

one taken from each section of the book, are merely a few instances where the reader will need to note developments since Heintz originally wrote his essays. That said, Heintz's work still is a valuable contribution for scholars who are interested in considering the many fruitful possibilities for critically and creatively integrating ancient Near Eastern source materials with the study of the Hebrew Bible.

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From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters. By JACK M. SASSON. Winona Lake, Ind.: EISENBRAUNS, 2015. Pp. xx + 454. \$59.50.

Jack M. Sasson has researched and written on the sources from the Old Babylonian period—especially those from the ancient city of Mari—for nearly fifty years. *From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters* is a product of his career-long efforts in this field, and it does not disappoint. This volume showcases the author's intimate knowledge of and studied reflections on Old Babylonian sources and will be immensely useful for those who are interested in the social, cultural, and religious histories of ancient Syro-Mesopotamia as well as for those working in comparative studies that engage the Hebrew Bible. In sum, the quality of the translations as well as the care taken in selecting and organizing the texts will make it an invaluable resource for students and scholars.

The opening chapter begins with a user-friendly introduction that overviews primary sources and provides a synopsis of secondary sources for those uninitiated in Mari and Old Babylonian studies. Then this chapter concludes by briefly raising potential prospects and pitfalls for comparison of the Old Babylonian world with that of the Hebrew Bible. For those unfamiliar with Sasson's work, the page and a half of remarks on comparative study of "Mari and the Bible" may seem somewhat unexpected or out of place. Yet throughout his career, he has provocatively and compellingly integrated his research on "Mari and the Bible," and the volume under review continues this practice.

Lively translations of sources from the Old Babylonian period are accompanied by thoughtful notes that suggest connections with the Hebrew Bible. For example, in his notes, Sasson remarks on similarities between Akkadian and Hebrew turns-of-phrase (e.g., p. 30 n. 25, p. 229 n. 34), comparisons between socio-political terminology (e.g., p. 137 n. 41), considerations of related cultural practices (e.g., p. 339 n. 134), and provocative off-hand impressions (e.g., p. 320 n. 78). Ultimately there are many significant reflections on "Mari and the Bible" throughout the book that demonstrate the author's extensive knowledge of both the Old Babylonian sources and the Hebrew Bible.

Following the introduction, five main chapters primarily consist of translations of Old Babylonian texts accompanied by succinct descriptions of the sources and diverse notes on them. As the title of the volume indicates, the vast majority of the nearly 850 translated sources are letters that were recovered

from ancient Mari. At the same time, it is noteworthy that sources from other Old Babylonian collections (e.g., Tell al-Rimah, Tell Leilan, and Tell Shemshara) as well as from diverse genres (e.g., administrative texts, legal documents, and ritual texts) have been included in the volume, making it an even richer compilation.

Two brief examples illustrate the value of Sasson's inclusion of Old Babylonian sources from corpora other than those discovered at Mari. First, he includes a letter from Tell Shemshara, written by king Shamshi-Adad, that documents a rather murky affair concerning a certain Hazip-Teshub (ShA 1.17 = I.1.d.ii.2). Yet this source is cleverly arranged among letters from Mari that document a specific type of political refugee known as a *keltum*, or a *kaltum* (pp. 25–26). In the sources from Mari, the *kaltum* was often an elite individual or even a member of a royal family, who sought a patron who could support his political ambitions. Sasson's translation and treatment of the Hazip-Teshub affair from Tell Shemshara in tandem with the *kaltum* known from Mari casts light on the former missive despite the poorly documented history of Hazip-Teshub.

Similarly, Sasson includes translations of letters from Tell Leilan that concern the *habbātum*. While the *habbātum* are mentioned in the Mari letters, they appear less frequently and in contexts that often provide only a general impression of their socio-political role. Yet the letters from Tell Leilan offer a tantalizing glimpse of the “unruly” elements of Syro-Mesopotamia during the Old Babylonian period, in particular the *habbātum*. Sasson's addition of these sources to the present volume helps to make this history more readily accessible to a wider audience (pp. 196ff.).

Since the letters found at Mari alone number nearly 3500, the author should be commended for carefully selecting the sources for his compendium of texts. For example, Sasson has included captivating ancient prose, from the lurid complaints of a disgruntled vassal (A.221 = 1.5.b.ii) to the passionate and personal tenor of letters written to the king of Mari by his daughters (e.g., Inib-šarri and Kiru; see I.8.b–I.8.c). Moreover, Sasson's translations of these well selected sources are clear and engaging. For example, his handling of the *Epic of Zimri-Lim* (FM 14 = 1.2.b.i) felicitously renders preterite Akkadian verbal forms into the English present tense, which encourages readers of this ancient text to encounter it as a literary source as much as, if not more than, an historical text.

Sasson also provides interpretive guidance throughout his translations, offering extensive citations of secondary sources in his notes. At the same time, he not only refers readers to important secondary sources in the treatments of many of the texts included, but also signals his own interpretive preferences through his translations and notes. For example, his rendering of one of the better-known reports on prophetic activities (ARM 26.199 = 5.7.c.iii) retains a traditional interpretation of the verbal forms *ú-bi-il* in ll. 18–22 as third-person forms, rather than first-person forms (cf. Durand 2012). Additionally, Sasson's rendering of the oath reported in a missive sent by Šubram to the king of Mari (ARM 28.95 = 1.4.d.i) is as a simple negative oath (l. 26: “People from Apum have not given it as a gift”), rather than as a negative oath in which the apodosis is omitted (cf. Durand 2004: 147 n. 189). These are only two examples from among the nearly 850 sources in the volume under review, yet these instances illustrate the many interpretive decisions the author has made in order to present his explanations and understandings of the Old Babylonian period, and these efforts should not be overlooked by those interested in these texts.

A final observation concerns the organization of the sources. These are cleverly arranged under six headings (kingship, administration, warfare, society, religion, and culture). Readers will find Sasson's reflections on this thematic organization in the final chapter seven helpful as they work through the sources. The arrangement reflects what this reviewer perceives to be Sasson's long-standing attentiveness to the contours of *conjuncture*, such as institutional, social, and cultural histories. The result is that the volume offers an interesting framework for the rich archival sources included and that it is easy to navigate for those interested in such topics (see also Durand 1997, 1998, 2000; cf. Heimpel 2003).

The organization of the volume, moreover, successfully allows seemingly disparate Old Babylonian sources to hang together and tell stories about the people who produced them, even when the stories of these individuals are incomplete *à l'histoire événementielle*. For example, one instance in which Sasson has masterfully aggregated and arranged sources is in a sub-section entitled “The Wealth of Kings” (pp. 38–67). Here he recounts conquests, diplomatic missions, and economy in such a way that the

sum of the individual stories is greater than the parts; his selection and organization of the sources in this section explore aspects of royal wealth in texts that otherwise might have been judged as unrelated.

In sum, Sasson's *From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters* is a welcome addition to the growing collection of ancient Near Eastern sources that are being published in translation. This volume, moreover, is important not only for the treatment of a significant number of texts, but also for the clarity and elegance with which it presents them. And with its reasonable price, it can serve as a valuable resource for specialists and non-specialists alike.

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Tribe and State: The Dynamics of International Politics and the Reign of Zimri-Lim. By ADAM E. MIGLIO. Gorgias Studies in the Ancient Near East, vol. 8. Piscataway: GORGAS PRESS, 2014. Pp. xvi + 271, maps. \$95.

In this revised version of his dissertation, A.E. Miglio analyzes eighteenth-century B.C.E. letters from Mari from an interdisciplinary perspective that involves not only Assyriology, but also anthropology, political science, and social theory. Miglio's declared aim is to elucidate the role of inter-tribal relations within the diplomatic game of early second-millennium B.C.E. Syria and Mesopotamia.

The first chapter (pp. 1–22) offers a short historiographical and methodological survey, where the influence of social theorist A. Giddens is formative (also in the conclusion, pp. 235–39). The book aims to apply Giddens' model of inter-societal systems to cuneiform evidence and establishes that the socio-political organization of the Mari kingdom was a mixed form of tribal and state-based social organization, which had a direct impact on the way Mari king Zimri-Lim conducted politics. Demonstrations of this hypothesis are developed in the following four chapters.

Chapter 2 (pp. 23–53) discusses the fundamental concepts of state and tribe. Against a growing trend in Near Eastern Studies to define social organization according to ancient terminologies (Schloen 2001; Charpin 2004: 299–304; Reculeau 2008: 326–37), Miglio argues for the use of modern sociological and anthropological concepts. "State" is defined in a strictly Weberian way as based on the king's "claim to a monopoly of violence" (p. 42), while tribes are addressed through some reflections on debates in 1960s–1970s anthropology. Miglio's opinion is that, in Mari, "an alternative to identification by state was identification by tribe" (p. 43), and that tribes acted as non-state actors "with substantial degrees of autonomy" (p. 51), like present-day NGOs (pp. 49–50). This is an interesting hypothesis, but the study does not offer convincing arguments to prefer it to the usual understanding.

Chapter 3 (pp. 55–108) discusses at length the title "king[s] of Mari and the Land of Pastoralists/Sim'al tribe," understood as defining the king as both a "head-of-state" and a "tribal leader" (p. 237).