Lucinda Dirven. “The Astronomical Diaries and Religion in Seleucid and Parthian Babylon: the Case of the Prophet of Nanāya”

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Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/51792>

DOI: 10.4000/abstractairanica.51792

ISSN: 1961-960X

Publisher:

CNRS (UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens), Éditions de l'IFRI

Electronic reference

Leonardo Gregoratti, “Lucinda Dirven. “The Astronomical Diaries and Religion in Seleucid and Parthian Babylon: the Case of the Prophet of Nanāya””, *Abstracta Iranica* [Online], Volume 42-43 | 2021, document 2, Online since 30 December 2020, connection on 23 December 2022. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/51792> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.51792>

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- 1 Dirven's contribution deals with an episode narrated in the Diaries which has not obtained the deserved attention from scholars and whose implications concerning the religious life of late Babylon are extremely interesting. In 133 BC a boatman entered Babylon and claimed to be a messenger of the goddess Nanāya. He began to preach in the street and was welcome by an enthusiast crowd of citizens. Finally, his popularity entered in open conflict with the Temples' authorities, a revolt followed which was quashed. Dirven argues that this episode, a consequence of the period of troubles the city was experiencing in those years, demonstrates the decline of traditional cult institutions and the people's search for alternative and more direct forms of religion in response to their needs and fears.

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