

and spatial layout, and to practitioners directly participating in the development of this art, architecture, urban development. In addition, the book provides a space for multi-faceted cultural and political dialogue between nations, states and civilisations.

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Sylvie Lackenbacher and Florence Malbran-Labat, *Lettres akkadiennes de la «Maison d'Urtēnu»*. *Fouilles de 1994* (Ras Shamra – Ugarit XXIII), Peeters, Leuven-Paris-Bristol Ct 2016, 464 pp.

The book under review contains the publication of cuneiform tablets found at Ras Shamra – Ugarit in 1994. The present volume presents 130 letters written in Akkadian and discovered in the so-called “House of Urtēnu”. Most of them are addressed to the king of Ugarit, to the queen or to the prefect of the palace and were sent from various foreign countries of the Near East. They date from the final period of the Late Bronze Age, from the time of the last two kings of Ugarit, Niqmaddu III and ‘Ammurapi, and thus immediately precede the events that changed the political aspect of the Near East in the twelfth century B.C.

This *editio princeps* is divided in six sections offering the transliteration and the translation of each tablet with short comments. The copies are reproduced in the third part of the volume (pl. I–XCIV) and they are followed by carefully made photographs, showing also the sides of the tablets (pl. XCV–CCXI).

The second part of the book contains two concordances of the RS numbers, of the numbers given to the tablets in the *editio princeps* in general and in each section in particular (pp. 203–208). They are followed by an index of words and expressions commented in the text (pp. 209–220), of anthroponyms (pp. 220–225), theonyms (p. 225), toponyms (pp. 225–228), of titles and functions (pp. 228–230), and of objects (pp. 230–234). References are given each time to the serial numbers of the tablets in each section and to the RS numbers, but not to the serial number of each tablet in the entire publication or to the pages of the printed volume. This would have considerably eased the consultation of the work. A list of abbreviations and a bibliography are given on pp. 235–241, followed by a map and by plans of the “House of Urtēnu” (pp. 243–245). A French and an Arabic summaries are provided at the end of the volume (pp. 461–464).

The first section of Part I with the transliteration and translation of the texts contains thirty-nine letters sent from the Hittite world. Nine letters were sent by the Hittite Great King (nos. 1–9) and three letters are related to the king of Karkemiš (nos. 10–12). The third one seems to have been written by ‘Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit, who is asking for urgent help. However, the letter has apparently not been sent because of the pressure of the enemy, which is not named. One letter comes from Tarḫuntašša (no. 13), another one from Kizzuwatna (no. 14), and four letters were sent from Alašiya, i.e. a kingdom on Cyprus (nos. 15–18). The king is called ^m*Ku-uš-me-šu-ša* and the high

officials writing to the king of Ugarit are ^m*Ši-na-aš* and ^m*Ša-an-gi-wa*. Royal princes (DUMU LUGAL) are the authors of four letters (nos. 19–22), while two other letters were sent by members of the royal family (nos. 23–24). Hittite officials without title are the authors of further three letters (nos. 25–27).

The high Hittite official *uriyanni*, whose title is often preceded by the determinative of proper names instead of LÚ, occurs in several letters, six or seven of which concern works to be performed at Alalah (nos. 28–33 and 35). One of these letters is sent by the king of Karkemiš (no. 31). Another letter deals with measures that should be taken against Suteans (no. 34), while another one refers to negotiations with the kings of Ušnātu, Amurru, and Qadeš (no. 36). A partly broken tablet deals with merchants (no. 37), a letter concerns a Hittite sent by Eya-ḫatna (no. 38), whose function is not specified, and there is a letter sent by Ini-Tešub, king of Karkemiš, to Šagarakti-Šurriaš, king of Babylon (no. 39). This letter, dated between 1255 and 1243, or between 1240 and 1228 according to H. Gasche *et al.*, belongs to a period somewhat older than the corpus of documents from the “House of Urtēnu” and its presence at Ugarit cannot be explained.

Only two letters sent from Egypt occur in the present corpus (nos. 40–41). The first one is an answer to a letter of the king of Ugarit who recorded that his father was the servant of Ramesses II (^m*Ri-ia-ma-še-ša*) and that he was the servant of Merneptah (^m*Mar-ni-ip-ta-aḫ*), who ruled *ca.* 1212–1202 B.C. The king of Ugarit was thus asking for Egyptian help in a period of extreme food shortage and he apparently got a positive answer. A similar letter dating from the reign of Merneptah, found also in the “House of Urtēnu”, was published by S. Lackenbacher in 2001¹.

The second letter from Egypt is very fragmentary. It is addressed to ‘Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit. The photograph does not allow checking the decipherment of the entire line 1, but the copy suggests a slight correction of the reading proposed in the *editio princeps*. The letter was sent by ^m*Wa-aš-ma-a²-dRe-a* LUGAL [...] *na-ra-am* ^d*A-ma-na* DUMU ^dUTU ^m*Šu-ta-ia*. The same title is written ^m*Wa-aš-mu-a-Ri-a* in a letter found at Boghazköy². ^m*Wa-aš-ma-a²-dRe-a* is a transcription of Egyptian *Wsr-m³.t-R⁴*, the title of Ramesses III (*ca.* 1182–1151 B.C.), as confirmed by the following “ruler of Heliopolis, beloved by Amon”, translated from Egyptian *ḥq3-’Iwnw mri ’Imn³*.

According to this letter, Ramesses III was a son of Sethos II (*ca.* 1199–1193 B.C.), but this is unlikely and this alleged filiation was aimed at stressing the legitimacy of Ramesses III after a chaotic period with several Egyptian rulers. Only Sethos II was recognized by Ramesses III as a legitimate king⁴ and this idea is expressed in lines 1–2

¹ S. Lackenbacher, *Une lettre d’Égypte*, in *Ras Shamra – Ougarit XIV*, Paris 2001, pp. 239–248.

² E. Edel, *Neue Deutungen keilschriftlicher Umschreibungen ägyptischer Wörter und Personennamen* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl. Sitzungsberichte 375), Wien 1980, p. 17; *id.*, *Die ägyptisch-hethitische Korrespondenz aus Boghazköi in babylonischer und hethitischer Sprache* (Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Abhandlung 77), Opladen 1994, p. 24.

³ R. Hannig, *Die Sprache der Pharaonen. Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch* (Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 64), 2nd ed., Mainz a/R 1997, p. 1278.

⁴ B. Grdseloff, *Une stèle scythopolitaine du roi Séthos I^{er}*, Le Caire 1949, p. 70, n. 2; C. Aldred, *The Parentage of King Siptah*, in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 49 (1963), pp. 41–48 (voir p. 43); R.O. Faulkner, *Egypt: From*

of the letter. These lines are thus very important for the chronology of the final period of Ugaritian history. The letter shows that ‘Ammurapi was still king of Ugarit at the time of Ramesses III, as the reviewer has already stressed in 2006⁵.

For the same reason, *i-na ma-an-da-at-ti* in line 44’ of the first letter from Egypt (no. 40) must have its normal meaning “as tribute” despite the difficulties expressed in the *editio princeps* (p. 86). Ugarit was no longer a vassal state of the Hittites during a short period at the very end of the 13th century B.C. and after the collapse of the Hittite Empire *ca.* 1180 B.C. The king of Ugarit then recognized the Pharaoh as his suzerain, sending him a tribute.

The third section of the transliterations and translations of the Akkadian documents from the “House of Urtēnu” presents seventeen letters addressed to the king of Ugarit by Syro-Phoenician kings (nos. 42–58) of Ušnatu (nos. 42–44), Amurru (nos. 43–46), Qadeš on the Orontes (no. 47), Byblos (nos. 46–49), Beirut (nos. 50–51), Sidon (nos. 52–57), and Tyre (no. 58). The kingdom of Ušnatu was bordering the territory of Ugarit on the south-east and Qadeš was lying on the Orontes, further to the south-east. The other kingdoms had direct access to the sea, like Amurru, or were harbour cities, usually regarded as Phoenician. The title of this chapter, “Letters of the kingdoms of Syria” (p. 89), is therefore somewhat surprising and their present-day situation does not explain it, since Byblos, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre lay in Lebanon. In the 13th–12th centuries B.C. they belonged to the Egyptian political sphere. The diplomatic phraseology used in these letters show that these kings regarded themselves as “brothers”, except the king of Amurru, who considered himself as “father” of the king of Ugarit. It is doubtful that this difference depended on the age of the monarchs.

The fourth section presents eight letters of merchants belonging to an unnamed “firm” (nos. 59–66) which conducted business by collecting, furnishing, exchanging oil from Ugarit (cf. also nos. 75 and 109) for other goods, in particular wool (nos. 63, 66). These men are never called “merchants” and the phraseology of the letters reveals a certain hierarchy among them. The harbour of Tyre plays a certain role in their transactions (nos. 62, 63), that were reaching Egypt (no. 63) and Ḫatti (no. 63). The wool is said once to come from the country of the Suteans (no. 66). The Akkadian language of these letters deserves a special attention.

The large fifth section of transliterations and translations presents forty-six letters of various contents (nos. 67–112). Nine letters are addressed to the king (nos. 67–75) and three to the queen or a king’s spouse (nos. 76–78). The addressee of five letters is the prefect of the palace (nos. 79–83). His proper name Uzzēnu appears only in a letter sent to him by a high official of Alašiya, called Kinniki. The letter concerns three Alašiyans staying at Ugarit, as well as the taxation of merchants coming from Alašiya to Ugarit (no. 82). None of the six Alašiyān proper names appearing in this letter occurs in Cyprus in later times.

the Inception of the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Death of Ramesses III, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 3rd ed., vol. II/2, Cambridge 1975, pp. 217–251 (voir pp. 235–236).

⁵ E. Lipiński, *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age* (Orientalia Lovaniensia. Analecta 153), Leuven 2006, pp. 32–36.

Two letters are addressed to other officials (nos. 84–85). The first one, sent by Šaggar-abu, concerns shepherds in Sūḫu on the Middle-Euphrates and events in Babylonia, where Kadašman-Ḫarbe became king. This name was borne by two monarchs of the Kassite dynasty. The king mentioned in the letter must be Kadašman-Ḫarbe II, whose short reign is dated around 1223 B.C. by A. Brinkman, but is lowered to 1218 by H. Gasche *et al.* The letter confirms the Assyrian hegemony of Tukulti-Ninurta I over Babylonia, but adds that the Assyrians then left Babylon. However, Šaggar-abu specifies that Kadašman-Ḫarbe II came to Babylon and to Sippar, but soon returned to Lubda, east of the Tigris. He was obviously a puppet ruler, replaced by Adad-šum-iddina. The information provided by the letter (no. 84) should be integrated in the discussion of the events of this period.

The second letter (no. 85), sent to a *ḫazannu*, concerns movements of six hundred ‘*apiru*’ people, probably in the area of Ušnātu, south-east of Ugarit. The second part of the letter deals with a troublesome situation among shepherds and suggests measures to be taken to protect the cattle and avoid further disturbances.

Three short letters are characterized as “private”, because the addressees bear no title (nos. 86–88). In fact, they concern private matters.

Twenty-four letters are grouped in a particular section for the simple reason that their address is not preserved (nos. 89–112). A thematic grouping would have been more useful for the readers and students. The first letter (no. 89) concerns relations between Ugarit and another country, the name of which is lost. The second letter deals with a silver problem in which people from Alašiya are involved, as well as a person from the unidentified land of Šulipa (no. 90). The sale of a servant is discussed in one of the letters (no. 93), followed immediately by a letter dealing with a problem requiring the intervention of the Great King (no. 94). The latter is also mentioned in the letter recommending the use of armed forces to protect the town of Aruwa, at the southern border of the land, against an attack of unspecified enemies (no. 95). Another letter deals with ships going to Ašqelon (no. 97). This information is interesting, since it shows the relative importance of this harbour before the arrival of the Philistins *ca.* 1130 B.C. Two other letters deal with renting ships (nos. 105, 106), while other letters mention bespoke goods to be sent by ship (nos. 109, 110). A navigation to the land of Arume, not identified, is recorded in the last letter of this section (no. 112).

The last section of the transliterations and translations presents twenty-eight fragments (nos. 113–130), which may provide some interesting vocabulary or grammatical forms. It is not necessary to enter here into details.

The volume edited by Sylvie Lackenbacher and Florence Malbran-Labat offers a large amount of new material that will interest historians of various specialities and linguists dealing with Akkadian and other Semitic languages. We should be grateful to both authors for the accomplished task and congratulate the publisher for the excellent presentation of the work.