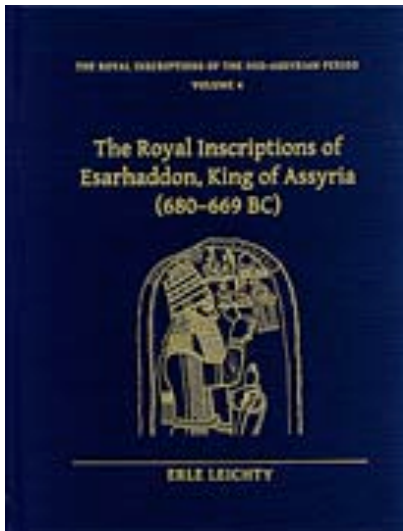


RBL 11/2012



Leichty, Erle

The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)

Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011. Pp. xxxv + 340.
Hardcover. \$89.50. ISBN 9781575062099.

Paul Sanders

Protestantse Theologische Universiteit
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

This inaugural volume of the series Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period (RINAP) comprises a large part of the textual corpus connected with King Esarhaddon. The series carries on where the now-defunct RIMA (Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods) series ended. It will also include volumes with inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727) and Shalmaneser V (726–722), of Esarhaddon’s grandfather Sargon II (721–705), and of Esarhaddon’s father Sennacherib (704–681). All of these mighty Assyrian kings are also mentioned in the Bible. For example, 1 Kgs 19:37 and Isa 37:38 refer to the murder of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon’s assumption of power.

The texts issued by Esarhaddon (Akkadian: *Aššur-aḫu-iddin* “Aššur has given a brother”) show how he wanted to be seen by his officials, his subjects, defeated peoples, and his enemies: as a king who was the favorite son of his father and who was elected by the gods, a king who restored cities, cult centers and cult statues with the consent of the gods, who defeated hostile kings and seized their treasures and gods, thanks to his own gods, a king who resettled defeated populations (cf. Ezra 4:2), who was as wise as the sage Adapa and whose deeds exceeded the deeds of all previous kings. Biblical scholars may recall that in his royal inscriptions Esarhaddon describes how the god Marduk punished the Babylonians for their sins and that he intended to do so for a long time. However, in his mercy Marduk decided to shorten the period and to restore the former prosperity of Babylon through the hands of Esarhaddon.

Not all the texts of Esarhaddon are included in the book. Apparently, the significant succession treaty of Esarhaddon from Tell Tayinat (see now J. Lauinger, *JCS* 64 [2012]: 87–123) was unearthed too late (2009). Neither does the volume reproduce the other treaty and oath texts that show correspondences with covenant texts in the Hebrew Bible, since they were already discussed by Simo Parpola and Kazuko Watanabe in *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* (SAA 2; Helsinki, 1988).

Leichty did not order the texts chronologically but according to their provenance: first the texts from Nineveh, then those from Aššur, Kalḫu and Tarbišu, and after them the texts from Anatolian, Syrian, and Babylonian find spots. In the case of each location, the order of the texts is based on the type of object on which the text is written: first the prisms, then the cylinders, the stone slabs, and so on. Many texts are attested on more than one exemplar. Text 1, for instance, comes from a virtually undamaged prism found in Nineveh and is commonly referred to as Nineveh A. However, certain parts of the text are also found on other prisms that are only partially preserved. Leichty does not treat them as other texts but as additional exemplars of text 1.

Most of the texts were issued by Esarhaddon himself. Among them are some lesser-known Assyrian hieroglyphic inscriptions (238–43; no. 115). For some texts in the volume, the relationship with the reign of Esarhaddon is dubious (284–313; nos. 1001–30). Also included are some inscriptions by royal women such as Esarhaddon's mother Naqī'a (or Zakūtu), who prays for her son's and her own well-being (313–24; nos. 2001–10).

The main purpose of the RINAP series is to provide basic text editions. Consequently, the general introduction of this volume is short (1–8). The introductions to the individual texts provide information about the various exemplars as well as a bibliography. Also, Leichty indicates clearly whether he collated the texts of the exemplars himself. If he did collate the text, he specifies whether he did so on the basis of photographs or the documents themselves. He appears to have collated numerous unpublished as well as previously published documents in museums and universities, which must have taken a significant amount of time. The Akkadian text is always accompanied by an English translation, but there are no discussions of interpretation and translation problems.

The CD-ROM in an envelope at the back of the book contains a PDF file: Leichty_Esarhaddon_Scores. The file is 372 pages long and can be copied from the CD-ROM. Contrary to the book, it shows the complete texts of the various exemplars. However, texts of which only one exemplar is extant and texts with only a small number of variants (nos. 60, 84, 88, 96, 126, 132) are found only in the book. In the PDF file, the first line of each section is the text that is also displayed in the book. This line is followed by the

readings of the exemplars, which makes it easy to notice variants. In the case of text 1, the first line is virtually always equal to the second line, the text of the nearly undamaged prism, exemplar 1. What follows are the readings of the more damaged exemplars 2–33. Here is the example of column v line 55, which in the book is translated as “Ba’alu, king of Tyre, Manasseh, king of Judah” (23):

55 ^mba-’a-lu LUGAL URU.ṣur-ri ^mme-na-si-i LUGAL URU.ia-ú-di
 1 ^mba-’a-lu LUGAL URU.ṣur-ri ^mme-na-si-i LUGAL URU.ia-ú-di
 2 ^mba-’a-lu LUGAL KUR.ṣur-ri ^mme-na-se-e LUGAL URU.ia-ú-di
 3–5 [...]
 6 ^mba-’a-DINGIR [...] LUGAL URU.ia-ú-[...]
 7–10 [...]
 11–18 [...]
 19 ^mba-’a-lu [...] ^mme-na-si-i’ [...]
 20–32 [...]
 33 ...

The text of the first line (after 55) is found in the book. The following lines with the readings of the exemplars are only found in the PDF file. However, the book does refer to the variants of the exemplars, in the section “Minor Variants and Comments” at the end of the book (327–32). The variants of text 1 column v line 55 are referred to as follows (328):

v 55.6 -DINGIR for -lu. v 55.2 KUR for first URU. v 55.2, 19 -se-e and -si-i’ respectively for -si-i.

The survey of the variants is much more precise than in Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons* (Graz, 1956). However, no reference is found to the variants in text 5 (= Nineveh F), a text that is very similar to text 1:

[^mme]-na-si-i MAN KUR.ia-u-di (p. 46)

Contrary to the RIMA series, this volume includes a useful index of proper names. There are also nineteen excellent photographs of inscriptions in the book. My only suggestion for the following volumes of the RINAP series would be to include all the texts in the PDF file on the CD-ROM, also the texts that are found on only one exemplar or texts with only a few variants. This will enable scholars to search also in these texts or to copy from them. I have not found any shortcomings or errors in the beautifully executed volume or in the PDF file, and I expect that the following volumes will meet the same high standard of quality.