A. C. V. M. BONGENAAR, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple at Sippar: its Administration and its Prosopography*. PIHANS, 80. Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1997. ISBN 90 6258 081 5. Pp. xviii, 559, 6 pl., tab. Hfl. 95,--/ c. $48.00.

The book discusses the personnel of the famous temple during the late period thoroughly by presenting a complete prosopography from all the texts available to the author. It shows readers a detailed picture of economic life in the temple during the period. In chapter one, the author introduces the background of research on temple texts in the Neo-Babylonian period. In 1881-1882, more than 35,000 tablets and fragments were excavated from the Ebabbar temple of the Sun god in the North Babylonian city of Sippar, which are kept in the British Museum. The documents covered the period from 626 B.C. to 484 B.C., and include the records of the entire reign of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty and the early part of Persian rule, ending with the second year of the reign of Xerxes. All the relevant kings' names, regnal years, and abbreviations are given in the introduction.

The archive of the Ebabbar temple in Sippar was one of only two large and important temple archives from this period which have been found; the other is the archive in the Eanna temple to Inanna in the southern Babylonian city of Uruk. After having read this book and compared it to the Old Sumerian administrative texts of Lagash of about 2400 B.C., which I have studied extensively, it seems to me that the temple and palace economic system of Mesopotamia changed little through its entire history. Until the late Babylonian period, the slave based society of the ancient world and the stagnant temple and palace economic system had maintained Mesopotamian civilisation for two and a half millennia. It is its old and dying economic system that doomed this once greatest civilisation in the ancient world to disappear forever within a century of the advent of Persian rule.

In chapter two, the officials of the temple are listed. During the Assyrian period, the head of the temple, or bishop, was called šatammu and when Nabopolassar established the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, he changed the title to sangũ, an archaic word possibly from the Sumerian for "head" (similar to the Chinese shou, "head", or shang "top"), and called the temple head with the city's name, the sangũ of Sippar. In the table on p. 12, and the prosopography on the pages following 26, the

author gives the backgrounds and other preserved information about all the known bishops of Sippar during this period. It is noticeable that many bishops has a duty period of about 12 years or less; only Ebabbar-šadunu (Nbp 20-21, Nbk 1-21?) was in office more than 20 years. That may indicate that the normal term of office for a bishop of the temple was about 12 years.

Both Bishops Ina-Esagila-lilbur and Guzanu were the sons of Nabu-šum-ukin, the governor of Babylon possibly during the first 12 years of the reign of Darius (attested in Dar 12, see p. 9). The brother bishops were later promoted to the position of the governor of Babylon after their father retired. Ina-Esagila-lilbur possibly took the job after his 12 years of duty as the Bishop of Sippar and executed the governorship for another 12 years (Dar 13? – 24, attested in Dar 22 – 24). Guzanu took the governorship from his elder brother possibly when he finished his 12 years of duty in Sippar (Dar 13 – 24) and possibly executed the governorship for another 12 years until the end of the reign of Darius (Dar 25 – 36?, attested in Dar 25 – 28). The family of Nabu-šum-ukin, son of Šanašišu, must have dominated the Babylon-Sippar district during the reign of Darius. The duty periods of the three family members in the governorship may indicate that the term of office was also generally 12 years during the reign of Darius.

The prosopography of the top officials at the side of the bishops of Sippar, whom the author translated as "the Resident (of Ebabbar)", is presented in chapter II-3. Since the Akkadian word means "trustworthy one", and this high-ranking office was connected to the palace, the better translation probably is "the (royal) commissioner (of Ebabbar)". The office of the royal commissioner was under the office of the chief of a temple (šatammu) during the Assyrian period. When the Nabopolassar removed the title of šatammu from Sippar and changed it to sangũ, he also raised his commissioner in Ebabbar above the bishop of Sippar; from the reign of Cambyses, the royal commissioner returned to second place. The main function of the commissioner was to supervise the workshops in the temple. According to the table and a food ration list (Nabu-nidus 10 i/4) in pages 35 and following, the royal commissioner of Ebabbar, represented by one of his chiefs of ten men, monthly received barley and dates from the temple for his 50 labourers, two carpenters, one smith, ten livestock and chariot managers (kizû), himself and a foreman of the oblates. The workforce of the commissioner in the temple and Sippar,

which also was called the workforce of the suburb, in Nbk 23 reached a maximum of 144 men. The foremen of the oblates, the temple slaves, under the commissioner, supervising the temple slaves of Šamaš, were usually assigned to making bricks and baked bricks for the temple (2000 baked bricks were made by them in Nbn 12, viii, see page 43). The workforce was also sent to dig or maintain the canals of Sippar: once 4200 baked bricks and 210 talents (talent = 30 kg.) of bitumen were assigned to the commissioner for the embankments of the canal in Nbn 15.

Although the author identifies kizû with "the third rider of a chariot", he thought that he did not actually ride in a chariot as the texts of the temples would imply and misunderstood the term officer "guard(s)". It seems to me that the kizû was definitely an official for chariot, possibly "the third rider of a chariot", a meaning which has parallels in the Sumerian period. The commissioner certainly needed the chariot officers as his guard (or driver) on chariot and as his horse managers during his business travels. According to the prosopography in pages 47 and following, the duty periods of the commissioners were often longer than those of the bishops: Šamaš-ra'im-šarri 13 (?) years (Kad 6 – 19?, attested in 6 – 9). Bel-epuš 3 years (Kand 20 –21, Sšl 1), Bel-ušallim 30? years (Nbp 18 – 21, Nbk 1 – 26?, attested in 4), Nabu-bala-uereš 23 years (Nbk 27 – 43, AmM 1 – 2, Ner 1 – 4?, attested in 2), Nergal-šarra-bulli 7 years (Nbn 1 – 7), Bel-ahhe-iqiša 15 years (Nbn 8 – 17, Cyr 1 – 5), Šarru-lu-dari 19 years (Cyr 6 – 9, Cam 1 – 8, Dar 1 – 7), Ina-illi-šarri 17 years (Dar 8 – 24), Šamaya 9? Years (Dar 26 – 34?), Ubar ? (Dar 35 - ). According to the prosopography in pages 50 and following, the subordinates of a commissioner were the messengers, the foremen of the temple slaves, the alphabet scribes, the chief of ten men, deputies (šanû) and slaves (qallu) of commissioners, and boatmen.

The third ranking officials of the temple, the scribe of Ebabbar or the scribe of the temple, is introduced in section 4 from page 56. The number of these officials increased to five after Nabonidus became the king. Meanwhile, the king sent two royal servants, who could be eunuchs, to every important temple as its treasurer (ša muhhi quppi or rab quppi) and the supervisor (bel piqitti), possibly for securing the taxes flowing from the temples to the palace (section 5). The subordinates of the treasures were cashiers, "the guardians of the cash boxes".

The chief of the prison of Sippar, introduced in section 6, probably did not belong to the temple but was an agent associated with the

temple, since the temple did not seem to have the right to arrest citizens. The prisoners were the work force of the city mills so the temple delivered barley to the prison and took back flour. Section 7 presents the following foremen and officials related to the temple:

> Chief of the palace slaves (a building profession), chiefs of herds, a chief of ploughs, a chief of farmers, a chief of ten men, chiefs of 50 men, chiefs of 100 men (centurion), or of a section (KUD-um), a chief of boatmen, chiefs of accounts, chiefs of bows, of "arrowheads (? sikkati "peg")", of the temple's rent-collecting, of physicians, of diviners, superintendents, a chief of the quay, of fodder, a royal chief of water, of the royal gardeners, of cattle pens, the ibtu tax collectors, chiefs of merchants, and chiefs of craftsmen.

Chapters 3 and 4 are on the dependencies of the temple, i.e. the servants and slaves who economically depended on the temple. The persons receiving rations from the temple were exorcists, fullers, gate keepers, fishermen, weavers, builders, goldsmiths, (land) measurers, boatmen, singers, two kinds of cooks (mubannû, nuhatimmû), potters, gardeners, brewers, oil pressers, and butchers. The same professionals received rations from the pre-Sargonic period, which may show that the temple system of Mesopotamia changed little from the earliest period. The overseer of the professionals of Ebabbar was called piru (PA), and the head of the temple during the Sumerian period was also called šabra (PA+AL), which may have been an Akkadian loan word. The "temple enterers" of Šamaš (p. 147) possibly were the elders of the temple, and the kiništu (p. 150), the "submitted ones" (kan-šu "to submit to someone") were the lower ranking personnel of a temple. In YOS 6, 77: 27, three classes of persons are mentioned: the temple's elders (lú ku4-é-meš), the submitted ones and the freemen (of the city).

As in the Sumerian period, two of the important professionals in the temple were bakers (MU), who were understood to be cooks in the Ur III and earlier administrative documents, and brewers (bappir3), which are treated in III. 3 – 4. The prosopography of oil pressers is presented in III.6. Chapter III.7 lists small groups of professionals of the temple: exorcists, boatmen, singers, measurers, mubannû cooks and butchers. The

measurers possibly did not measure "barley and dates", as the author suggests, but the land according to the field rent texts (AfO Bht 25, 138 – 39) and the Old Sumerian éš-gid. "one who measures (land) with a rope.

The craftsmen of the temple are arranged in chapter IV. They were textile workers, fullers, the goat hair sack makers (saqqaia), clothes menders (túg-kal-kal/mukabbu), smiths, carpenters, reed workers and leather workers. The textile workers were divided into general wool weavers, the coloured wool weavers (lú-uš-bar birmi), who included dyers ($abû), and linen weavers (lú-uš-bar/kitê). There were three kinds of smiths in the temple of Sippar: the blacksmith (lú-simug an-bar), the bronze smith (lú-simug zabar) and gold smith (lú-kù-tim/dim). The herdsmen of the cattle and flocks for offerings are presented in IV.5.

In addition to the text there are three appendices, indices, and transcriptions of six tablets. The prosopography of the sub-landlords of the temple land (ša muhhi suti), the collectors of the temple tax, and the tithes (ša muhhi ešri) is given in Appendix A. These two professions were probably invented in the Old or Middle Babylonian period since they are not found in the Sumerian texts. Appendix B includes the names belonging to the five great families of the temple: four noble ones and one of the oil pressers. Appendix C is the list of all the scribes of the temple, both cuneiform ones and alphabet ones.

This book gives a very detailed introduction to the Sippar temple archive for the students and scholars who would investigate the economic system of the late period of Mesopotamian civilisation. Its nearly complete prosopography of the texts from the Ebabbar temple in Sippar and up-dated bibliography about those ancient tablets will make it become a necessary and useful reference book for those readers.

Wu Yuhong
Northeast Normal University/University of Pennsylvania Museum