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Cultural interaction between Assyria and the Northern Zagros

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Stellingen van Dlshad Marf bij het proefschrift “Cultural Interaction between Assyria and the Northern Zagros”

1. Part of the city of Musasir depicted on a relief in the palace of Sargon II in Dur-Sharrukin is called by P. Albenda “*a four-storied building*,” (Albenda 1986:91) and by L. Oppenheim “*multistoried buildings*.” However, the relief shows the private houses on the slope of a mountain. A similar way of building houses can still be seen in traditional villages in the Zagros (chapter IV, 4.7).

2. Two statues discovered in Mdjeser (Musasir) in the 1970s have been understood by R. Boehmer as an example of the local Assyrian style of the 9th century BCE. However, they are in fact Scythian funeral statues (chapter I, p.35; III, p.271; IV, p.380ff).

3. K. Radner understands “*the city of the raven*” on the seal of Urzana of Musasir as a metaphor for the god Haldi. She assumes that in the Roman period Mithra was a facet of Haldi, and she supposes that there are underground temples of Mithra in the Bradost caves. However, the mentioned ‘city of the raven’ was not a metaphor for Haldi, but a metaphor for the houses built on the mountain slope. There are no ‘underground temples’ in the Bradost caves.

4. The Assyrians practiced the policy of renaming occupied cities in the Northern Zagros. Twelve cities were renamed. Since almost all of them were important commercial cities, their name contained the word *kārum* (“trading station”). This procedure shows that Assyrian presence, both commercially and economically, was strong in these cities.

5. According to the Old Testament the Babylonian king Belshazzar gave Daniel a purple garment, and also in Assyria purple garments were given as a royal gift. Sennacherib dressed a Mannean delegation in such garments, and the Assyrian deputy in Media dressed a Median who worked as an Assyrian agent in a purple garment. Purple garments as royal gifts were thus preferred in Babylonia, Assyria, as well as in the Northern Zagros (chapter II, 2.7.6).

6. Although Hasanlu adopted characteristics from the west, the style jars with relief decoration discovered in the Diana plain and a knob style stamp seal discovered in Erbil show that cultural influence also spread from Hasanlu to the west (chapter III, 3.5 and 3.10).

7. A. Tenu (Tenu 2009:170) and later C. Pappi (van Soldt, et al., 2013: 220, note 78) refer to an existing Assyrian palace in Tell Basmusian in the Rania plain. However, no palace has been discovered, and the Middle Assyrian tablets discovered in Basmusian do not mention such a palace (chapter IV).

8. As is clear from Mesopotamian literature, Zagros is used as ‘the Orient’ of Mesopotamia. Its landscape and people were used as a metaphor in the Mesopotamian epics and myths, and according to the Epic of Gilgamesh the ark landed on Mount Nišir. The Zagros was also the place where the Anzu bird was born, where the sun god Shamash rose, and where deities live (chapter II, 2.4).

9. The origin of the golden jug of the tomb of Nimrud has not been discussed by scholars. The carved scenes and the iconography of the figures on this jug prove that it is not made by an Assyrian, it came from the Northeast (chapter III, p. 256f).