

were banned, at least among the elite, the latter created a traditional—or rather idealized—Old Music, regarded as manly and simple. The Eastern habits were condemned and relegated to females. Against this background she studies the Aristophanic portrayal of the tragic poet/musician Phrynichos, which illustrates that “not all early musical patterns could provide a good antithesis to New Music” (p. 250).

Mira Waner presents a case study on the music culture of Sepphoris, the capital city of the Galilee during the Roman and Byzantine periods. The cultural environment of this site was characterized by people of various ethnic and religious identities. Although culturally similar and despite cultural syncretism, “there probably was a divergence rather than fusion in the music culture” (p. 292), as far as can be maintained from a study of iconography, which does not necessarily reflect real musical life.

Antonietta Provenza deals with music therapy and the cases of Orpheus, Empedocles, and David. She focuses on music, lyres, and spells as means of psychagogic therapy and healing, and on their ability to “divert men’s mind from sorrow” (p. 328). According to Pythagoras, the lyre “imitates and reproduces the harmony of the world order, thus capable of restoring man’s well-being when he is upset” (p. 313). From an educational point of view, the soothing effects of the lyre could be associated with a musical ethos generated with favored rhythms, harmonies, and modes.

Roberto Melini presents an account of musical evidence from the Roman period as preserved under the ashes of Vesuvius. He points to the Greek impact in the pantheon and music of southern Italy, starting with Greek settlers in the eighth century BCE near modern Naples and focusing on the role of musical instruments in cultic rituals. Finds from Herculaneum and Pompeii (buried in 79 CE) include musical instruments as well as hundreds of iconographic representations that give information about organological details and gods related to music. He discusses the connection of music, religion, and mysteries as socio-cultural techniques for the management of life.

To sum up: This volume is a stimulating multi-faceted collection of original, specialized, and multidisciplinary studies which enrich our knowledge about ancient music in the Near East and the Mediterranean.

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The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur. By NILI SAMET. Mesopotamian Civilizations, vol. 18. Winona Lake, Ind.: EISENBRAUNS, 2014. Pp. xii + 286, 29 plts. \$89.50.

The book under review provides a new and much needed critical edition of *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur* (henceforth LUr), a Sumerian literary composition of more than 400 lines attested exclusively from Old Babylonian period sources (p. 2 n. 5). It is known from ninety-two manuscripts, which allow for its almost complete reconstruction. A new critical edition, grounded on the most recent scholarship of the genre of City Laments, is therefore a welcome contribution. Nili Samet not only offers a new translation, commentary, and score of the manuscripts but also an introduction to the topic of the City Laments, concordance tables, and twenty-nine beautiful color plates.

In chapter 1 (pp. 1–31), Samet briefly examines the topic of laments in general, and then focuses on laments in Sumerian literature. After discussing the corpora of Cultic Laments and that of City Laments, as well as their relation to one another (pp. 1–3), she considers the five extant City Laments: *The Lament over Ur*, *The Lament over Sumer and Ur* (LSUr), *The Lament over Uruk* (LU), *The Lament over Eridu* (LE), and *The Lament over Nippur* (LN). It is unclear to this reviewer whether the *Curse of Agade*, arguably the model for all Old Babylonian City Laments, has been excluded from the discussion for chronological reasons, as it is at least an Ur III composition. Since the author implicitly recognizes the connection between some of these City Laments and the *Curse of Agade* (p. 7 n. 36), the omission is even more puzzling.

Samet’s discussion of the City Laments, their reciprocal chronological relationships, and their historical background is very well handled. Extremely important are the author’s remarks that “[d]iscussing the historical aspects of the City Laments should not mislead us into considering them historical

documents . . . Questions regarding literary, cultic, and ideological aspects of the laments seem to be more relevant to this genre than historical questions” (p. 8).

Next, Samet attempts to identify the possible cultic settings of the City Laments (pp. 9–12). She postulates the development of these cultic settings based on the chronological order in which, according to her, the extant City Laments were written. She concludes that City Laments were usually performed during a ceremony associated with the restoration of a temple or the (re-)installation of a deity’s statue (p. 12). The lack of details in the City Laments prevents Samet from being specific about the nature of the ceremony, but she notes a shift in its players. Whereas in the earlier laments, i.e., LSUr, LUr, and LE, an unnamed individual, possibly a lamentation priest, appears to perform the ritual, in LU and LN this responsibility is firmly in the hands of Ishme-Dagan, the fourth ruler of the Isin Dynasty, and most likely the sponsor of the writing of LU and LN.

Samet continues with a brief but much-needed mention of the thorny issue of Sumerian genre theory and the place of City Laments within it (pp. 12–13). She also provides a detailed and useful overview of the contents of LUr, which helps the reader through this complicated and repetitive composition (pp. 13–31).

In chapter 2 (pp. 32–52), Samet reviews the history of the scholarship on LUr. She further presents a list of all extant manuscripts preserving the composition, a detailed description of each, as well as concordance tables clarifying the relationship between previous editions’ manuscript sigla and those of the current work. The latter is especially useful in navigating the numerous editions of LUr.

Chapter 3 (pp. 54–77) contains the transliteration and translation of the composition, and it is followed by a short but detailed commentary (chapter 4, pp. 78–132), and by the score (chapter 5, pp. 133–233). An extensive bibliography, indexes, and plates conclude the book. The presence of photographs is welcome even if most of the manuscripts are available on line.

Samet’s *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur* is a solid piece of scholarship. It is well written, well researched, and well edited. The author navigates through almost one hundred manuscripts and five hundred lines of text with ease and offers insightful observation about the nature of LUr and its place in Sumerian literature.

However, there are a few marginal problems, which do not take away from the value of the work. First, although Samet consistently uses the term “lament” in her book when she refers to City Laments or Cultic Laments, as well as when she names and analyzes the Sumerian City Laments in detail, the title of the book is *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*. It is unclear as to whether this choice was motivated by a desire not to change the traditional title of the composition, by an unexpressed reason, or whether it is simply an oversight.

Second, Samet’s discussion in regard to the “Sumerian belief that the end of a reign comes when its appointed duration expires” (p.12) does not make mention of the important role played by the *Sumerian King List* (henceforth SKL) in articulating this belief. As extensively discussed by other scholars (e.g., Michalowski 1983), the SKL provides the illusion of a Mesopotamian world ruled by *one* single dynasty at a time, for an *allotted* time span. The SKL was used by the Isin rulers to legitimize their own position as the heirs of the Third Dynasty of Ur. Even if the original date of composition of the SKL goes back to the mid-to-late third millennium BCE (Steinkeller 2003), its use as an ideological tool by the Isin kings is undeniable. Since Samet situates the composition of all City Laments within the first century of the Isin Dynasty, including the SKL in the discussion would have made her analysis more thorough.

Third, although Samet touches upon the narrative and poetic structure of LUr at various points in her exposition, she does not dedicate a chapter to this. Considering the important role poetic devices such as repetition, metaphor, and alliteration play in this text, it might have been helpful to offer an organic discussion on the matter at some point in the book.

Finally, Samet’s handling of the Sumerian u_4 is somewhat problematic. On the one hand, she makes the excellent point that “any attempt to adhere consistently to one of the two meanings [“day” or “storm”] in all contexts would be futile” (p. 87). This choice is certainly wise given the numerous vague occurrences of the term. On the other hand, her decision to render u_4 as “storm-day” in certain contexts is hard to accept, because the English expression does not correspond to the inherent ambiguity of the Sumerian term. It is also not clear how one determines when to translate u_4 “day,” “storm,”

or “storm-day,” unless context is the only factor taken into consideration. That in certain cases u_4 is a destructive force is not in dispute. Indeed, the present reviewer would go as far as to claim that in specific cases such an entity must be viewed as a demonic force. This seems to be suggested by LUr II. 400–404, where u_4 is described as having no mother, no father, no wife, no child, no neighbor, and no friends. This is reminiscent of the *galla*-demons who hunt Dumuzi in *Dumuzi and Geshtinana* (l. 49: “The *galla*-demons have no mother; they have no father, no mother, no brother, no sister, no spouse and no child”). Similarly, the family of demons including creatures like Ardat-lilī is often connected with lack of spouse and progeny (Farber 1987: 24).

These are however minor quibbles. Nili Samet has produced an accessible volume on a complex composition. This book is a welcome addition to the library of Assyriologists and Biblicalists alike and the new critical edition Samet has given us will aid scholars in furthering our understanding of the *Lament over Ur* and related texts.

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Lamaštu: An Edition of the Canonical Series of Lamaštu Incantations and Rituals and Related Texts from the Second and First Millennia B.C. By WALTER FARBER. Mesopotamian Civilizations, vol. 18. Winona Lake, Ind.: EISENBRAUNS, 2014. Pp. xiii + 472, 91 pls. \$99.50.

After many decades, Walter Farber’s magnum opus on Lamaštu has now finally been completed. The study under discussion presents all texts concerning the notorious demoness Lamaštu ranging from the third millennium to the first millennium BCE, in both incantations and rituals. Although a brief introduction to Lamaštu and her background is offered in “Lamaštu, Daughter of Anu: A Sketch” (pp. 1–6), it is clearly stated by the author that he is not presenting a full investigation of the persona of Lamaštu, but concentrating solely on the philological record.

“The Lamaštu Texts: An Ancient History” (pp. 7–38) contains a general discussion of the corpus of Lamaštu texts, noting the interesting features and peculiarities of each period, outlining the evolution of some earlier incantations into the later series. In his introduction to the texts of the third and second millennia BCE, Farber states that Sumerian incantations have been incorporated only if they show a direct relation to the known SB texts, the result being that only TIM 9, 63: 17’–23’//OECT 5, 55 is included, with TIM 9, 63, “obv.” 1’–5’ and 6’–16’; MLVS II pp. 9f. (LB 1005); YOS 11, 89; AMD 1, 278 and 287; and MCL 1614 “obv.” being excluded from this edition. YOS 11, 86, 29–38; YOS 11, 88; and CT 42, 36 have also been left out based on their troublesome identification.

The Akkadian evidence of the OB and OA periods is relatively plentiful, containing eight relevant incantations. Farber carefully postulates that starting from the second millennium BCE, the concept of belief in Lamaštu was likely rooted in Mesopotamian culture itself. References to Lamaštu as a dangerous foreign woman (i.e., Amorite, Sutean, or Elamite) are in his view better explained from within Mesopotamian social and magico-religious beliefs rather than by resorting to the concept of Lamaštu as a product of importation (pp. 8–9).

Regarding the MB period, a helpful schematic sketch of the tablet RS 25.420+ (= “Ug”) is offered (pp. 11–12). Farber argues, contra Arnaud 2007: 11 and 62, that RS 25.513 (= “RS”) cannot belong to the same tablet as RS 25.420+, since it was written in a quite different hand. Note that of both tablets,