to those dealing with the architecture and cuneiform texts, these include chapters on the pottery (pp. 63–233, by Martin Gruber and Kyrill Radezky), the small finds (pp. 234–49, by A. Schachner), the faunal remains (pp. 255–67, by Remi Berthon, in English), and the bullae sealed with Anato-

lian hieroglyphic impressions (pp. 281–86, by Meltem Doğan-Alparslan and Metin Alparslan).

After the letter mentioned above, the most important textual find from the GAL *MEŠEDI* house is a very fragmentary Hittite-language contract (pp. 272–74; KBo 62.32) bearing the partial impressions of several, unfortunately nearly illegible, cylinder seals. This is significant because the use of this type of seal, in contrast to that of stamp seals of various forms, is extremely rare in Late Bronze Age Anatolia. Furthermore, contracts are otherwise almost totally absent from the Hittite cuneiform record.

The final portion of the report (pp. 315ff.) treats the scant remains of two Byzantine houses whose excavation preceded that of the Hittite residence below. Schachner dates their erection to the ninth or early tenth century and their abandonment to the mid-eleventh century CE (pp. 316, 343). Interestingly, they too were cleared out and sealed up when the last occupants left. These structures were seemingly simple farmhouses on the outskirts of the Byzantine village centered in the Lower City of Boğazköy (whose name in this later era remains unknown).

This well-illustrated volume (305 photos and figures and two loose plans of the site) concludes with ample Turkish summaries and a useful bibliography. It should be acquired by any research collection concentrating on pre-Classical Near Eastern archaeology.

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