



Abstract

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Ideology and Administration in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon

The sizable corpus of inscriptions composed in the name of Nebuchadnezzar II (NBK), King of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (605–563 BCE) offers rich opportunities for studying the socio-cultural dynamics during his reign. Following the recent achievements in interpreting the Neo-Babylonian primary sources by Rocio Da Riva and Michael Jursa's team in Vienna, my paper investigates the workings of the political and religious ideologies within the world he once lived, on the strength of NBK's inscriptions.

A starting point is establishing a chronological sequence for NBK inscriptions, a classic issue in the studies of the NBK corpus because of the historical ambiguity imposed by the lack of a written dating as well as the archaeological context. So far, the only attempt was made by Stephen Langdon in 1912, but his theory has long been disproved. My suggested sequence is created by integrating multiple 'external sources', i.e. archaeological data and the textual sources belonging to the corpus of the administrative texts in temple archives. For the archaeology I rely on Olof Pedersén's review of Koldewey's excavation report. Combining this with the texts from the archives of the Eanna and Ebabbar temples, we can generate chronological anchor points. For instance, when both data sets are combined, we obtain a relatively concrete historical reference for the construction of the North Palace: at least between NBK's 19th to 29th regnal year.

This chronological sequence introduces a new dimension into the analysis of the inscriptions, making it possible to look into the historical development of the corpus, especially with the inscriptions from Babylon. This yields insights into the intellectual and political history of NBK's reign.