

mettre et partager une émotion, à restituer les perceptions associées, les scribes des tablettes mésopotamiennes laissent une place non négligeable au caractère phonique des événements qu'ils décrivent.

A. MOUTON
CNRS

Sources of Evil: Studies in Mesopotamian Exorcistic Lore. Edited by GRETA VAN BUYLAERE, MIKKO LUUKKO, DANIEL SCHWEMER, and AVIGAIL MERTENS-WAGSCHAL. Ancient Magic and Divination, vol. 15. Leiden: BRILL, 2018. Pp. xiii + 382. \$132.

The volume under review is comprised mainly of papers presented on April 15–17, 2015 at the Lehrstuhl für Altorientalistik, University of Würzburg. The conference aimed “to explore various perspectives for interpreting the lore of the exorcist beyond the editorial work on individual subgroups of texts” (p. vii). The editors have organized the book’s thirteen essays into five major sections, each of which is summarized by the editors in the introduction (pp. 1–6): 1) Organizing Magical and Medical Knowledge, 2) Agents of Evil and Causes of Illness, 3) Repelling Evil with Rituals, Amulets, and Incantations, 4) Concepts and Therapies of Illness, and 5) The Living and the Ordered World in Exorcistic Lore. Concluding the volume are indices of divine and demonic names, cosmic regions, personal names, Akkadian and Sumerian words discussed, and cuneiform texts. My comments on each article will be necessarily brief.

Eckart Frahm’s “The Exorcist’s Manual: Structure, Language, *Sitz im Leben*” (pp. 9–47) offers a thorough treatment of the Exorcist’s Manual. He surveys the extant manuscripts and scribal contexts and discusses the various ways scholars have understood its structure (arguing for a tripartite one) and the texts to which it most closely relates. The latter include the *Sag-gig/Alamdimmû* Catalogue, the catalogue of exorcistic texts, fragments of the Aššur Medical Catalogue, and a few other unpublished catalogues of incipits of medical, exorcistic, and omen texts. Frahm postulates that the Manual originated in the eleventh century BCE, when the Borsippian scholar Esagil-kin-apli collected and edited its contents, an act that signaled a move toward canonization. Concluding the study is a discussion of its use in the first millennium BCE as reference work, pedagogical tool, and model for future scholarship (though perhaps less so in Aššur).

In “Catalogues, Texts and Specialists: Some Thoughts on the Aššur Medical Catalogue and Mesopotamian Healing Professions,” Ulrike Steinert focuses on two types of catalogues: those that list tablets or chapters that belong to a single series, and those that list texts that belong to a single profession. She sees them as having three basic purposes: as inventories created for archival purposes, tools for scholarship, and didactic/educational tools. Comparing the Aššur Medical Catalogue with the diagnostic and physiognomic omens (*Sag-gig/Alamdimmû*) and the Exorcist’s Manual, Steinert suggests that the Catalogue belongs to the professional domain of the *asû* “physician,” while the latter texts belong to the *āšipu* “exorcist.” Nevertheless, she sees some overlap in the texts they used and their professional duties. Though the two “were regarded as distinguishable disciplines, the expertise and practical profile of specialists was not necessarily restricted to one field of knowledge” (p. 116). She concludes that the catalogues

were tools for scholarly learning and for the instruction of the adept. But through their reference to a named scholar (i.e., Esagil-kin-apli) as the authority behind the catalogues and text corpora, they could also have played a role in the construction of professional identities and histories. (p. 117)

Nils Heeßel, “Identifying Divine Agency: The Hands of the Gods in Context,” examines the expression *qāt* + Divine Name as a reflection of “the Mesopotamian etiological concept of disease and illness” (p. 135). He shows that being struck by different divine hands required different ritual remedies. After surveying the expression in various divinatory texts, Heeßel finds that “in all these texts the diagnosis

qāt + DN is associated with serious portents of evil that the deity had already inflicted on the person, either by placing illness inside the body, or by having him suffer serious falls causing injuries, or stings by dangerous animals,” and that “all the instances cited show that the ‘hand of a deity’ was harmful for the affected person” (p. 147).

Andrew George, “Kamadme, the Sumerian Counterpart of the Demon Lamaštu,” studies the pronunciation of the name of the female child-snatching demon written ^dDÌM.ME in the light of a recently published Middle Babylonian manuscript of the bilingual lexical list *Ea VII*. He concludes that it was pronounced as *kamad-me*. He adds that the syllabic spellings *ka-ma-ad-ru* and *ka-ma-du-ru* translate the signs ^dDÌM.A = ^dkama-duru₅ “a demon of a damp nature and clammy feel” (p. 154).

In “The Lion, the Witch, and the Wolf: Aggressive Magic and Witchcraft in the Old Babylonian Period,” Avigail Mertens-Wagschal aims “to define the spectrum of aggressive magic in the Old Babylonian period and to observe the place of witchcraft within it” by “analyzing the motif of the lion and the wolf” and “the textual and physical contexts in which this motif occurs” (p. 159). Mertens-Wagschal examines six incantations and finds that the motif can be used positively when used in reference to the client and negatively when referring to the opponent: “The incantations reflect the perspective of one party in a human interaction, namely, the perspective of the client for whom the incantations were written” (p. 168). In essence, both the client and his opponent perceived the other as practicing witchcraft.

Daniel Schwemer, “Evil Helpers: Instrumentalizing Agents of Evil in Anti-Witchcraft Rituals,” opens with a discussion of the apotropaic use of monster images as found in temples, and in the form of interred figurines, Pazuzu, and amulets. Also covered are demons in anti-witchcraft rituals and a ritual involving the decoration of a skull (representing a ghost), into which the practitioner places a figurine of Lamaštu. He interprets the function of Lamaštu in this ritual as “that of an evil helper who keeps a sharp eye on the witches as they travel to the world of the dead” (p. 183). Schwemer also reviews an anti-witchcraft ceremony that employs the term “any evil” (NÍG ḪUL *mimma lemnu*), and argues that the term is ambiguous, referring both to the demonic personification of all kinds of evil and all the evil done by witches.

In “Magico-Medical Plants and Incantations on Assyrian House Amulets,” Strahil Panayotov turns our attention to the apotropaic use of plants in Assyrian house amulets once displayed inside a house or at its gate, or hung near the heads of beds to ward off nightmares. Panayotov argues that those containing slots or holes on their sides once had plant materials inserted into them, in particular *libbi gišimmari* “frond of the date palm,” *bīnu* “tamarisk,” and *maštakal* possibly “salsola.” He examines several such tablets as well as the aforementioned plants (and the imprints they leave), and accents his study with color photographs. In an appendix, Panayotov offers a scored edition of the house amulet containing the Late Assyrian incantation *Marduk apkal ilāni*.

Tzvi Abusch, “Alternative Models for the Development of Some Incantations,” offers a diachronic examination of three incantations in *Maqlû* (VII 1–21, III 136–53, and II 77–103), and explores alternative ways of understanding *Maqlû*’s compositional history. In particular, he contemplates the inner section (VII 1–21) both as a later insertion and as the primary core of the incantation.

In “Reusing Incantations and Making New from Old: On the Formation and Therapeutic Objective of the *Muššu’u* (‘Embrocation’) Compendium,” Barbara Böck aims to understand how the series was compiled by locating the origins of its incantations, and to ascertain how it obtained the title “Embrocation.” She finds that eighteen of the incantations were borrowed from other magical series, in particular *Sag-gig*, *Udug-ḫul*, *Ḫul-ba-zi-zi*, and *Nam-érim-búr-ru-da*. Another source was the corpus of healing recipes. In all, 66.7 percent of the series appears in older sources. Böck also surveys the compendium’s language, references to embrocating, massaging, and touching, and its contents. She provides a convenient list of the series’ diseases and demons. She concludes that

there is a certain concentration on the ‘Ghost’ or the ‘Hand of a Ghost’ as the causing agent. I therefore suggest that *Muššu’u* had been created as a corollary of a healing ceremony that was meant to expel the demon. Accordingly, healing texts would have motivated the formation of *Muššu’u*. (p. 257)

The illness known as *maškadu* is the focus of Troels Pank Arbøll's "Tracing Mesopotamian Medical Knowledge: A Study of *maškadu* and Related Illnesses." In particular, Arbøll seeks to understand *maškadu* by looking at descriptions of the illness, related illnesses (*sagallu* and *šaššaṭu*), and its symptoms as found in incantations. He finds that the treatments of *maškadu*, *sagallu*, and *šaššaṭu* overlap, because

they all describe the same underlying illness in various stages of progression ... Thus, *maškadu* (body pains and 'string' problems in the thigh area from the hips to the ankle) could progress into *sagallu* (pain in the greater thigh area and the inability of the patient to stand up), which finally becomes *šaššaṭu* (the body is stiff and paralyzed with muscle spasms and severe pains). (pp. 278–79)

In "*Ina lumun attalî Sîn: On Evil and Lunar Eclipses*," Francesca Rochberg focuses on ascertaining how the deviation represented by eclipses was conceived as evil. She explores eclipse terminology, ritual texts concerning lunar eclipses (e.g., substitute king, namburbi, breaking of pots), and demons as a perceived source of the evil of eclipses, and shows that the darkening of luminaries was perceived as the disturbed mood of the moon- and sun-gods (the verb *adāru* can mean "darkened" or "disturbed, saddened, angry," and the expression *lumun libbi* similarly can mean "eclipsed" or "stricken with grief, sorrow, distress"). Rochberg concludes that there were multiple conceptions of lunar eclipses

from Sîn deciding to make an eclipse to warn human beings of dire events, to the mourning, grief, or indeed anger of the moon-god, to the myth of the seven demons swarming the moon, or the motif of a god (Marduk, Tišpak, Nabû, or Nergal) in mortal combat with a celestial lion-serpent. (p. 311)

Rochberg also entertains the notion that the demonic association of eclipses might inform traditions concerning the *Labbu* "sea dragon" and the later Syriac eclipse dragon known as *ātālyā* (cf. the related Akkadian term *antalû/attalû* "celestial disturbance," also discussed herein).

Enrique Jiménez, "Highway to Hell: The Winds as Cosmic Conveyors in Mesopotamian Incantation Texts," offers a study in literary motifs that

aims to show that there is a rationale behind the association of the winds of the ritual action with the witchcraft of the prognosis: in fact, in the imagery of Mesopotamian incantations, winds are presented as one of the most important cosmic exorcistic elements. (p. 318)

He examines descriptions of witchcraft as clouds, dreams, and smoke (i.e., as objects that wind can affect), the connection between airy demons and the winds, and the breath of gods as "sweet wind" (*šāru ṭābu*) that one can smell. Jiménez concludes that winds

are used by demons as well as by other sources of evil, but they can also be used by exorcists (and, ultimately, the gods) for the contrary, to expel that evil. In ancient Mesopotamia, it was therefore important to make sure that the winds were one's ally, and that they were not being used by one's enemy. (pp. 334–35)

An appendix on the fragments of Zuburudabeda concludes the article.

The volume's final essay is Franz A. M. Wiggermann, "The *Göttertypentext* as a Humanistic Mappa Mundi: An Essay," which focuses on the twenty-seven images (ALAM.MEŠ) of gods and spirits listed in the *Göttertypentext*. In particular, he argues that we should view the text as presenting the deities and their descriptions in three-dimensional space.

The space that accommodated this web of supernatural creatures can be viewed as a temple, and ultimately as a model of the symbolic space in which the beings in question acted out their various symbolic roles: a microcosm. (p. 354)

To demonstrate, he provides two diagrams of the temple and the placement of the images within it that demonstrate how the reader might use the *Göttertypentext* as a guidebook. In essence, the text invites the reader to visualize entering the temple and to identify with the only other human in the

tableau, the baby on Sassūr's lap, and to "see its and your life lined out in front of you: birth, work, a measure of divine support, inescapable death, and an eternity in the netherworld" (p. 356, fig. 2). He also isolates two iconographic themes:

the protection of exits and entrances by guardian figures, and an audience involving a host, two guests, a master of ceremonies, and a banquet. Together the players and themes define the nature of the stage as a microcosm, and the ultimate subject as a humanistic *mappa mundi*. (p. 358)

The temple's walls represent the mountains that encircle the horizon at the ends of the earth, much like the Kassite temple of Karaindaš in Uruk, and more famously, in the Babylonian map of the world, whose eight triangles, the author argues, represent the mountains encircling Ocean as seen from above (pp. 364–65).

Since the focus of the conference from which the essays derive was narrow, most of the essays hang together well and even complement each other. Several offer state-of-the-art treatments of topics and texts that make the volume especially useful. Readers will find much in this volume that contributes to our understanding of Mesopotamian exorcists, magic, medicine, and conceptions of evil.

SCOTT NOEGEL
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
