

Die mittelasyrischen Personen- und Rationlisten aus Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad/Dūr-Katlimmu. By SAQER SALAH. *Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad/Dūr-Katlimmu (BATSH)*, vol. 18. Wiesbaden: HARRASSOWITZ VERLAG, 2014. Pp. lxxiv + 454, plates. €118.

This volume is a welcome addition to the rapidly growing corpus of Middle Assyrian administrative documents. While the current corpus is hardly lacking in personnel texts, the concentration of so many personnel texts from a single place and time is without parallel. There is much to be gained from studying them, and Salah's editions offer an excellent starting point.

The work includes full editions of all the texts along with copies and photographs. In addition, the introduction includes an impressive study of the various family histories which can be traced in the texts. The texts can be divided roughly into three groups. The largest are texts involving the disbursement of rations to various named individuals. There is also a sizable group of texts which simply list personnel. Finally, there are a little under a dozen texts dealing with garment manufacturing and distribution.

There is a wealth of information in the texts. Here I will mention but two particularly interesting aspects. A number of texts divide the population of Dūr-Katlimmu and its dependent town of Duāra into four groups of about 25–50 people, each associated with a *rab hanšē* "captain of fifty." That these groups and their captains existed is not new. However, in the texts from BATSH 18 one can trace their composition through time. As it turns out, membership in a particular "fifty" was generally passed down from father to son. That is to say, the Assyrian population at Dūr-Katlimmu was apparently divided into stable, hereditary groups.

The second point relates to the *šiluhlu* unfree labor force. As we learn from the texts already published in BATSH 9, the Assyrian state employed a number of *šiluhlu* in agricultural work at Dūr-Katlimmu. Based on those texts one might get the impression that most of the population at Dūr-Katlimmu was unfree. But, thanks to the texts in BATSH 18, we can say that they were only a small portion of the population. Whereas the records show a population of 30–40 *šiluhlu* active in the area at any one time, the personnel lists routinely mention 120 or more "free" individuals. Suggestively, one might also note that the *šiluhlu* were divided into three groups at Dūr-Katlimmu and a fourth at Duāra. These map uncannily well to three "fifties" of free men at Dūr-Katlimmu and the fourth fifty at Duāra. This is only the tip of the iceberg. What all this means for our understanding of the Middle Assyrian kingdom remains to be seen.

The work is a hefty tome and there are few formatting quirks which take some getting used to. The book follows the practice of other recent BATSH volumes of having the copies interspersed with the editions rather

than confined to a separate plates section. This is, in general, quite convenient since all the information on a given text is only a few pages away. Even so, it can prove cumbersome in some of the larger texts where the copy, transliteration, and translation have to be broken up into somewhat confusingly interleaved chunks.

The work is largely free of serious errors, and only two minor slips warrant mention here. First, although the book consistently normalizes the divine name ^dSILIM-*ma-nu* as Salmānu, in the personal names index entries are alphabetized as though the name were spelled Šulmānu. Second, the index follows a dubious interpretation of BATSH 18 76. That text makes rather liberal use of the ditto sign MIN to indicate the professions of many individuals. In a number of places the last preserved title before the MIN sign is *rab hanšē* "captain of fifty" and the personal name index dutifully restores the title. However, as we know from other texts in the volume, Dūr-Katlimmu and its satellite Duāra only had four *hanšē* units between them, and these otherwise had only one captain each. There should not be dozens of them in one text, and so Salah's interpretation of the MIN sign seems untenable. Indeed, that the MIN sign was not used to simply repeat the previous title is made clear, for instance, in lines 40–43, where one finds the sequence of professions *kukultu*, MIN, MIN, *kukultu*. If the MIN in these lines meant *kukultu*, the scribe would have written MIN in line 43 as well. It seems better to assume that the scribe used MIN to indicate workers who were in a default group, likely *ša šipre* "of working age." People in other groups, be they captains of fifty or *kukultus*, had their designations written out explicitly. But these are relatively minor matters in a very useful—and indeed quite weighty—volume.

PAUL GAUTHIER
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Die Zeit selbst lag nun tot darnieder: Die Stadt Assiut und ihre Nekropolen nach westlichen Reiseberichten des 17. bis 19. Jahrhunderts. Konstruktion, Destruktion und Rekonstruktion. By JOCHEM KAHL. *The Asyut Project*, vol. 5. Wiesbaden: HARRASSOWITZ VERLAG, 2013. Pp. x + 438 + *162, illus. €68.

The aim of this book by Jochem Kahl is to present a collection of travel reports from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century AD that are stored in various museums and collections throughout the world. Its main achievement is collecting the information presented in these Asyūt travel reports and making the material available to researchers. It is Kahl's merit to have presented a voluminous study of the view of European and American travelers on this city in Middle Egypt during the aforementioned period. The picture of the city,