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Redemption in the Old Babylonian Period: texts, archives, practice

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STELLINGEN

I. The text CUSAS 10 18 (= CUSAS 43 65) is, or is a witness to, the first extant royal edict from Mesopotamia mandating the return of property, and its contents originated from the chancery of Rīm-Sîn I of Larsa.
II. The *mīšarum*-edict of Samsu-iluna king of Babylon, issued upon his accession to the throne, incorporated provisions from Rīm-Sîn I's edict tradition, a borrowing and adoption that most likely originated with Samsu-iluna's father Ḫammurabi upon the annexation of Larsa.
III. The force behind the traditional right of redemption (of property and persons) lay in the social, religious and familial need to maintain the integrity of the *bīt abim* "paternal estate".
IV. The effective working of the traditional right of redemption relied upon trusted counterparties and even networks that extended beyond the immediate family.
V. The continued spread of a strong written customary tradition in the Old Babylonian period was helped not hindered by the adoption (with local variation) of Sumerian contractual register by Akkadian speakers.
VI. Full editions of the late Old Babylonian manuscripts of the law collection of Ḫammurabi would shed important light on its native reception and early transmission.
VII. Cuneiform diplomatic has value not only for classifying and understanding legal and administrative documents but all text genres.
VIII. As Landsberger knew, an Assyriologist must possess 'Donegality'.
IX. The Humanities still need Giambattista Vico.