

accomplished this by avoiding the construction of pagan temples in places with large Jewish populations. Nevertheless, it is interesting to speculate on the reaction of his Jewish subjects when he was appointed manager of the Olympic Games in 12 or 8 BCE. Herod emulated other actions of Hellenistic rulers as well, such as making Jerusalem a center of intellectual inquiry and founding a city in his own name, Herodion, site of his largest palace and his tomb.

In many ways, as Marshak explains, Herod's most complex relationship was with his Jewish subjects. As a usurper whose Jewishness was even in question, he needed to build and maintain the support of his Jewish subjects. He did this in part by promoting himself as a patron of Diaspora Jewish communities, who in turn supported him and brought significant funds to the community through pilgrimage and temple taxes. Further, he built new structures at David's tomb and at the Abrahamic sites of Hebron and Mamre, in order to connect himself with the Jewish past. Most important of all, he undertook the rebuilding and renovation of the Temple in Jerusalem, which he remade into one of the largest sanctuary sites in the ancient world. Once again, Herod made use of visual referents in order to consolidate his claim to be a true and worthy King of the Jews.

This book is both accessible to a lay audience and of great value to scholars. The lay audience in particular will benefit from Marshak's lucid chapters on the historical, political, and cultural background of the region and the period, and appreciate his consistent practice of providing concise definitions of technical terms as they are encountered in the text. Marshak's command of both the primary and secondary sources is impressive, and his analysis of disputes between scholars judicious; when he gives his own opinions on these disputes they are always clearly identified as such.

While the work concludes with an extensive bibliography, an index of modern authors and one of ancient literature, there is no general index to the work, which seems an odd omission. As mentioned above, with the exception of coin illustrations, which are excellent, more architectural plans and illustrations of architectural decoration could have been provided; the lack of such illustrations is surprising in a work that focuses so much on visual representation. Despite these omissions, however, this book makes a major contribution to the study of the reign of Herod, as Hasmonean successor, Hellenistic ruler, Roman client-king, and King of the Jews, and should remain a standard for many years to come.

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*Babylonien und seine Nachbarn in neu- und spätbabylonischer Zeit: Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium aus Anlass des 75. Geburtstags von Joachim Oelsner, Jena, 2. und 3. März 2007.* Edited by MANFRED KREBERNIK and HANS NEUMANN. *Alter Orient und Altes Testament*, vol. 369. Münster: UGARIT-VERLAG, 2014. Pp. vii + 338, illus. €91.

The book under review publishes essays from a colloquium held in celebration of Dr. Joachim Oelsner's seventy-fifth birthday. In addition to a brief foreword and updated bibliography of Oelsner's work (that is, updated from the bibliography in his *Festschrift*), this volume has twelve submissions. It ends with detailed indices of names (gods, people, and places), foreign words, and topics.

U. Becker's paper is a selective review of the literature on the famous lines in Ezra 7:12–26, highlighting the debates over the understanding of that passage as a historical source or simply as a literary narrative. While it is not quite original work, I personally find summaries like this useful. It provides a point-of-entry for students and scholars trying to get a handle on a knotty issue grounded in discipline-specific literature. J. Everling's submission is the publication of BM 22022, a brief text from the time of Alexander IV mentioning rations for workers repairing the Esagila temple. The article has an appendix with all known cuneiform texts dated to Alexander IV, listed in chronological order.

A. Fuchs lays out the evidence we have for the rise to power of Nabopolassar and tries to fit it together in a way that links the chronology to the often sparsely informative sources. This will be a useful resource for future researchers, although the title of this work ("Die ungläubliche Geburt des neu-

babylonischen Reiches . . .”) is quite misleading and unfortunate—there is almost nothing *unglaublich* about the rise of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty. M. Jursa’s submission on violence in Neo-Babylonian texts, giving the usual warnings about the limitations of what the evidence can tell us, points to the literature on microhistory as a way to elucidate his subject matter. He grounds his analysis in the idea that most of our information on violence will come from situations that contrast with the “normal.” In doing so he highlights particular types of violence: that committed between social orders (usually lower upon higher or violence against state or temple officials, as both challenge the social order); how violence in the city, which tended to be individual upon individual, differs from that in the open country, where one hears of group violence, not only of brigands and the like but also of land owners with the ability to use violence against workers, or even some collective violence by laborers and workers against state and temple officials. Violence that did not challenge the social order tends not to appear in texts because it was, in effect, common and usual, and thus did not give rise to situations that generated a textual witness. Jursa does, though, document cases of the murder of slaves (which, of course, is a matter of property) and violence against women. In general, this paper provides an interesting start into penetrating questions about the relationship between violence and Babylonian social order.

K. Kessler’s paper takes issue with recent literature that investigates Lucian of Samosata and what he might have known about actual Mesopotamian myth and ritual in his *Necyomantia*. Kessler is highly critical of those (especially M. Geller) who want to connect what is reported in Lucian’s text to actual Babylonian ritual as we know it from cuneiform sources. K. Lämmerhirt presents some of his work on first-millennium onomastics from archives in the Nippur region. Some of the results conform to what was already known or assumed, but he makes the worthy point that, from the eighth century forward (until we run out of sources), we can study Nippur as a fine example of imperial infrastructure building: from a city that seemed to have little control over the “tribes” in its hinterland to, in effect, a city with an urban elite that brought deportees, soldiers, and immigrants into a system monitored by state officials. He argues that this was limited to the economic sector (for example, he maintains that onomastics reveal no religious acculturation), but it is not clear to me why we should separate out the economic sector as something distinct from long-term, piecemeal state-building in general. This article has me looking forward to the final project.

J. Marzahn, in an enjoyable article, points out anecdotally (but importantly) how badly informed the public is about aspects of ancient Near Eastern studies (concentrating on public presentation and knowledge of things like “Nebuchadnezzar” and “Babylon), which is especially disconcerting given the output of specialist literature. Some of this public perception is beyond the field’s control (for example, what happens on the internet, or how the name “Babylon” is used in popular culture), but some of it reflects (in my opinion) the field’s failure to integrate itself into the broader humanities. This volume provides ample evidence of the problem at a higher level, as contributors often castigate educated outsiders for their failure to understand the cuneiform secondary literature.

R. Rollinger works to tie Herodotus’ Babylonian logos into new debates about Herodotus in general. Ultimately he seeks to argue against H. G. Nesselrath, taking apart his thesis in three ways: First he accuses Nesselrath of ignoring recent research on Babylonia under the Persian empire, especially that based on cuneiform sources, which seem to show a prosperous Babylonia rather than one in general decline that began under the Teispids (a view which Nesselrath assumes from one sentence in Berosus). In the next section he catches Nesselrath in a contradiction: On the one hand Nesselrath wants to argue for a general decline of Babylonia from the reign of Cyrus onward (as just discussed), but at the same time he believes that Herodotus was more or less accurate in his descriptions of Babylonian history. Since Herodotus does not seem to mention this decline (which would have been contemporary with him), Nesselrath then goes on to blame Herodotus’ informants for failing to bring it to his attention. In the final section, on the further decline of Babylonia under Darius and Xerxes, Rollinger again calls Nesselrath out for being too simplistic with the cuneiform evidence.

R. Schmitt discusses Urartian influence in Achaemenid Iran, chiefly in royal inscriptions. After reviewing the earlier discussions of Urartian influence in Iran (mostly architectural and artistic), he argues for the probability of Urartian artists at the Achaemenid court. He is not convinced about everything that people take as borrowing between the two cultures, although he does find four instances

he considers undeniable: royal titles; the (still) difficult introductory phrase *θāti RN xšāyaθiya* “thus speaks RN, the king”; the phrase *vašna Auramazdāha*; and Darius’ claim that he accomplished everything in Behistun in “one and the same year.” The work ends with a discussion of the means by which Urartians may have influenced the Persians, dealing with the always thorny problem of the “Medes” as intermediaries.

P. Stein reexamines a badly weathered stone inscription written in Aramaic from Tayma that has long been thought to reflect Nabonidus’ “cult reforms.” This article relates some of his preliminary conclusions. He argues that the inscription is Achaemenid, probably dating to Artaxerxes I or II (or possibly Darius I). Rather than reflecting the establishment of a new cult, as has long been argued, in Stein’s opinion the text is more like a legal document; he draws parallels to Mesopotamian *kudurrus*.

M. P. Streck investigates case inflection in Neo- and Late-Babylonian dialects. This neatly organized paper attempts to understand the chronological changes in the *status rectus*, as outlined in GAG §63 1 (e.g., *-um* → *-u* → *-∅*). Beginning with the Graeco-Babyloniaica, he then examines the evidence for stems that end in a vowel, stems that end in a single (*einfach*) consonant, stems that end in a double (*lang*) consonant, stems that end in a consonant and feminine ending, and stems that end in two different consonants. He then examines attestations of the masculine plural, the *-ān*-plural, the *-ūt*-plural, the feminine plural, the “difficult cases,” and the Aramaic *-ījā*-plural. In the end, his summary tables are useful starting points for observing the various stages in the development of the final case vowel over time. Clearly, as Streck states, one will have to push his investigations further to account for regional dialects and more precise changes over time, but this article provides a very useful starting point.

Finally, C. Wunsch traces the history of the three-tiered family name, which is found in Neo-Babylonian legal and administrative documentation, and then relates such names to other aspects of Mesopotamian society: to class (only the upper class tended to use the three-tiered family name), to location, and finally to the influx of new people into Mesopotamia during the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid periods. She laments the lack of an up-to-date comprehensive study of names for these periods and produces what is effectively a primer for a future comprehensive study. It is a very useful short compendium, although one hopes (and I imagine she does too) that it will soon be superseded.

The contributions here showcase not only the work of the gifted cuneiformists upon whom Oelsner obviously had much influence, but also demonstrate that, like Oelsner, these scholars are successfully embracing approaches that go beyond the texts. The book is a fitting tribute to a very influential scholar.

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*The Hellenistic Far East: Archaeology, Language, and Identity in Greek Central Asia.* By RACHEL MAIRS. Berkeley and Los Angeles: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 2014. Pp. xvi + 231, illus. \$85.

The Hellenistic Far East—Sogdiana, Bactria, Arachosia, Gandhara, and parts of India—retains a capacity to thrill: part Silk Road, Prester John fantasy, part Great Game derring-do, which it would be a pity to scrub away entirely. But the expansion of our evidentiary base in recent decades from almost nonexistent to paper-thin—the partial excavation of Ai Khanoum and Takht-i Sangin, the East Bactria Survey, the appearance of some Achaemenid and Hellenistic administrative documents, to name the highlights—now permits analysis in the modes employed with some success for the more traditionally central regions of the Hellenistic world. In this excellent, subtle book Rachel Mairs, one of the leading English-language scholars of Central Asia and northern India in the centuries after Alexander’s conquests, effectively demonstrates the region’s integration into the Hellenistic *oikoumenē* and, even more, its particular contribution to scholarly understandings of cultural interaction, ethnic identity, and the nature and depth of the changes wrought by the Graeco-Macedonian conquest.

The book is organized into four thematic chapters, preceded by a scene-setting introduction (pp. 1–26) and followed by a conclusion (pp. 177–88) that extracts major themes and an appendix (pp.