

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).

It focuses on “internal” administration, as opposed to “diplomatic” relations with other polities and/or tribes. However, some misunderstandings of the administration of the Mari kingdom narrow the interpretation offered: Yaminite towns were not “outside of the *ḫašum* [district]-system,” and it is not true that they “often operated outside Zimri-Lim’s system of *šāpiṭū* [governors]” (p. 69), as is evidenced by dozens of letters and administrative texts pertaining to the management of land, irrigation, and agriculture (Durand 1998: 573–676).

Similarly, the indication that tribal leaders “owned cultivated land in the *aḫ Purattim* [= the kingdom of Mari]” and the correlation between this land and the *sugāgūtum*-tax (pp. 72–74) show a misunderstanding of the *ilkum*-system of land allotment against service (see [Démare-]Lafont 1998: 539–59; Reculeau 2008: 339–43). Analyzing the function of *merḫū* [tribal leaders] through the lens of the single individual Bannum (pp. 91–95) is also questionable, given the unique status that he enjoyed at the very beginning of Zimri-Lim’s reign (see Charpin and Ziegler 2003: 175–90).

Chapter 4 (pp. 109–86) analyzes Zimri-Lim’s relations with the leaders of several kingdoms and/or tribes. Studying the hierarchy among kings, Miglio distinguishes between Zimri-Lim’s interactions with kings “who did not foreground their tribal affiliation” (p. 139), like the kings of Kaḫat and Ašlakka, and his “inter-tribal relations” (p. 186) with kings who assumed tribal kingship, like the Yaminite kings, the Numhean kings of Kurda, and the Yamut-balean kings of Andarig. He concludes that Zimri-Lim’s actions were guided by mere *Realpolitik* in all cases but one, that of Yamut-bal, for whom “he showed an unusual commitment,” to be explained by “inter-tribal politics [. . .] especially as it arose from *ḫipšum*, creat[ing] a staunch solidarity between” Sim’al and Yamut-bal (p. 185).

Interesting as this hypothesis may be, speculating on the actors’ intentions is a dangerous game with the data at hand, and the conclusions appear to be based on Miglio’s own methodological presuppositions, rather than clearly deriving from the cuneiform texts. Perhaps Zimri-Lim had some very good *Realpolitik* reasons to choose not to alienate his ally from Andarig, reasons that had nothing to do with tribal ties.

Chapter 5 (pp. 187–233) analyzes the war that pitted Elam against several Syro-Mesopotamian polities in 1765–1764 B.C.E. Against the common opinion, first suggested by J.-M. Durand and D. Charpin, that this war saw the rise of a sense of Amorite unity against the Elamites, Miglio rejects the notion of Amorite as a possible way to define oneself in the second millennium B.C.E. According to him, “the terms (MAR.TU and *amurru*) are solely the perspective of outsiders” (p. 193). This may be true in the third millennium B.C.E., but self-designation as Amorite is well attested in the following centuries, when Amorite leaders take over Mesopotamia: Zabāya of Larsa depicts himself as a “leader of the Amorites” (*ra-bī-an* MAR.TU; RIME4.2.4.1:2), as do many military leaders, before it becomes a title for Babylonian generals (Stol 2004: 805).

Miglio also proposes (pp. 205–14) an alternative understanding of A.3080, a letter sent by Yaminite leader Ḫammī-ištamar to Zimri-Lim, first edited by J.-M. Durand. According to him, the metaphor of “white and black *butterflies*” refers to Yaminites and Sim’alites, not Amorites and Elamites. This proposal is interesting, but one should admit that grammatical discussions based on poorly understood Št<sub>2</sub>-forms can only be tentative. In any case, the assumption, following a proposal by M. Anbar, that ll. 11–24 (p. 206, but the translation p. 205 begins the quotation as early as l. 8) are an unmarked quotation from a previous letter by Zimri-Lim, cannot be accepted. The mention of “your god” (l. 11) always refers to the king’s god (see Durand 2008: 302–4) and is never used in letters by an “overlord” to a “vassal.” Moreover, the only reason for this hypothesis is the uncommon use of the enclitic *-mi* (l. 17) in direct speech. Yet this argument is no longer valid: Although the text was unknown when J.-M. Durand and M. Anbar discussed the passage, a similar use is now attested in unquestionable direct speech in A.3274+:35’ (Guichard 2002). Infrequent as it may be, *kēm-mi* clearly functions like *umma-mi* in direct speech to introduce quotations. The whole passage must be attributed to Ḫammī-ištamar, which undermines the analysis of Zimri-Lim’s motivations based on it (pp. 217–19).

Editorial problems: References to chapter numbers that are not used in the titles or table of contents are tiresome. Bibliographical references are also hard to handle: Miglio does not use the author-date documentation system, but an idiosyncratic version of the notes and bibliography method, with author names, abbreviated titles, and no publication date. This is fully acceptable, but then the bibliography should be arranged accordingly: the abbreviations listed on pp. ix–x are almost never used here, and the bibliography (pp. 241–64) is organized according to the author-date system. This makes the retrieval

of a given reference complicated for authors frequently mentioned in the book. Even more problematic is the use of uncommon abbreviations that are at times cryptic. For example, “Kupper, *ARM(T)*, 19” (p. 98 nn. 119–20) and “*ARM(T)*, 110, 122 e)” apparently refer to J.-R. Kupper, *Lettres royales du temps de Zimri-Lim*, *ARM* 28 (Paris, 1998)—a book not even mentioned in the bibliography! This example is unfortunately not isolated (cf. p. 94 n. 109; p. 223 n. 82, etc.).

Generally speaking, the book suffers from poor editing, which does not do justice to Miglio’s scholarship. Some names are misspelled: painter E. Delacroix becomes E. Delacriox (pp. 2–3), while Italian-born Paul-Émile Botta recovers his original first name of Paolo Emilio, but under the faulty form Paolo Emila; medievalist Marc Bloch is germanized into Mark Bloch (p. 187), which is rather unfortunate given Bloch’s personal history! References (both in text and bibliography) and quotations in French, perforce numerous in a book dealing with the Mari archives, are almost all faulty.

More crucial are the countless errors in the transliterations of Akkadian texts. Not only are H-signs sometimes rendered with h alongside the more frequent use of ḥ, but confusion of signs is also very frequent, e.g., p. 123 n. 37: *id-di-ú* for *id-du-ú*; p. 125 n. 39: *qi-bi-it* for *qí-bi-it*; *na-ak-ri-š?* for *na-ak-ri-šu*; p. 130 n. 53: *pu-na-ma* for *pa-na-ma*; [<sup>d</sup>*ia-ah-d*]u-li-im for [<sup>m</sup>*ia-ah-d*]u-li-im; p. 177 n. 176: missing line numbers, and *ú* for *ù*; p. 222 n. 79: [ap]-*qi-id* for *ap-qí-id-ma*; *mi-t[i]* for *mi-ṭ[i]*; etc. Sequences of signs can be erroneous, e.g., p. 127 n. 45, l. 8: *iš-ba-tu* for *il-li-ik-ma*; p. 130 n. 55: *ka-ḥa-at<sup>ki</sup>* for *áš-la-ka-a<sup>ki</sup>* (confusion between year names ZL 1 and 4); p. 220 n. 76: LÚ.ELAM.NIM-tim for NIM-tim; p. 222 n. 79:13: dittography of l. 14 instead of [*i-na-an-n*]a [*š*]a-ba-am *i-na re-[eš A.ŠÁ]*; etc. These are only a few examples of problems that are unfortunately ubiquitous. Readers are encouraged to check the original editions or the online resources at <http://www.archibab.fr> (where they also will find bibliographical references for Mari letters quoted by collection numbers only).

Miglio’s efforts to wrestle with some very complex matters are a stimulating challenge for anyone interested in the study of the Mari archives and/or the complex notions of tribalism and sedentary-nomad relations. The methodological choice is radical, and will surely be questioned. The conclusions reached by the author still need to be further substantiated, but Miglio should be thanked for his contribution to this important debate.

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