Keilschriftforschung

Jiménez, Enrique: *The Babylonian Disputation Poems*. With Editions of the Series of the Poplar, Palm and Vine, the Series of the Spider, and the Story of the Poor, Forlorn Wren. Leiden/Boston: Brill 2017. XVIII, 525 S. m. Abb. 8° = Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 87. Hartbd. € 165,00. ISBN 978-90-04-33625-4.

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The book in question contains six parts: Part I (p. 1–153) is an analysis of the Mesopotamian disputation poems, with a focus on the Akkadian tradition. The author discusses, with a remarkably wide horizon, their literary history, beginning with the Sumerian disputation poems and ending with post-Mesopotamian traditions until Medieval Europe, including their style and their *Sitz-im-Leben*.

Part II contains an edition of the Series of the Poplar, reconstructed from three manuscripts. The main addition is the third manuscript which was previously unpublished. It consists of three pieces from the British Museum identified by W. G. Lambert. The largest of these pieces had been copied by Lambert himself.

Part III gives an edition of the disputation between Palm and Vine. The text had already been known from a difficult manuscript from Uruk (SpTU 5, 225), to which two manuscripts can now be added: a big and well preserved manuscript identified by J. in the Yale collection, and a small fragment in the Warka collection in Heidelberg. The composition is now much better understandable than before.

Part IV offers an edition of the Series of the Spider. The text had already been known from one manuscript, to which one manuscript from Assur, identified and copied by Lambert, can be added.

Part V contains an edition of The Story of the Poor, Forlorn Wren. The text is reconstructed from four manuscripts, only one of which had previously been published. The three other manuscripts again had been copied and provisionally transliterated by Lambert but remained unpublished.

In part VI J. edits fragments with literary disputations: additions to the Series of the Fox with manuscripts from the Lambert folios, another small fragment identified and copied by the author in the British Museum, and several other fragments already published in different places. On the last pages J. presents in copy and transliteration two further fragments from the British Museum the classification of which as disputation poems is uncertain.

The book owes much to the legacy of the late Lambert, the master of Akkadian literature in the second half of the 20th century. It is the merit of the author to bring this legacy to light, enriched by his own discoveries of new manuscripts. J.s editions are thorough in philological matters, especially the many Late Babylonisms in the texts. He extensively deals with questions of material culture, such as the botanical identification of the *ṣarbatu* tree as Euphrates poplar (pp. 213–217), the existence of wind vanes in Mesopotamia (pp. 197–204), or the zoological identification of the *diqdiqqu* bird as wren (pp. 357–360).

At the end of the book the reader finds an edition of a Syriac dialogue poem between the vine and the cedar by A. M. Butts, an almost full glossary of words and indices of various kind.

Some remarks by the reviewer:

When the author presents his reconstructed master texts in bound transcription he is faced with many, sometimes unsolved questions of how to render a Late Babylonian text which does not conform to the normative rules of Old Babylonian. For example, *u-šaḫ-ma-ṭu* p. 250: 24 (not subordinative!) is transcribed as *ušaḫmaṭa*, assuming a ventive in /u/, but the writing might have been simply chosen because the *ṭu*-sign has the advantage of an unambiguous rendering of /ṭ/ (AD as well as DA are ambiguous), s. for this orthographic device the reviewer in RlA 10 (2003–2005) 138 s. v. Orthographie. B § 4.1 with lit. *i-ra-áš* p. 252: 38 is rendered as *irašši* "he gets" although the writing obviously stands for a form without final vowel: /iraš(š(i))/. A similar case is *i-ra-am* 254: 48 for /iram(m(u))/ (not *irammi*). *pa-pal-lum* p. 254: 53 does not stand for *papalla* but for /papallu/ with accusative in /-u/: the old triptotic case system has almost disappeared in Late Babylonian. p. 252: 34 *ina qú-ú Šamši* is transcribed as *qê šamaš*, but the form *qú-ú* in the construct state is probably another typical feature of Late Babylonian, namely a not inflected case vowel of nouns ending in contracted vowel, analogous to the the status rectus, s. the reviewer in AOAT 369 (2014) 253–255, where it was demonstrated that the ending *-û* becomes regular for all cases (cf. p. 338: 33 f. *ša* KUR-*ú* = *šadû* in the genitive, not *šadê* as rendered by J.). Fn. 670 on p. 265, suggesting an alternative reading *ina-qu-ú*, is therefore irrelevant. *a-ḫa-a-šú* p. 254: 47 can not be *aḫīšu*, but is dual nominative *aḫāšu*, and *ka-sa-a-šú* in the same line is *kasāšu*, not *kasûšu* (cf. the commentary to the line below).

Series of the Poplar

p. 168 Ic: 12: read *inaṭṭû*.
p. 168 Ic: 16: read in B *šá*.
p. 169 Ic: 15 transl. "gods".
p. 187 n. 495: read III.3.b.

Palm and Vine

p. 248: 12: read *uštešše̓r*.
p. 248: 15: transl. "has grown".

p. 248: 17: transl. “barges”.
p. 250: 19: read present tense *ibbannâ*.
p. 250: 22: *e-pe-ri* is plural *eperī*.
p. 252: 34: There is enough space at the end of the line of manuscript c to restore GI.[NA-*ia*], which solves the problem (commentary p. 262) of the missing trochaic verse ending.
p. 252: 37: *i-raš* // *i-ri-šú nigûtu*: the verb does not derive from *erēšu* “to ask for” but from *rī’āšu*: “he happily sings a joyful song”. The same is true for *nigûtam te-ri*!-*iš* ZA 102, 188: 44 “she happily sang a joyful song”, pace Streck/Wasserman ib., AHw 788 *nigûtu* 1 and CAD M/2, 218 *nigûtu* b. The var. *i-ri-šú* is probably a ventive form *irišš*(*a*). There is no need to assume a corruption here (J. p. 265 and p. 279 n. 710; in the latter instance read Ms c), but manuscript c plays with similar forms: *irišš*(*a*) in l. 37, *irašš*(*i*) in l. 38.
p. 252: 38: The reading *Kà-kà* for GA GA is admittedly difficult. But to understand this sign sequence as “cloister” (*gagû*) is likewise not convincing with regards to form and content. The line must mean something like “He (Šamaš) turns to the *supplicant*/*lamentation* (*itâr ana* IGI GA GA) and has mercy (*iraš*(*š*(*i*)) *rēm*(*e*)”, but the exact analysis of the line remains a mystery.
p. 252: 39: transl. “that they all name”.
p. 252: 42: *ši-biṭ* ^{d}*nam-tar-ri* // *nam-ta-ri* is a genitive construction. Thus transl. “I bring back <from> the Netherworld the person afflicted by the deadly *š.*-epidemic”.
p. 254: 46: *u-šat-taq lal-la-ri* can not be translated “I dispatch the mourner”. Pace J. p. 255 not from *etēqu* Š since the present tense of verbs I-’ e-class always has /e/ in the second syllable. This is rather the first instance of *šatāqu* II “to be silent”, D “to silence”: “I silence the mourner”. (Note that in CT 22, 19: 23 read *še*$_{20}$-*ti-iq e-pir* “make (the pens) pass and provide (them with food)!”, pace AHw 1200 where the form was derived from *šatāqu* II.)
p. 254: 47–48: The lines do not refer to the mourner of the preceding line, but to the sick person: “He for whom an ominous sign had appeared (*it-tu-šú* manuscript a; manuscript c has *tu-ú-šú* “an incantation”) had risen/appeared (*it-bu-ú*), and whose arms had been paralyzed (*ub-bu-ru a-ḫa-a-šú*), through me (wine) he returns (from the deathbed) (*issaḫḫaramma*) and he throws away his bondage (*i-ra-am ka-sa-a-šú*)”. The far-fetched derivation of *it-bu-ú* from an unattested stative Gt of *nabû* is thus unnecessary. It is hard to say whether *tû* “incantation” is a corruption of *ittu* “sign”, as J. assumes, or just the other way round. *a-ḫa-a-šú* is either nominative *aḫāšu* and subject of *ub-bu-ru* (instead of *ubburā*!), or uninflected accusative of respect (then transl. “who had been paralyzed with regard to his arms”). The rhyme *aḫāšu* – *kasāšu* explains the unusual construct state of the infinitive *kasāšu* instead of triptotic *kasûšu*.

Series of the Spider

p. 302: 1–9: [*uštar*]*raḫ* in l. 7 without subordinative does not favor the assumption (commentary p. 313) that ll. 1–9 form a single *enūma* clause. The comparison with the beginning of *Enūma elîš* does not hold: there are good arguments that the first *enūma* clause of *Enūma elîš* already ends in l. 2, s. the reviewer, The Beginning of the Babylonian Epic of Creation, in: S. J. Wimmer/G. Gafus (ed.), “Vom Leben umfangen”. Ägypten, das Alte Testament und das Gespräch der Religionen. Gedenkschrift für Manfred Görg (= Ägypten und Altes Testament 80, 2014) 391–395, esp. 393.
p. 304: 21: Read with the copy *e-mu-*[*qí*].

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p. 334: 13: the form *gat-ta-a-a* (for *gattaya*) “my figure” is typical Late Babylonian and may be added to the discussion on p. 353.
p. 338: 39: Read and transl. *šaḏî* (KUR-*i*) “my mountain”.