

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Les tribus amurrites de Mari. (= Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 108) by Moshe Anbar

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1985 p. 276-286. On notera que la (très laide) copie par G. D. Young de la tablette Wabash 1 est dite p. 176 transcrite sous le No. 79, mais que la compilation s'arrête p. 156 au No. 77...

La présence des Hittites en Syrie a fait l'objet de deux articles très bien faits: celui de G. M. Beckman est intitulé "Hittite Administration in Syria in the Light of the Texts from Ḫattuša, Ugarit and Emar". Il s'agit d'une synthèse claire, complète, qui comporte une bibliographie à jour. Tout au plus peut-on signaler que la fouille de Tell Kazel, depuis les travaux de Dunand (p. 43 n. 16) a été reprise en 1985 par l'Université américaine de Beyrouth: cf. L. Badre, *Berytus* 38, 1990, p. 9-124. H. A. Hoffner a traité d'une manière très nuancée de l'influence culturelle syrienne en Hatti (p. 89-106). On peut compléter son tour d'horizon par le cas du bétyle, dont la graphie NA₄.ZI.KIN chez les Hittites s'explique par un emprunt à l'akkadien *sikkanum* qu'on rencontre à Mari et à Emar, ainsi que l'a démontré J.-M. Durand ("Le nom des Bétyles à Ebla et en Anatolie", NABU 1988/8, suivi par M. Dietrich, O. Loretz et W. Mayer, "Sikkanum 'Betyle'", UF 21, 1989, p. 133-139 [qui ont oublié de citer la note de Durand dans NABU]); voir tout récemment M. Hutter, "Kultstelen und Baityloi. Die Ausstrahlungen eines syrischen religiösen Phänomens nach Kleinasien und Israel", dans B. Janowski, K. Koch et G. Wilhelm (éd.), *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien und dem Alten Testament. Internationales Symposium Hamburg 17.-21. März 1990*, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 129, 1993, p. 87-108. On peut aussi citer le cas du GAL MEŠEDI, dont le titre est un emprunt à la lance-mešittum comme l'a montré J.-M. Durand dans ARMT XXI p. 366 (cf. indépendamment M. Civil et H. A. Hoffner, RA 81, 1987, p. 187-188). H. A. Hoffner a tout à fait raison de suspecter un ancêtre commun au hittite *tuwarša* et à l'hébreu *tirōš* qui désignent le vin: Mari connaît en effet un *turšumum* qui désigne le vin (cf. la note de J.-M. Durand dans NABU 1994). Pour la pratique de l'*andurârum* en Syrie (p. 100), on me permettra de renvoyer à mes deux études sur "Les décrets royaux à l'époque paléo-babylonienne, à propos d'un ouvrage récent", *AfO* 34, 1987, p. 36-44 et "L'*andurârum* à Mari", MARI 6, 1990, p. 253-270).

Une des découvertes majeures de ces vingt dernières années est certainement celle des textes d'Emar: D. E. Fleming en est devenu l'un des spécialistes les plus compétents et son article sur les rituels d'Emar (p. 51-61) est fort intéressant. En ce qui concerne l'archéologie d'Emar, on observera qu'il ignore curieusement p. 52 et n. 6 les articles de J. Margueron et B. Geyer parus dans MARI 6, volume dont il cite pourtant d'autres contributions. Par ailleurs, le caractère hittite de l'habitat d'Emar, souligné par J. Margueron (cf. p. 55 n. 20) a été remis en cause par des auteurs comme D. J. W. Meijer, "Ground Plans and archaeologists: On similarities and comparisons", dans *To the Euphrates and Beyond (Mélanges van Loon)*, Rotterdam 1989, p. 221-236 ou Th. McClellan (contribution au Colloque sur les maisons syriennes de Damas, juin

1992, à paraître).

La bibliographie (p. 177-219) reflète le contenu de l'ouvrage, avec ses incompréhensibles lacunes: sous la rubrique ARM (p. 177), on trouve seulement ARM 16/1 et ARM 19... et le lecteur n'en saura pas davantage en consultant les noms des auteurs. Qu'un livre de ce genre, qui cite certaines études parues en 1992, ne mentionne pas les deux tomes d'ARM 26 publiés en 1988 risque d'étonner plus d'un lecteur et de priver le néophyte d'une importante source d'informations. Quant à la revue MARI, elle est tout bonnement absente de la liste des abréviations (alors que certains articles sont cités plus loin)! Mon chauvinisme blessé se console à la pensée que la série *Miscellanea Eblaitica* de nos collègues florentins (publiée dans la série *Quaderni di Semitistica*) est également passée sous silence. Qu'on se rassure: Ugarit n'est pas mieux traitée. Les synthèses parues dans le *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible* fascicules 52 et 53 (Paris, 1979) sont ignorées, de même que ... les sept volumes de la nouvelle série *Ras Shamra - Ugarit* parus entre 1983 et 1991. On aurait tort si l'on avait l'impression que la littérature en français a fait l'objet d'un certain ostracisme: le pauvre M. Liverani, qui a fait l'effort d'écrire en anglais son livre *Prestige and Interest. International Relations in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B. C.* (Padoue 1990), qui concerne la Syrie au premier chef, sera sûrement déçu de voir qu'il n'a été ni lu ni même mentionné...

Au total, ce recueil nous livre quelques articles intéressants ou utiles, mais sûrement pas une synthèse ni même un aperçu tant soi peu complet des nouveaux horizons dans l'étude de la Syrie antique: il est dommage que des savants américains comme J. Sasson ou D. Pardee n'aient pas été amenés à rédiger des contributions sur Mari ou Ugarit qui auraient pu rééquilibrer l'ensemble. Bref, un livre à ranger dans la série des occasions manquées. C'est bien dommage.

Paris.

Dominique Charpin.

Moshe Anbar, *Les tribus amurrites de Mari*. 248 pp. Freiburg (Schweiz), Universitätsverlag – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991 (= *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*, 108).

The work under review includes, as it were, two volumes in one: a Mari chronicle (some 50 pages long) and an Amorite gazetteer (about 130 pages). There is, in addition, a historical question, whether or not the Amorites were nomads in origin: it is posed in an introductory, bibliographical chapter, and is resolved in the affirmative in the conclusion.

The two major components present an accurate and up-to-date factual compendium of the data. The Mari "chronicle" (ch. 2) is a detailed listing of events, sorted by year names. The Amorite "gazetteer" reviews four topics, as they pertain in each case to what are considered

Amorite tribes, especially the Khaneans, Suteans, Bini-Yamina and Bini-Sim'al. The topics are: socio-political organization (chs. 3 and 5), geographical distribution (ch. 4), economy (ch. 6) and the relationships with the central government (ch. 7). Five maps locate sites and regions. There is a useful index of texts cited, but one misses a topical index and a bibliography (the bibliographical coverage in the introduction is thoughtful but quite selective).

Certain important aspects are ignored altogether, in particular the linguistic dimension: it is not so much that a discussion is not given (which in and of itself would be acceptable), but that the topic is not even referred to, its implications are not addressed, and its omission is not justified. The main drawback is a certain nominalistic approach to historical analysis, which is apparent especially in two respects. First, important matters of structure are barely hinted at. For instance, the listing of proposed terms for tribal units is presented as a structural study (p. 79), but hardly anything structural is said, other than for a cursory summary of comparative Arabic data. Elsewhere, too, ethnographic comparisons with Arab tribal organization are appended more as lexical footnotes than as guideposts for proper institutional analysis (e.g., pp. 149 and 154). The concept of a tribal federation (such as Khana or Sutu, see e.g. p. 132, 195) appears as little more than a vague term for something larger in size than the other tribes: but what are the mechanisms of control over the confederate members? who are its leaders? is there a "king" of the Suteans? what is the difference between "king of Khana" as a specific title with political implications and "kings of Khana" (in the plural) as a descriptive term? what does "king of Khana" mean when used specifically by the king of Mari in his titulary? why is the geographical distribution so fluid?

The second problem is that the prominence given to words as things can blur the very meaning of those words. For it is not so much the words in and of themselves that hold a key to their real significance, but their distribution into definable patterns. A case in point is the interpretation of DUMU *Yamīna* (and analogously DUMU *Sim'āl*). Anbar's choice (p. 83f., n. 324) to read this as the tribal name *Bini-Yamīna* is based on the literal correspondence with Hebrew Ben-Yamin, and on the understanding of *Yamīna* as meaning "South," in line with Arabic. But such a close reliance on the individual words does not do justice to a distributional pattern to which I have called attention in S. Eichler *et al.*, *Tall al-Ḥamīdiya 2*, Göttingen 1990, 105f.: in contrast with the so-called "Benjaminites," Khaneans and Suteans are not called *DUMU *Ha-na* or *DUMU *Su-tu-ú*, but rather LU₂ *Ha-na* and LU₂ *Su-tu-ú*. Since, in my view, the primary meaning of *yamīna* is not "the south" but "the right bank" (i.e., the steppe on the right side of the Euphrates; in modern term, the *shamiya*), DUMU *yamīna* would mean "son of the steppe," hence generically "nomad," much as DUMU *ugārim* means "son of the irrigation district," hence "peasant," and DUMU *ālim* "son of the city," hence "urban dweller." This ex-

plains the expressions, noted by Anbar, "Haneans DUMU *yamīna*" (pp. 78, 86f.): they are "nomadic Haneans," exactly like the "Haneans *ša nawīm*" (p. 171), as opposed to Haneans living in towns or cities. It also explains why often the term "sons of the steppe" is used with a disparaging tone (they are nomads viewed as barbarians), and why it is used seldom of single individuals, and then never of individuals with any status in the governmental administration (unlike the Haneans, who are so named). It may well be that the term DUMU *yamīna* came to be used occasionally in ways similar to LU₂ *Ḥana*, but the two cannot simply be equated. In particular, more of a justification should be given for using these and other analogous terms as the major sorting criteria for the material throughout the book.

Another question that bears on terminology is the very use in the title of the book of the name "Amorites" to refer to these tribes. After all, the term Amurru as such is frequent only in the third millennium, and then, in a revised connotation, in the latter part of the second. So, why do we use the term for the early second? Anbar barely touches on this question (p. 9), and from reading the main body of the book one might think it is about a different topic: Amurru appears only occasionally as a minor clan (e.g., pp. 78, 80, 83), and otherwise the Amorites are practically never mentioned as such outside of the introductory and concluding chapters. It seems legitimate to ask whether in fact the tribes studied by Anbar ever called themselves "Amorite." It would seem not. During the Old Babylonian period, covered by the book, the term is very seldom found in Mari, and in Babylon it occurs as a generic term that refers to part of the population; as the descriptive term for the dynasty of Hammurapi; as part of a title which defines a position of high rank in the army (*wakil Amurrim*, generally translated as "general"). But it is not used to refer to any specific tribe, nor to the ensemble of the tribes. Thus the title of the book is potentially misleading. In modern scholarly parlance, the term "Amorite" is applied to the linguistic domain, and by extension to the kingdoms ruled by dynasties with rulers bearing names in that language. The implication that the tribes themselves may be called "Amorite" is in principle justifiable on similar grounds, but one would like to see this issue addressed and the terminological choice properly explained.

As it stands, the book is a very useful philological update to Kupper's *Les Nomades*, but without a thorough application of methods and perspectives that have been introduced since 1957, so that it falls short of exploring historical issues and developing a proper historical argument. As an encyclopedic review of data it fills a need and serves a purpose, for which we are grateful to the author.

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