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The book under review\textsuperscript{1} sets out to examine different aspects of the armed forces in the city of Sippar, based on the materials from the Ebabbar archive. It covers the Neo-Babylonian and the Achaemenid Empire, treating them as a single unit. The book is divided into two parts, the study (p. 1-51), and the text editions (p. 54-111).

Following an introduction, chapter two deals with the recruitment and organization of the temple contingents. It is divided into three sections, based on the military professions: infantry, cavalry and chariots. The third chapter deals with the units of free citizens and chapter four examines the fief system. The military officials and the chain of command are described in chapter five and six. Military campaigns are dealt with in chapter seven, as is the evidence for foreign prisoners of war in Sippar.

The second part of the book presents editions of 54 previously unpublished texts from the British Museum Sippar collection. The transliteration and translation are completed by copies made by Cornelia Wunsch. The commentary is kept to a minimum, which is expected given the straightforward administrative nature of the texts.

Every student of Late Babylonian socio-economic matters will read MacGinnis’ study with profit. The new and fruitful observations concerning the military organization that are particularly noteworthy include, i.a., the author’s suggestion that a pair of archers formed the basic unit of the temple archers, and that these pairs were then grouped together into an eight men decury unit (p. 7), and his reconstruction of the military chain of command from top (šarru) to bottom (širku) (p. 37). However, the main value of the book lies undoubtedly in the text editions. The copies are beautifully done, the transcriptions are precise and the translations are good and clear. The texts commentary, while justifiably concise as mentioned above, is quite informative and places the texts into their archival and historical context.\textsuperscript{2}

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\textsuperscript{2} Just occasionally, some of the prosopographical notes seem somewhat problematic; e.g., regarding the identification of a shepherd named Bēl-usātu (no. 20), MacGinnis (p. 77) points to three other attestations of a shepherd of this name, CT 55, 662, 684 (Nbn), and CTMMA 7.8.10 (8 Npl). Since there is a gap of at
As far as the general argument of the book is concerned, however, one cannot help but feel that the author’s exclusive focus on evidence from the Ebabbar in general, and on the newly published material in particular, results in a certain lack of depth in some of the discussions. Regarding a list of recruits for the bow service (text no. 1), for example, MacGinnis comments “it does seem extraordinary that one is a four-year old” (p. 5). Giving that it is indeed unlikely for a four-year old child to be drafted and sent to defend the empire, some other explanation or elaboration seems required: might this be a case of administrative window-dressing, a scribe or recruitment officer being forced to produce a complete list rather than a functional military unit?

The lack of sufficient documentation from Sippar is sometimes mentioned, e.g. with regards to the rab hanšê (p. 33). In this case, complementary material, such as the dossier of Zēru-ukīn/Pirʾu, a rab hanšê from Nippur, could certainly be of help. The discussion of issues such as weapons or the distinction between the civilian and the military duties of various officials could be taken further on the basis of dossiers from Sippar, e.g. the smiths file, and elsewhere.

As mentioned by MacGinnis in the preface, the research for the book was conducted in 2003. And so, more recent work which would have been pertinent for this book could not be taken into account. In text no. 19, for example, commentary is made regarding hi-re-e-

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3 See M. Jursa Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative Documents. Typology, Contents and Archives (GMTR 1), (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005), 115; and M. Jursa. Aspects of the economic history of Babylonia in the first millennium BC. Economic geography, economic mentalities, agriculture, the use of money and the problem of economic growth (AOAT 377), (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 649f.
4 The assumption that 40-60 arrows were issued per archer (p. 4) is based on just one text (no. 27), which in fact mentions 40-50 arrows per archer.
5 A list of varied assignments performed by the archers (p.10-11) should be mentioned here, but it refers only to the simple archers. Other than that, one can find only scattered remarks, e.g. regarding the rab meʾāti (p. 33).
6 Or at least the main task of working on the unpublished texts.
ti, la ği-iš-tu₄ (l. 3-4) and zikûtu (l. 7), with reference to the CAD and some further attestations of the words (p. 77). However, both terms have been elucidated in the meantime by C. Waerzeggers, who presents previous studies and interpretations, as well as a philological discussion.⁸ The discussion on the tašlišu (p. 16f.), which focuses mainly on the identification of the tašlišu with the kizû, could have benefited from the work of K. Kleber, who shows that the tašlišu was not necessarily a soldier, or even associated with chariots (2008, 114f.).⁹

Future research of the Babylonian military will build on MacGinnis’s results but might do well to broaden the corpus and the focus of research, not only geographically, but also with respect to the types of sources. One particularly promising text category is the epistolographic material which has hitherto not been taken into account systematically in this regard. For example, the important letter CT 22, 74 from the Egibi archive, mentioned only briefly on p. 17, is one of the few sources to mention explicitly the militia soldiers furnished by free urban families (l. 19: Ṽluérinmeš₄ du₄-mu-du₄ ia*), for which one should also note the Uruk evidence (YOS 3, 17 and YOS 21, 72; Kleber 2008, 103f.) – the fact that in the latter texts these men do labour service rather than military service emphasizes the need to study military recruitment together with other forms of levies of manpower. For military matters in a narrow sense note for instance a letter from Uruk, YOS 21, 8, which shows that 70 Akkadian arrowheads were worth one shekel of silver and that for the same amount one could buy 100 Cimmerian arrowheads, or eight ga-ra-nu-spear points.¹⁰ YOS 21, 31 (probably from Nippur) speaks of weapons (e.g. bow, arrows, bow cases) kept in a private house. Did private citizens manufacture weapons for the state; to which degree were Babylonians in general provided with armament? While one could continue in this vein, the examples quoted may suffice to make the point: the letters can enrich our knowledge with respect to the material culture of the military and by providing contexts which are often missing in the administrative material.
In conclusion, notwithstanding some shortcomings of the study part that may be due to the long history of the manuscript, the book makes available to scholars numerous previously unpublished texts with good quality translations, transliterations and copies, and raises some fascinating questions and presents interesting new ideas and insights. The book will thus undoubtedly serve future research, and the author deserves the gratitude of the field for this important contribution to Late Babylonian studies.