

Mozan Area AA	Jezirah (EJ periodisation)	Jezirah (EJZ periodisation)	Southern Mesopotamia
1	EJ IIIb	EJZ 3b	Early Dynastic 3b
	↓	EJZ 4a	Early Akkadian
2	EJ IV	EJZ 4b	Late Akkadian
3a		EJZ 4c	Post-Akkadian
3b			
4a	EJ V	EJZ 5	Ur III
4b	OJ I	↓	Isin-Larsa

Elena Rova (Venice)

Charvát, Petr & Maříková Vlčková, Petra (eds.): *Who Was King? Who Was Not King? The Rulers and the Ruled in the Ancient Near East*. Prague: Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 2010. XV + 160 pp. ISBN 978-80-87365-37-3. 20,00 €.

This monograph presents a dozen articles based on talks given at a conference in Prague in April 2010. Despite its small format, the tome packs quite a punch. A model table of contents presents the contributors and the articles, with an abstract for each article, adding to the usefulness of the volume. The headings of the introductory sections are in English, German and French, like the individual contributions; and the abstracts are consistently written in the language of the article itself. Each article provides its own bibliography. The following represents a few remarks on selected topics touched upon in the volume.

In the opening section, the editors raise a number of questions related to the study and understanding of Near Eastern state formations, with special focus on the exercise of power and on holders of the top political office. The choice of title for the conference and the publication, borrowed from a terse question in the Sumerian King List, is therefore most apt.

Tracing ideas of power and powerlessness in early historical Mesopotamia, G.J. Selz contrasts aspects of curse formulae and proverbs. He cautiously suggests that interesting parallels to the Mesopotamian opinion on the exercise of power exist in the Chinese philosophical conception of the Mandate of Heaven, with its roots in the early 1st millennium BCE. Indeed, the parallel is not far-fetched. Selz demonstrates an undertone of ambivalence vis-à-vis the palace, the king, and the temples in the proverbs. Leadership in general was considered beneficial to mankind, but power needed to be exercised with moderation and those in power had to comply with a general code of conduct dictated by cognitive, social and natural factors. Selz favours the designation “monistic” over “holistic” to characterize this system (p. 3 with footnote 9; p. 6).

P. Charvát's contribution centres on a rarely discussed late Uruk period bas-relief carved in dark stone, published among finds made at Kiš January–April 1912¹ by French excavators led by H. de Genouillac.² The relief depicts a monumental building on the left hand side, with two human figures occupying the right side (the positions of the two human figures have become reversed in Charvát's account). The figure flanking the building is the smaller of the two, and he faces the taller figure, who holds his right hand above the head of the smaller figure, clasping an unidentified object in his uplifted hand. Charvát wavers between the idea that the taller figure is grabbing the smaller one by the hair, or that he is holding "something that he applies to the head of the Small Man" (p. 16). Charvát decides that "[t]he idea of anointing a successor in office offers itself so persuasively that we find it hard to resist." In this reviewer's opinion, Charvát's first instinct is the safer bet – though it is by no means certain! In that case, the action of the taller figure may be interpreted as one of hostility, and the gesture of the smaller figure may be seen as an entreaty for mercy.³ However, the object held above the head of the smaller figure may correspond to an object held by the taller figure in his left hand, which unfortunately rests in front of his body, and so only the contours are visible. The motif at any rate requires further study.

In his survey of links between Ur III and Old Babylonian Mari royal ideology, B. Lafont offers a novel interpretation of the term LUGAL. He suggests that GAL, usually interpreted as corresponding to Akkadian *rabûm*, '(to be) great', could actually denote a cup. Admitting that this explanation of the title LUGAL does not necessarily imply an understanding at the expense of the traditional one, Lafont proposes they could well be seen as complementary. The rest of Lafont's essay concerns the question of deification of the ruler, kingship by divine selection, and attributes of royalty. While in connection with the divine status of rulers, there is always the risk of over-emphasizing the literal import of names such as *Yaḥdun-Lim-ili* (p. 30),⁴ Lafont skillfully demonstrates interesting connections between Ur III royal ideology and the court at Mari.

¹ *Fouilles françaises d'el-'Akhymer. Premières recherches archéologiques à Kich (Mission d'Henri de Genouillac en 1912)*, vol. 1, Paris 1924, 16–17; vol. 2, Paris 1925, 30–33, and erratum, p. 60.

² *Fouilles françaises d'el-'Akhymer*, vol. 2, pl. I, no. 1. No specifics are given about the relief or its find context, and de Genouillac mentions that he bought objects brought in from the area, as well as objects excavated on location (vol. 1, p. 19–21). There is a real possibility that the relief was not found at Kiš.

³ See de Genouillac's characterization of the motif as "Attitude[s] de prières", *op. cit.*, p. 9. Compare the Uruk IV period Susa sealing with bound prisoners executed by means of bow and arrow by a figure similar to the taller figure in the "Kiš" relief, in the vicinity of a horned building, e.g. D.P. Hansen, in J. Aruz & R. Wallenfels (eds.), *Art of the First Cities*, New York, New Haven & London 2003, p. 24 fig. 8 (Sb. 2125); and the late Uruk period sealing from Ur, showing a man holding another person by the hair while stabbing him with a dagger, L. Legrain, *Archaic Seal Impressions* (Ur Excavations 3), London & Philadelphia 1935, pl. 15 no. 297 (dating following Legrain).

⁴ For discussions of the meaning of this type of name, see G. Marchesi, *LUMMA in the Onomasticon and Literature of Ancient Mesopotamia*, Padova 2006, p. 68 footnote 322.

W. Sallaberger examines important aspects of the Code of Ḫammurāpi: the participation of ordinary citizens and of civic institutions in upholding the rule of law.⁵ He points, for instance (p. 53), to CH § 17, setting the reward for returning a runaway manservant to his owner at two shekels of silver; and § 59, where a female innkeeper is made responsible for reporting plans of criminal activity taking place in her establishment. As for institutions (p. 54–55), the city and the mayor are responsible for compensation in cases of robbery resulting in the loss of goods or human life (§§ 23–24), and where no perpetrator had been caught. Sallaberger concludes, among other things, that the jurisdictional basis for Ḫammurāpi's state presupposed a counterpart in a strong civil society.

Other essays focus on Isin, Larsa, and Babylon year names and their relation to the political and economic history of the early 2nd millennium BCE (L. Pecha); Old Babylonian princesses as *nadiātum* of Šamaš at Sippar (W. Tyborowski); the concept of royalty in the Amarna correspondence with a look at different terms of address in these letters (J. Mynářová); the Ugarit king list compared to other lists of rulers in the ancient Near East (P. Čech); the historical image of Jehu of Israel (F. Čapek); a family of scholars whose attachment to the Assyrian court can probably be traced over several generations (K. Šašková); depictions of rulers and subjects in Achaemenid monumental art (M. Roaf); and on questions relating to the time and circumstances of composition of the Nabonid chronicle (S. Zawadski).⁶

This handy paperback forms a welcome addition to any research library. The editors as well as their funding institution deserve our gratitude for the exemplary swiftness of publication of the conference proceedings. The width of contributions and the expertise on display vouch for the usefulness of this tome, and both students and scholars are bound to find pieces of interest here.

Jakob Andersson (Uppsala)

⁵ The case of vigilantism as illustrated by CH § 25 is a phenomenon with interesting implications. See, most recently, M. Jursa, *Die Babylonier*, 2nd ed., Munich 2008, p. 65.

⁶ A few talks at the conference do not feature in the volume. A. Bartelmus' presentation of Kassite period building inscriptions has since appeared in print, *Kaskal* 7 (2010), 143–172.