RECENTLY DISCOVERED NEO-ASSYRIAN ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE REVIEW PALACE AND NERGAL GATE OF NINEVEH

By Ali Y. Al-Juboori

Between 1987 and 1992, Iraqi archaeologists under the direction of the local Inspectorate of Antiquities undertook excavations at Nineveh. In particular, they excavated east of the mosque located on the smaller mound of Nebi Yunus and at the Nergal Gate, the middle gate of the northern city wall. At the Nergal Gate, an inscription of Sennacherib was found on two bull colossi and two paving stones. At Nebi Yunus, a few inscribed clay and stone objects were discovered in the ruins of the armoury, the so-called “Rear Palace” (or “Review Palace”). These included a slab of Ashurnasirpal II, a prism fragment of Esarhaddon, two human-headed winged bull colossi of Esarhaddon, a winged-bull of Ashurbanipal, and an unsculpted wall slab of Ashurbanipal. Then, after east Mosul was liberated from ISIS/Daʾesh occupation in early 2017, seven further inscriptions of Esarhaddon were discovered in looters’ tunnels under the destroyed mosque. All of those inscriptions are edited here.


TELL KHAIBER: AN ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE OF THE SEALAND PERIOD

By Stuart Campbell, Jane Moon, Robert Killick, Daniel Calderbank, Eleanor Robson, Mary Shepperson and Fay Slater

Tell Khiber: مركز إداري لسلالة القطر البحري أو سلالة بابل الثانية

Tell Khiber: Administrative Centre of the Sealand Period

By Stuart Campbell, Jane Moon, Robert Killick, Daniel Calderbank, Eleanor Robson, Mary Shepperson and Fay Slater
Excavations at Tell Khaiber in southern Iraq by the Ur Region Archaeological Project have revealed a substantial building (hereafter the Public Building) dating to the mid-second millennium B.C. The results are significant for the light they shed on Babylonian provincial administration, particularly of food production, for revealing a previously unknown type of fortified monumental building, and for producing a dated archive, in context, of the little-understood Sealand Dynasty. The project also represents a return of British field archaeology to long-neglected Babylonia, in collaboration with Iraq's State Board for Antiquities and Heritage. Comments on the historical background and physical location of Tell Khaiber are followed by discussion of the form and function of the Public Building. Preliminary analysis of the associated archive provides insights into the social milieu of the time. Aspects of the material culture, including pottery, are also discussed.

THE LAND BEHIND THE LAND BEHIND BAGHDAD: ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES OF THE UPPER DIYALA (SIRWAN) RIVER VALLEY

By Jesse Casana and Claudia Glatz

While the Diyala (Kurdish Sirwan) River Valley is storied in Near Eastern archaeology as home to the Oriental Institute's excavations in the 1930s as well as to Robert McC. Adams' pioneering archaeological survey, The Land Behind Baghdad, the upper reaches of the river valley remain almost unknown to modern scholarship. Yet this region, at the interface between irrigated lowland Mesopotamia and the Zagros highlands to the north and east, has long been hypothesized as central to the origins and development of complex societies. It was hotly contested by Bronze Age imperial powers, and offered one of the principle access routes connecting Mesopotamia to the Iranian Plateau and beyond. This paper presents an interim report of the Sirwan Regional Project, a regional archaeological survey undertaken from 2013–2015 in a 4000 square kilometre area between the modern city of Darbandikhan and the plains south of Kalar. Encompassing a wide range of environments, from the rugged uplands of the Zagros front ranges to the rich irrigated basins of the Middle Diyala, the project has already discovered a wealth of previously unknown archaeological sites ranging in date from the Pre-Pottery Neolithic through the modern period. Following an overview of the physical geography of the Upper Diyala/Sirwan, this paper highlights key findings that are beginning to transform our understanding of this historically important but poorly known region.
TESTING THE MIDDLE GROUND IN ASSYRO-ANATOLIAN MARRIAGES OF THE KĀRUM PERIOD

By Yağmur Heffron

Abstract

Central Anatolia in the Middle Bronze Age is marked by a well-documented Old Assyrian presence during the kārum period (20th–17th century B.C.), a dynamic time of long-distance trade and cultural contact. One of the idiosyncrasies of the social history of this period is a special bigamous arrangement which allowed Assyrian men to enter second marriages on the condition that one wife remained at home in Assûr, and the other in Anatolia. In testing the extent to which a middle ground for cross-cultural compromise is recognisable in such Assyro-Anatolian marriage practices, this article considers whether the terminology used in reference to the first and second wives (amtum and aššatum respectively) can be interpreted as the crucial element of misunderstanding in middle ground formation.


EMBELLISHING THE INTERIOR SPACES OF ASSYRIA’S ROYAL PALACES: THE BÊT HILĀNĪ RECONSIDERED

By David Kertai

Abstract

Jāmî al-masāḥāt al-dawāliyya lil-qanûn al-millîya li-Bâlî ashûr (Bêt hilānī)

A‘āda al-nisâ‘ fi al-masā‘ar

Tālîf: ‘Abd al-Karîm

Al-mu‘ājza: Tâhid fîn al-masâ‘ar (bêt hilānī)


3

ABSTRACTS
The bet hilani is one of the most famous features of Assyria’s royal palaces as well as one of its most elusive. The term is mostly known from Assyrian royal inscriptions, which describe it as an architectural feature inspired by the architecture of Syro-Anatolia. Such explicit references to the architecture of other cultures is exceptional and provides a rare glimpse into the valuations of Assyria’s architects.

Modern attempts to identify the bet hilani archaeologically are almost as old as the field of ancient Near Eastern Studies. Unfortunately, the discourse has become more convoluted over time through the integration of disparate architectural features into a single bet hilani discourse and a narrow view of how architectural exchanges occur. Past research has generally assumed a morphological correspondence between the Assyrian bet hilani and the external porticoes that typify Syro-Anatolian architecture. This article will argue that Assyrian architects had a different set of ideals and interests which led them to change the external Syro-Anatolian portico into an interior feature used to add monumentality and ornamentation to the rooms of Assyria’s palaces. This changes the bet hilani from a morphological category into a decorative one and contextualises it within the architectural traditions of Assyria.


TABLETTES DE LA COLLECTION DE MICHEL DE GENOUILLAC

By Camille Lecompte and Christine Pariselle

Henri de Genouillac (1881–1940), one of the leading Assyriologists of his time, owned a collection of cuneiform tablets and inscribed artefacts. On his death, it was divided into two parts. Whereas the majority of these objects were bequeathed to the Musée des Antiquités in Rouen, his native city, a smaller part remained the property of his nephew, Michel de Genouillac. The present paper, which offers the publication of the latter, also aims to reconstruct its history. The Michel de Genouillac collection consists of 20 Ur III tablets (9 from Puzriš-Dagan, 10 from Girsu, 1 of uncertain origin), 1 clay cone with an inscription of Gudea and 5 Sargonic administrative tablets from Girsu.

This article consists of a detailed account of the mashhad of Imām Yahyā ibn al-Qāsim. The square-plan building, constructed on the cliff edge above the southern bank of the Tigris in the citadel of Mosul in c. 637/1239, was destroyed in an act of cultural terrorism by ISIS on 23 July 2014. This is a study of the work of earlier scholars on the building, a reassessment of the structure and its regional context, and a number of hypotheses regarding the original appearance of the tomb. In addition, the wide-ranging sources of the formal and decorative elements of the building are examined. The mashhad was the most richly ornamented of the medieval tombs in Iraq which had survived into the modern era, yet it had not been comprehensively studied in over a century. The remaining untranslated inscriptions are given in full, adding useful new information to the discussion regarding the important distinction between the ‘Alids versus Shi‘ites associations of the building and its patron. Drawing on the limited published and archival images of the building, the internal appearance is reconstructed, and a series of new architectural plans and elevations are provided in order to preserve the memory of this important structure.


A NEW MANUSCRIPT OF LUGAL-E, TABLET IV

By Sam Mirelman

This study edits BM 48053, a newly identified Late Babylonian manuscript of the epic poem Lugal-e in the British Museum collection. This tablet, which is likely to come from Borsippa, contributes towards the
reconstruction of Tablet IV of the epic in its late bilingual form. It is also of interest for its colophon, which specifies the swift return of the tablet following a same day loan, using the phrase *ina miššil irtimšu* “in half a day” or perhaps “at midday”.


THE MANUFACTURE, EVALUATION AND CONSERVATION OF CLAY TABLETS INSCRIBED IN CUNEIFORM: TRADITIONAL PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

By Julian Edgeworth Reade

Knowledge of ancient Middle Eastern history is largely based on written records preserved on clay tablets, but tablets have often been separated from other archaeological artefacts, with erratic consequences. This paper discusses the treatment, distribution and evaluation of tablets since the first major discoveries in 1850, the problems and potential advantages of identifying clay sources and methods of manufacture, the challenges of preserving and recording tablets found in different conditions in the field, and the development of cleaning and long-term conservation techniques. Early experiments in firing tablets at the British Museum and at Babylon were followed by the systematic work of Friedrich Rathgen in Berlin around 1900. While his methods were gradually accepted in principle, there was limited communication among specialists, and independent procedures evolved. The debate on best practice continues.

IRAQ (2017) 79 163–202 Doi:10.1017/irq.2016.10

DĀDUŠA’S STELA AND THE VEXED QUESTION OF IDENTIFYING THE MAIN ACTORS ON THE RELIEF

By Robert Rollinger

ملة دادوشا وصعوبة تحديد هوية الشخصين الرئيسيين على هذه الملة

 By روبرت روينجر

يتعلق هذا البحث موضوع ملة دادوشا ملك أشنونا الشهيرة ووجدت بالقرن الثاني عشر قبل الميلاد. تشير هذه الملة إلى وجود علاقة فريدة وغير عينة بين النصوص والصورتين لا يوجد مثيل لها في الشرق الأدنى القديم. لكن البحث الأخير لا زال في خلاف حول تحديد هوية الشخصين الرئيسيين الثلاثة المتحدين على الألواح. يفشل البحث بالأحداث الثقافية والاجتماعية وسياق الأمور وتوصيل البحث الى نتائج تقوم بأن الشخص المتصدع الواقع على الشمال وهو وقتًا حيث تكون ما يبدو المشابه يمثل أداة، والشخص الواقع على اليمن الأبعد هو ملك أشنونا الثاني يدلي الخشود إلى إلهام الذي ضمنه النصر على عدوه.
This contribution deals with the famous stela of king Dāduša of Ešnunna (c. eighteenth century B.C.). The monument testifies to a correlation of text and image that is unique in the Ancient Near East. However, recent scholarship still disagrees on the identification of the three main actors in the top register of the stela. The paper discusses in detail the philological and epigraphic evidence and their larger contexts. It concludes that the slaying figure to the left standing on the defeated king of Qab(a)r is Adad and the figure to the far right is the pious king of Ešnunna paying reverence to his god who guaranteed victory over his enemy.


EXCAVATIONS AT KURD QABURSTAN, A SECOND MILLENNIUM B.C. URBAN SITE ON THE ERBIL PLAIN

By Glenn M. Schwartz, Christopher D. Brinker, Andrew T. Creekmore III, Marian H. Feldman, Alexia Smith and Jill A. Weber

Excavations at the 109 hectare site of Kurd Qaburstan on the Erbil plain in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq were conducted by the Johns Hopkins University in 2013 and 2014. The Middle Bronze Age (Old Babylonian period) is the main period of occupation evident on the site, and the project therefore aims to study the character of a north Mesopotamian urban centre of the early second millennium B.C. On the high mound, excavations revealed three phases of Mittani (Late Bronze) period occupation, including evidence of elite residential architecture. On the low mound and the south slope of the high mound, Middle Bronze evidence included domestic remains with numerous ceramic vessels left in situ. Also dating to the Middle Bronze period is evidence of a city wall on the site edges. Later occupations include a cemetery, perhaps of Achaemenid date, on the south slope of the high mound and a Middle Islamic settlement on the southern lower town. Faunal and archaeobotanical analysis provide information on the plant and animal economy of the second millennium B.C. occupations, and geophysical results have documented a thirty-one hectare expanse of dense Middle Bronze Age architecture in the northern lower town.

ANIMALS OF THE SEALANDS: CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIAN “DARK AGE”

By Katheryn C. Twiss

The Sealand Dynasty ruled in southern Mesopotamia ca. 1740–1460 (?) B.C.E., but Sealand archaeological deposits are extraordinarily rare, and the dynasty itself is known almost entirely from a limited number of texts. Sealand Dynasty social and ecological practices remain mysterious, and ceremonial activities are at best poorly understood. Faunal remains from the small site of Tell Sakhariya in southern Iraq provide our first glimpse into the Sealand animal socio-economy. Sakhariya’s occupants herded and hunted in multiple environmental zones. In pre-Sealand times Tell Sakhariya was an important ceremonial site, and the large-scale food sharing and possible ritual dog burial in its faunal assemblage might indicate that Sakhariya retained ideological significance into the Sealand era.