

ing conviction that literature and history, both being expressions of a living society, cannot be studied in isolation from one another without distortion of the underlying reality" (p. ix). This "underlying reality" is analyzed in terms of material or economic forces and interests, conflicts between various segments and classes of society (nomadic and mercantile, Arabs and non-Arabs, the bureaucracy, the army, and religious leaders), social and ethical ideals (Arab, Persian), religious and cultural traditions (Islamic, Hellenistic), and so forth. The most interesting of these essays are the ones grouped under Part One ("Medieval Islamic History"), in which the author interprets Islamic history with the help of a flexible and non-dogmatic view of the interrelation between political history and non-political institutions and between the role of the individual actor and the relevant circumstances within which his actions take place. They culminate in the striking essay on "The Achievement of Saladin" (pp. 91-107), an eloquent eulogy of the power of moral character:

For a brief but decisive moment, by sheer goodness and firmness of character, he raised Islam out of the rut of political demoralization. By standing out for a moral ideal, and expressing that ideal in his own life and action, he created around him an impulse to unity which, though never quite complete, sufficed to meet the unforeseen challenge flung down to him by destiny (pp. 105-6).


Moral character stands almost alone as a vital and independent aspect of culture or civilization that is not interpreted in terms of the "relevant circumstances" and explained as a reflection of an underlying social reality. As the essays move on to discuss such things as political thought, philosophy, theology, mysticism, and literature, men whose achievements in meeting the challenges facing them were no less impressive than Saladin's, fail to arouse in the author the same degree of enthusiasm for and appreciation of the task they were engaged in, except in so far as they were, or were supposed to be, stating or misstating a

hypothetical "inner" (i.e., social) reality that is, at best, a historian's "interpretation" of the relevant circumstances.

It must be remembered, however, that Sir Hamilton's concern with "civilization" or "culture" has remained somewhat marginal and that he has been more at home in such old-fashioned disciplines as history, government, law, political theory, religion, and literature. (The term "civilization" occurs in the title of the book edited by Professors Shaw and Polk, but not in the title of any one of Sir Hamilton's essays in the bibliography compiled by Professor Shaw. The term "culture" is used only once in a title [No. 93, cf. No. 171], in an essay that was first published in French, and it refers to the West ["la culture occidentale" is normally rendered by Sir Hamilton by "the West" in English].) This cautious attitude to the concept "civilization" was no doubt responsible for his remaining closer to the subject matter he investigated and avoiding the many pitfalls to which that concept led many of his contemporaries.

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 *A Bibliography of the Cuneiform Tablets of the Kuyunjik Collection in the British Museum.* By ERLE LEICHTY. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1964. Pp. xiii + 289. £4 15s.

The Kuyunjik collection, which includes the famous library of Assurbanipal, contains an estimate of almost 26,000 cuneiform tablets and fragments. Just about one third, or 32%, of this total has been published over the course of the years, in one form or another, a percentage which may be obtained from a count of the entries in the book here under review, which yields a total of 8438 numbers. The book is a bibliographical tool, with a list of all pertinent bibliographical references arranged according to the museum number of the texts. It was a difficult and exacting task, because the places of publication were very many indeed, and it is all to

the credit of Professor Leichty that the task has been absolved in such a thorough manner. No small merit is the fact that he has been so successful in making his results available in a lucid and perspicuous presentation. The material is arranged along three columns, with the first column listing the texts in sequence according to museum number (joins are entered together under one entry, with all appropriate cross-references), while the second column gives the bibliographical references and the third column the type of publication (photography, copy, transliteration and/or translation). Several of the joins are new and include references to unpublished tablets. The book is indispensable for reference purposes, especially since the texts to which it makes reference constitute the best of the collection as a whole. For it must be stressed that the percentage indicated above is only based on Museum numbers without taking into account the type and quality of the texts and fragments, so that no implication is made here that the 68% unpublished texts weigh

necessarily more heavily in importance than the remaining 32% published. Even so, it is still desirable that this bibliography be kept up to date, both for the Kuyunjik numbers which are and those which are not included in the present work, whether the remaining unpublished numbers be joins and duplicates or new texts. Apart from the possibility of future supplements to this book (such as the appendix found in Borger's *Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur*, pp. 561-59), there is Deller's suggestion (*Or.*, NS, 33 [1964], p. 478) to open a special section of *Orientalia's* "Keilschriftbibliographie" to take care of the additions in a periodical manner. This would be a most welcome contribution, and it is to be hoped that both the editors of *Orientalia* and Professor Leichty may join forces in providing all Assyriologists with a running supplement to the now available very important bibliography.

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