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The Domestication of Equidae in Third-Millennium BCE Mesopotamia by Juris Zarins with the assistance of Rick Hauser CDL Press

It has been forty years since the first edition of this book, as an Oriental Institute doctoral dissertation, was completed. Now, in a fully revised and much expanded study, CUSAS 24 presents a comprehensive discussion of the philological, historical, and archaeological evidence for the range of equidae known now from much of Western Asia after a century of intense study and excavation. The study provides a unique perspective from the viewpoint of field archaeologists on the complex issues associated with the physical study of the remains of equidae and their associated terminology in cuneiform sources as well as their artistic representation. The study integrates diverse and recently excavated data, which reflect a wide geographical and chronological range, with cuneiform sources and new artistic finds to create a synthesis that will serve as a basis for all future research on the subject.

The volume includes numerous illustrations, photos, and charts that enhance the presentation of the data. Equid representations recovered in Royal Storehouse AK at Urkesh figure prominently in sections about artistic representation; they are placed in the context of other research in cuneiform studies and archaeological documentation. In fact, it is they who offer incontrovertible evidence regarding the presence of domesticated equidae. Being subject to measurement (ratio, proportion, discrete measurement) and analysis of the relationship of diagnostic body parts to each other, the evidence they afford is subject to objective verification, whereas sealings and other pictorial representations are often difficult to identify with certainty.

The volume will be of interest to archaeologists, anthropologists, Assyriologists, and to all those interested in the role of equidae in the early history of Mesopotamia and Western Asia.

Table of Contents

I.	The Paleoz	ological Evidence for Equidae in Mesopotamia	a and
South	west Asia	11	

- 1.0 New Data 11
- 1.1 Introduction 11
- 1.2 The Relationship of Humans to Equidae in the Wild 13
- 1.3 Criteria for Skeletal Identification 17
- 1.4 Early Holocene Distribution of Equidae in Southwest Asia 32
- 1.5 Identification of Domestic Equidae Based on Skeletal Evidence 41
- 1.6 The Case for Domesticated Equidae in Southwest Asia and Mesopotamia 47
- 1.7 Domesticated Equidae in Northeast Africa 75

II. Artistic Representations of Equidae in Mesopotamia and	
Southwest Asia 93	
2.1 Introduction 97	
2.2 Equid Representations Prior to the Late Uruk Period 97	
2.3 Artistic Material from the Late Uruk and Jemdet Nasr Periods 105	
2.4 Artistic Material from Pre-Dynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt	
and the Levant 108	
2.5 Artistic Material from the ED I–II Periods 111	
2.6 Artistic Material from the ED III Period 121	
2.7 Artistic Material from the OAkk Period 141	
2.8 Artistic Material from the Ur III Period 144	
2.9 Early Second Millennium BCE Artistic Pieces 147	
2.10 A Concluding Remark	
III. The Cuneiform Evidence for Domesticated Equidae	
in Mesopotamia Primarily from the Third Millennium 149	
3.0 The Cuneiform Record 149	
3.1 Introduction 149	
3.2 General Problems of Translation 150	
3.3 Basic Cuneiform Equid Signs 151	
3.4 The Equid Sign in the Lexical Sources 157	
3.5 Suggested Meanings 159	
3.6 Definition of the Equid Species Encountered	
in the Third-Millennium BCE Texts 161	
3.7 Classification of Mesopotamian Equids in the Third Millennium BCE	176
3.8 Employment of Equids in Mesopotamia in the Third Millennium BCE	188
3.9 Equid Products Utilized in the Third Millennium BCE in Mesopotamia	220
3.10 Mesopotamian Feeding Practices of Equidae in the Third Millennium	
BCE 222	
3.11 Personnel Directly Associated with Equids in the Third Millennium	
BCE 230	
3.12 Population Estimates of Equids for Selected Units and Periods	
Appendix: Selected Cuneiform Texts 259	
I. Late Uruk Texts 259	
II. Jemdet Nasr-Period Texts 260	
III. Early Dynastic IIIA Period Texts 262	

1.8 *Equus caballus* 1.9 Hybrids

IV.

V.

Old Akkadian Period Texts

279 VI. Isin-Larsa and Old Babylonian Texts

Ur III Texts

83