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Cover illustrations from Ingvarsson *et al.* in this volume, p. 23.

In the end this book, although deserving some criticism, does fill an important research gap. Especially the studies on aqueducts in modern Greece are important. By making this material available the volume will surely be sought after by students and scholars interested in the Roman water supply in the area.

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L. Badre, E. Capet & B. Vitale, *Tell Kazel au Bronze Récent. Études céramiques* (BAH, 211), Beyrouth: Institut français du Proche-Orient 2018. 252 pp., 195 figs., 59 pls. and 2 plans. ISBN 978-2-35159-740-8.

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This book stems from an article that was programmed to be included in the third and final volume of the series *Céramiques de l'âge du Bronze en Syrie* published in the BAH Beyrouth series by the Institut français du Proche-Orient (p. 9). While the enterprise is to be lauded because of the unfortunate situation in Syria and the resulting lack of fresh archaeological data available from the country, this book demonstrates the pitfalls of formatting hastily an article into a book.

The book has two main sections: one mainly dedicated to the local ceramic material authored by L. Badre and E. Capet (with two brief contributions on the Cypriot [pp. 45–47] and Mycenaean pottery [pp. 47–50] by B. Vitale and R. Jung) and the other to the Cypriot Bronze Age ceramics penned by the late B. Vitale who died a few weeks before the book was published. As it is stated in the Avant-propos (p. 9), the book proposes a catalog of 500 pottery vessels found at Tell Kazel and the neighboring Tell Arqa (Lebanon) located on the southern edge of the Akkar Plain.

The main forte of this publication is the pottery presentation and discussion which is the essence of the enterprise. Any scholar working on the Late Bronze Age—the period between 1550/1500 and 1175 BC—will welcome the abundant pottery catalog offered in this publication as well as the detailed discussion on the different types and their manufacturing and finishing techniques. Photographs of objects are also included and offer a concrete visual appreciation of their corresponding drawings.

However, there are quite a few hindrances that impede the valid abovementioned achievements of the book. Because of space constraint, only the main ones are listed in this review.

It is particularly unfortunate that there is barely any discussion on the stratigraphy of Tell Kazel where the authors have worked for more than 25 years. Only one page (p. 14)

gives a glance at the rich architecture of the *Chantiers* II and IV. The addition would have been particularly welcome for better contextualizing the *Tableau* 2 (p. 20) listing the proposed chronostratigraphy of the Akkar Plain as well as the ceramics. One can understand that stratigraphical discussions will be included in future final excavations reports (such as B. Chiti's forthcoming publication *Tell Kazel (Syria)*, for which she has received in 2016 a Shelby White-Leon Levy Publication Grant) but pottery studies particularly warrant an accompanying presentation of the related architecture and of the contexts where pottery types in particular first appeared/disappeared. A listing of contexts included in an annex would have offered an easy way to check the find-spot of each vase.

The authors start with a brief overview (pp. 11–14) of the historical and political situation in the Akkar area which is assimilated to the *Trouée de Homs*. While the main topic of the book is not history *per se*, this section would have benefitted from adding a few more references that would have better appraised the archaeology of this region. For example, the authors write that the *Trouée* of Homs is “a *province méridionale de l'empire Hittite*” during the middle of the 14th century BC (p. 12) relying mainly on the research work of I. Singer. Unlike Tell Kazel that has yielded Hittite/Hittite-like objects (such as the fusiform bottles), Tell Arqa has yet to offer any archaeological layers or objects that substantiate this claim, raising thus the question on the extension of the Hittite influence south of the Nahr el-Kebir. In footnote 7 of p. 12, the authors suggest that Arqa was also the capital of the kingdom of Amurru under Abdi-Ashirta according to the Amarna Tablets. This theory was put forth in the book *Inscribed in clay* (Tell Aviv 2004) in which Y. Goren, I. Finkelstein and N. Na'aman offered this possibility based on the petrographic analyses of the Amarna Tablets sent from Tell Arqa. It is quite surprising that this book is not even cited by Badre *et al.* in their discussion of the role of Arqa during the 14th century BC.

On p. 13, the overview of the surveys done in the Akkar Plain does not mention the German surveys undertaken in 1997 and 1998 or cite K. Bartl's preliminary reports ('Akkar Survey 1997', *Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises* 3, 1998–1999, 169–179; 'Archäologische Untersuchungen der südlichen Akkar-Ebene, Nordlibanon', in *Ausgrabungen und surveys im Vorderen Orient* 1, ed. R. Eichmann, Rahden 2002, 23–48; 'Ancient settlements in the Plain of Akkar/Northern Lebanon', *Occident et Orient*, 2002, 2–4).

The authors write on p. 13 that Tell Arqa was excavated by J.-P. Thalmann since 1972. This is incorrect as the Arqa excavations started in 1972 under the directorship of E. Will, then director of the Institut français du Proche-Orient, until Thalmann took over in 1978.

The chart on p. 20 (*Tableau 2*) ends the Late Bronze Age I, using Arqa's Level 12 data, at 1450 BC. This is quite high for the stratigraphy found at Arqa. Level 12 has three sublevels, one of which (12B) was totally destroyed presumably by Thutmose III during his 16th or 17th Asiatic campaign (his 42nd regnal year). According to the middle chronology used by K. Kitchen ('The basics of Egyptian chronology in relation to the Bronze Age', in *High, Middle or Low?*, ed. P. Åström, Gothenburg, 1987, 37–55), this year should be placed around 1437 BC, making the end of Phase L later than the 1450 BC advocated by the authors. In any case, authors should have referred to the chronological system they used in the book since absolute dates in Ancient Near Eastern chronology are still a contentious topic.

Even though the major ceramics categories are well described, the Chocolate Ware (*sic*) cited on p. 25 remains a mystery. The authors mention this type of ware—without including any sort of description or figure plate—referring only to Capet's publication of 2003 (in *Berytus XLVII*), pp. 90–91. However, these latter pages of the cited article do not mention at all any Chocolate Ware. The only "Chocolate Ware" that is known in Ancient Near Eastern ceramics is the Chocolate-on-White Ware dated to the end of the Middle Bronze Age and to the Late Bronze Age I (cf. P. Fischer, 'Chocolate-on-White Ware', *BASOR* 313, 1999, 1–29).

While the discussion on the technological and morphological characteristics of the ceramic assemblage is abundant and very detailed (pp. 20–49), the section on the typo-chronological concordances in the conclusion (pp. 53–57) is almost unusable. The authors unrolled indistinctively for each site a litany of types with their stratigraphical attributions in their respective sites and in the Akkar system making the comparative appreciation for the parallel sites extremely difficult and frustrating. It would have been much better had these similarities/differences been summarized in charts for each site. A series of maps showing the distribution of certain ceramic types across the Ancient Near East would have also offered a quicker and easier way to gauge the representativeness of pottery types.

The editing issues are one of the main hindrance to the success of this book and they are far too many to ignore. This is quite surprising and unfortunate from an established publication such as Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique.

The two sections of the book dealing with the local and Cypriot pottery are not similarly formatted which reflects badly on the book as one has the impression that the authors (or the publisher?) rushed into the printing process without attempting to homogenize the two parts.

Plate references to Tell Arqa's ceramics are not homogeneously formatted: for example, p. 58, pl. I: 79/463a.1, pl.

106.17 while on p. 68, pl. VI, object no. 71 is rendered as Arqa, pl. 123.4, 81/659.1 and on p. 70, pl. VII, object no. 83 is rendered as Arqa 107.8, 79/498.1.

Drawings are excellent but some of Arqa's ceramics (such as pl. VIII: 77; pl. XII: 157; pl. XV: 212; and pl. XXXIX: 453) are of a lesser quality because they were scanned from Thalmann's 2006 publication (*Tell Arqa-I* [BAH, 177], Beyrouth 2006). In my opinion, the editor should have asked the authors to re-draw digitally the scanned objects.

The chart of p. 20 (*Tableau 2*) is very aggressive visually with narrow margins and an abundance of numbers and percentages. It's understandable that the authors want to fit all data in one chart. Still, it's very crowded and extremely strenuous to read.

Weaknesses in grammar are to be noted in some parts of the text. For example, in the sentence: "*Il est plus probable qu'il profita...*" (p. 12), *profita* requires the subjunctive mode (*profitât*). Same correction for *entérina* (*entérinât*).

Typos are also peppered in the text: "*La situation crée...*" (p. 12) needs to be corrected to *créée*. *Désordre créés* (p. 13) should be *désordres créés*. *Ardée* should be spelled *Ardé* (p. 11). On p. 12, *Beqaa* should be spelled *Béqaa* following the French transliteration used elsewhere in the book. On p. 11, footnote 3 replicates footnote 2 (Singer 1991a) but should be referring instead to Kestemont. On p. 23, *fig* is followed by a semi-colon (*fig;*) instead of a period (*fig.*). On p. 29, "*la kylix... n'a pas inspirée...*" should be spelled "*la kylix... n'a pas inspiré*".

Despite the weaknesses of the publication, the book constitutes an extremely valuable pottery reference manual similar to the inevitable R. Amiran, *Ancient pottery of the Holy Land* (New Brunswick 1970), and should justifiably thus be quickly popular among researchers working on Late Bronze Age ceramics from the coastal Levant.

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