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The work reviewed here is a dissertation conceptualized as an interdisciplinary study on the demon Samanu in Mesopotamian and Egyptian textual sources, a topic which has hitherto not been adequately treated. The book consists of the following chapters. Part 1 outlines thematical and methodical issues. It is notable that the material is structured according to illnesses on the one hand and test cases of human beings, animals, plants, rivers, and insects on the other. Part 2 investigates the Mesopotamian corpus. The tablets are sampled with information about provenance, collection, measurements and bibliographical data. The relevant texts are then presented together with transcriptions, translations, and commentary. The text base as such is arranged thematically, typologically and chronologically. In part 3 the Egyptian corpus is taken into consideration, the working base being structured according to typological and chronological criteria. The texts are presented in hieroglyphic script, transliteration, translation, and commentary. In part 4 the character of Samanu is described in a broader context. Ample evidence for the distribution of the demon Samanu in texts from Mesopotamia, Mari, Sultantepe, Bogazköy and Ugarit is provided (p. 171). The oldest examples date from the IIIrd dynasty of Ur, the most recent one stemming from the year 123 BC (p. 171).

The demon was regarded as harmful for gods and human beings on the one hand and for animals, plants and rivers on the other (p. 171). The word “sāmānu” is traced back by the author etymologically to the root “sāmu” meaning “red“ (p. 172). The oldest Egyptian reference is known from the 18th dynasty, the most recent one dating ca. 300-250 BC (p. 174). In Egypt,

only human beings seem to have fallen victim to the demon (p. 174). The expression “šmn.w” can be found in Egypt coupled with the term “ḥ.w”. The doglike manifestation of Samanu is explained, the Mesopotamian attestations of which cover a time span from the 3rd dynasty of Ur to the neoassyrian/neobabylonian period (p. 176). An isolated Egyptian example for this feature can be dated in the 19th/20th dynasty (p. 176). The role of Samanu as a plague of gods is dealt with, the Mesopotamian texts being confined to the 3rd dynasty of Ur (p. 181). In the Egyptian environment, Samanu seems to appear as a plague of gods only in pLeyden Papyrus I 343+345 v: x 10-11 from the 19th/20th dynasty (p. 181).

As to the quality of Samanu as an illness of human beings the Mesopotamian textual sources stretch from the 3rd dynasty of Ur to Hellenistic times (p. 182), while the Egyptian ones are distributed from the New Kingdom to ca. 300 BCE (p.184). In the Mesopotamian world, Samanu is often linked with skin illnesses, and the possibility of this referring to leishmaniasis is critically evaluated (p. 187). In Mesopotamian magical and lexical texts Samanu can show up as a sheep illness, for which foot-and-mouth disease is suggested by the author (pp. 193-194). The occurrence of Samanu as cow illness in passages from the 3rd dynasty of Ur and the neoassyrian/ neobabylonian period is briefly outlined, and this is tentatively interpreted as loss of the horny sheath or a fracture of the core of the horn (pp. 195-6). In the 3rd dynasty of Ur, instances of Samanu as an illness of asses can be observed, and a proposal for this is acanthom or the juvenile form of papillomatosis (p. 199). In the next section, Samanu as plant illness is introduced, the Mesopotamian attestations for which range from the 3rd dynasty of Ur to the 2nd cent. BCE (p. 199). In the overwhelming majority of cases barley is affected by the illness, behind which leaf rust can be assumed (p. 199). The individual characteristics of Samanu as a damage causing insect are discussed, most sources of which stem from the neoassyrian period (204). The insect is identified by its red color as saddle gall midge, cereal leaf beetle (*Oulema melanopus* L) or scale insect (*Porphyrophora tritici*, Bodenheimer and *P. polonica* L.) (p. 206). In some cases, Samanu appears as a phenomenon of the river, the Mesopotamian attestations of which can be assigned to the 3rd dynasty of Ur to the 1st. millennium BCE. The red color of the water is explained as going back to the influence of algae or sediments (p. 208).

The therapeutic counter measures enacted by the ancient magicians/doctors in their attempts to overcome Samanu are also looked at, a distinction being made between plant and animal substances (pp. 209-10). The products and options for their use are subjected to a careful analysis. In the commentary, however, a sharper distinction should have been made between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian material, because the use of amulets for combating Samanu is

documented in Egypt on some occasions, while it seems to be totally missing in Mesopotamia (p. 231). At the same time conjurations were practiced against the demon in both cultures (p. 231).

Parts 5 and 6 develop the analysis in other ways. In Part 5 features of the transfer of knowledge are investigated. As far as can be judged from the themes in Leyden Papyrus I 343+345, this process must have included the Canaanite culture sphere (p. 242). In Part 6 a number of general conclusions are drawn. The Mesopotamian sources represent conjurations, diagnostic texts, recipes, omnia, lexical lists, and astronomic diaries, while the Egyptian ones encompass only conjurations with recipes and medical remedies (p. 251). Samanu is explained as an Akkadic loan word in Sumerian (p. 251). The vocabulary treated in the preceding study is summed up in the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Egyptian glossaries (p. 253-285). The book is rounded off by the extensive bibliography (pp. 293-337) and indices (pp. 339-360).

The following information may contribute to a better understanding of certain details:

pp. 50-51: for BAM 409 Vs. (!) 14'-20' cf. now Nils P. Heeßel, "Medizinische Texte aus dem alten Mesopotamien", in: Annette Imhausen/Tanja Pommerening (Eds.), *Translating Writings of early Scholars in the ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece and Rome, Methodological Aspects with Examples*, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde Band 344 (Berlin-Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 40ff;

p. 107: for "g3ii" "grass of the oasis" cf. Agnes Lühtrath, "Das Kyphirezept," in: Dieter Kurth (Hrsg.), *Edfu: Bericht über drei Surveys, Materialien und Studien*, Die Inschriften des Tempels von Edfu, Begleitheft 5 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 132-133; Joris F. Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*, Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden 51 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 23;

p.109: for the word "ktp" "sword" cf. R. T. o'Callaghan, "The word ktp in Ugaritic and Egypto-Canaanite Mythology," *Orientalia* 21 (1952): 37-42; Wilfred G. E. Watson, "Non-Semitic Words in the Ugaritic Lexicon," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 27 (1995): 545-546; Pierre Meyrat, "The First Column of Apis Embalming Ritual, Papyrus Zagreb 597-2\*," in: Joachim Friedrich Quack (Hrsg.), *Ägyptische Rituale der griechisch-römischen Zeit*, Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 276; Thomas Schneider, "Fremdwörter in der ägyptischen Militärsprache des Neuen Reiches und ein Bravourstück des Elitesoldaten (Papyrus Anastasi I 23, 2-7)," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 35 (2008): 192;

- p. 108: for the writing “ptri“ for “pri“ cf. Holger Kockelmann/Erich Winter, *Philae III, Die Zweite Ostkolonnade des Tempels der Isis in Philae (CO II und CO II K), Teil 1: Text*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Denkschriften der Gesamtakademie, Band LXXVIII (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2016), 67;
- p. 109: for the writing “wʿrd“ for “wʿr“ cf. Alan H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 7 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1937), 3a; Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Lesefunde im literarischen Steinbruch von Deir el-Medineh*, Kleine Ägyptische Texte 12 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997), 20
- p. 116: for the god/semigod (?) “mšr“ cf. Mourad Zaki Allam, *Papyrus Berlin 3031, Totentexte der 21. Dynastie mit und ohne Parallelen* (Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, 1992), 185; for the combination of Samanu and the ass in Mag Pap Leyden I 343 rt. 3/l. 7 cf. now Ingrid Bohms, *Säugetiere in der altägyptischen Literatur*, Ägyptologie 2 (Berlin-Münster-Wien-Zürich-London: LIT Verlag, 2013), 57-58;
- p. 117: for the “ttm“-plant cf. Rainer Hannig, “Beiträge zur Lexikographie I: Mögliche Phantomwörter in HL I,“ in: Gabor Takács (ed.), *Egyptian and Semito-Hamitic (Afro-Asiatic) Studies in Memoriam W. Vycichl*, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 39 (Leiden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2004), 92; for the phrase “ḏw n ḥmrk“ “the mountain of Ḥmrk“ cf. H. S. Smith, “Some Coptic Etymologies,“ *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 61 (1975): 200;
- p. 118: for the writing “ḥwi“ “to beat“ with “t“ cf. Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical II* (Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, LTD Boad Street, 1979), 69, 7/ 86, 1; Alan W. Shorter, “A Magical Ostrakon,“ *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 22 (1936), Plate VIII, 1.

In conclusion it may be said that this book affords a useful window on the role played by the demon Samanu in Western Asia and Egypt and the reader is put in a position to understand the most important aspects which arise.

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