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REFERENCES

Michał GAWLIKOWSKI, *Le sanctuaire d'Allat à Palmyre* (PAM Monograph Series 8), Warsaw, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017, 20 × 29, 300 p., 172 fig. n/b + 67 coul., ISBN : 978-83-235-3493-8.

- 1 The temple of Allat is located on the western part of Palmyra, in the heart of the 4th century AD military camp, at the foot of jebel al-Husayniyet. It has been ever since the concession of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, the editor of the PAM Monograph series. Even before the dig of the sanctuary of Allat had begun, traces of the cult of Allat were found in this sector of the ancient city. They influenced the decision of excavations in this area, under the direction of Kazimierz Michałowski and, since 1974, Michał Gawlikowski. Regular excavation was carried out until 1977, pursued by some trenches. I had the privilege to participate in the last three seasons, from 2005 to 2007. This long-awaited monograph by Michał Gawlikowski is the final publication of his scrupulous archaeological work in this remarkable site during ca 30 years and completes our knowledge about another important cultic place in Palmyra. The book focusses on the archaeology of the temple, its epigraphic and iconographic material, and its chronology. It gives a detailed overview of the evolution of a sanctuary through a period of at least five centuries.
- 2 The architecture of the sanctuary takes on the main part of the monograph, being the focus of six chapters (III-VIII). The complex history of the sanctuary is presented in six construction stages (Allat I-Allat VI) identified by Gawlikowski by combining methodologically the archaeological and epigraphical evidence.
- 3 The author of the volume estimates, in chapter I, the date of foundation of the temple to around 50 BC (table 2, p. 31), and he implies that the temple of Allat is the oldest

sanctuary in Palmyra. This interpretation does not, however, take into account the inscription PAT 1524 dated on 44 BC mentioning the priests of Bel, which points towards the existence of an organised cult and a place of worship.

- 4 In the Allat I period, the sanctuary, which Gawlikowski calls *temple primitif*, was a small shrine decorated by pilasters on the façade and merlons on the roof, comparable with another building discovered by Gawlikowski: the temple of Rab'asirê. This sort of the construction is labeled *ḥamana* in an Aramaic inscription (insc. 2), an ambiguous term until the publication of this volume. The new definition concerns a building enclosing a niche and a statue comparable to the constructions on firm ground made by nomad tribes for protecting their idols, which corresponds with the archaeology of the temple. It contained a small chamber, which size strongly limited the access inside. It enclosed a niche, traditionally adorned with eagles, with a non-preserved cultic statue placed on a socle, discovered *in situ* at the back of the chamber. An interesting hypothesis proposes to reconstruct a cultic object made of light materials like wood, gypsum or fabrics (or even metal, e.g. bronze or terracotta), which corresponds with the idea of an ambulation of the goddess, a tradition well attested in ancient Mesopotamia and indicated on the relief 12 (fig. 177, p. 212).
- 5 The Allat II stage, from the 1st century AD to mid 2nd century AD, reveals the extension of the *temenos* with the refitting of the courtyard and the walls. Gawlikowski dates two of the most remarkable monuments – a freestanding column of Šalmallat and the monumental lion found within the sanctuary – to this construction phase. The first object, found collapsed by an earthquake and restored with the help of S. Taha in 1975, deserves attention because of the rare presence of a sundial. The simulation made by D. Tarara (fig. 70, p. 89) shows that the hour could be read only until between 2:15 and 3:30 p.m. depending on the season. It does not seem to be unimportant, as Gawlikowski writes, and we can just wonder if this time was linked with a ritual *modus operandi*? The lion, called in the book *le Lion Gardien*, was discovered in fragments in 1977, in the later foundations parallel to the cella. We do not know where its original emplacement was, but the *haut-relief* definitely constituted a part of a wall, shown in the new rearrangement by Bartosz Markowski (fig. 80, p. 96). Inscription 19, written on the lion's left leg, concerns a ritual regulation indicating that bloody offerings were not allowed in the sanctuary *intra muros*. That may be the reason why a monumental altar (fig. 86, p. 100) was set outside of the *temenos* in a fair distance, while in front of the temple itself was just an altar for another kind of offerings (liquids, incense burning or even premises). Further in this chapter, Gawlikowski intriguingly suggests another temple in the close vicinity of the temple of Allat, basing his reasoning on the base of a column of a type unknown in the other Palmyrene monuments and on inscription 11, which evokes the foundation of a *ḥamana* of Šamaš.
- 6 The porticoes were set in three steps, from the 1st century AD until 114. The Polish archaeologist identifies the column with an architectural symbol of acculturation: “La colonne fonctionne en tant que signe extérieur des changements qui ont touché la civilisation de Palmyre à l'époque” (p. 65).
- 7 The mid-2nd century AD brings an interesting and rare architectonic solution identified by the author: the entire old *ḥamana* was surrounded by a Graeco-Roman envelope, taking the shape of a *prostylos* on a podium, and a naos (Allat III, *cella antonine*), associating the old temple with new trends in architecture. The close analogy with the temple of Ba'alshamin makes it possible to think that the same architect could have

made these two sanctuaries. The sanctuary of Allat in this intact shape survived until the siege in AD 272.

- 8 Later, archaeological data indicate the restoration of the impoverished temple by soldiers in the 4th century AD, reusing material from the destroyed shrine (Allat IV). The simplified late *naos* (fig. 142) became the shelter for a new cultic statue of Athena (Sculpture 20). The author dates this sculpture to the 2nd century AD. It was made of Pentelic marble and analogous to Phidias' Parthenos, and was picked by soldiers in the rumbles of the old sanctuary. But the life of the new temple was short, and it became a victim of the anti-pagan edicts of Theodosius of the 380s, as confirmed by the discovery of a hoard of coins in the ancient cella. After this date the walls of the temenos embraced a praetor's house and small installations in Omayyad times, but the ancient *naos* became a ruin and quarry for the stone material.
- 9 Daria Tarara, in her magnificent visualisations presented in fig. 22, 37 and 130, reveals the original temple from the ruins and reconstructs the antiquity for the modern audience. To her goes a great appreciation and congratulation.
- 10 Gawlikowski largely overlooks Allat in the local pantheon and her cult, closing this subject in the last part of the study (chapter IX). He points the Arabic origins of the goddess, underlined by the management of the temple by the Arabic tribe Benê Ma'azin. The author observes that the name of Allat is rarely mentioned in Palmyrene texts outside of the sanctuary. Moreover, her name appears among other gods of Palmyra, like Šamaš, Ba'alshamin, etc. The author keeps the individual character of Allat of Palmyra without any reference to the external analogies.
- 11 The last three chapters (X-XII) are catalogues of the religious sculpture, inscriptions and coins found in the sanctuary of Allat. They show the impressive evidence of the material discovered there: 33 fragments of reliefs and sculptures, 42 inscriptions edited by H. J. W. Drijvers and completed by M. Gawlikowski, including 3 Safaitic graffiti edited by M. Macdonald, and 45 coins from the Theodosian treasure, initially published by M. Gawlikowski and A. Krzyżanowska in 2014 in *Studia Palmyreńskie* XIII.
- 12 A few details need to be amended or precised:
- p. 56: The restitution of the cultic statue is illustrated on fig. 32, not fig. 22.
- p. 195: A close neighbourhood of the sanctuary revealed several large-size altars dedicated to "He whose name is blessed forever," which Gawlikowski interprets as a form of Ba'alshamin. My recent PhD thesis ¹ invalidates this theory, setting an accent on hymnic origins similar to the examples from the Ancient Mesopotamian religious literature and a possible universal attribution to any listening god. The altars to "Lord of the Universe," found as well in the vicinity of the temple, can be attributed either to Ba'alshamin or to Bel, as this title corresponds to the theology of both gods. The *foudre ailée* is not particularly a symbol of Ba'alshamin: no monument associates this symbol with the name of this god. ² The inscription IGLS XVII/1, 131, with the date 6 Nisan 183, a good day, indicates clearly the acme of the Akitû festival and foundation of the temple of Bel in Palmyra.
- p. 200: The numbers in Allat III and IV does not follow the order. After 33 there should be 34 instead of 44.
- The author of the volume quotes IGLS XVII/1 edited by Jean-Baptiste Yon, but this reference is missing in the bibliography.

- 13 Nevertheless, these minor details do not downgrade the immense value of Gawlikowski's study of the temple of Allat. This book is not a simple final excavation report, but an attempt to understand the complexity of the ancient place of cult. It is a homage to the endangered world heritage exposed on brutal acts of violence against different religions and cultures in the name of an ideology. The work of Polish archaeologists in Palmyra, published in Gawlikowski's volume, proves the fact that "le passé ne se perd jamais tout à fait, quel que soit l'acharnement de ceux qui voudraient en faire table rase" (p. 13).
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NOTES

1. A. KUBIAK-SCHNEIDER, *Celui dont le nom est béni pour l'éternité. Une étude des dédicaces sans théonyme de Palmyre*, PhD thesis defended in 2016 at the University of Warsaw. Publication forthcoming (*Religions of the Graeco-Roman World*, Brill, Leyden). Preliminary results were published in A. KUBIAK, "The gods without names? Palmyra, Hatra, Edessa," *ARAM* 28, 2016, p. 337-348, and A. KUBIAK, "Des dieux bons à Palmyre," *Studia Palmyrenskie* XII, 2013, p. 227-234.

2. This symbol is explained in the above-mentioned thesis as a symbol of divine power and presence, p. 191. It figures also on the inscription RSP 142 = PAT 1928 where it can be explained as the execution of the divine justice appealed in the inscription.

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