DEL OLMO LETE, G. — The private archives of Ugarit. A functional analysis. (Barcino Monographica Orientalia, 11). Universitat de Barcelona, Facultat de Geografia i Història, Barcelona, 2018. (24 cm, 177). ISBN 978-84-9168-194-6. € 22,–.

Based on the fact that "Tell Ras Shamra-Ugarit is unique because of the presence of several so-called archives, in contrast to other archaeological sites in the Near East which have preserved sets of tablets, but in general only one archive for each site" (p. 27), the author sets himself the objective of studying "the role and function of each archive in the political setting of Ugaritian society", specifying that "We do not intend to carry out a genre-critical or typological discussion of the texts themselves, but to analyse the reasons why they have found their place in a particular archival context, unveiling consequently the role or function that such an archive accomplished in Ugaritian society" (p. 9). The archives studied are as follows: The archive of the Great Priest (*rb khnm*, Ȧttēnu / Ḫurāṣānu) (pp. 13-25), (*bn*) *ȧgpṯr* / (Binu) Agaptarri's House (pp. 27-54), the archive "Maison aux Tablettes Littéraires" - "Ville Sud" (pp. 55-59), Urtēnu's archive (pp. 61-63), the archive of Rapānu (pp. 65-76), the Ugaritic archives of the "Maison du Lettré" and "Maison de Rašapʾabu" (pp. 77-86), the archive of the so-called "Palais Sud" (pp. 87-92), the archive between the Central Palace and the South Palace (PC/PS) (pp. 93-98), scattered archives and text collections (pp. 99-109), and the set of texts in the "Maison aux Jarres" (pp. 111-112). The author also notes that "Although the great Palace Archives remain outside our interest for the time being, we cannot avoid mentioning them as a basic reference point in this topic" (p. 10), so he adds two chapters on the archives of the "Palais Royal" (pp. 113-

116), and the Ras Ibn Hani archive (pp. 117-112). Each chapter provides the plan(s) of the archive studied.

Each chapter lists all the texts found in each archive, including texts that are still unpublished; also the archaeological context is very much taken into account. "The purpose of bringing together all these fragmentary texts is to convey a visual impression of the importance of this archive or library" (p. 48) and in fact, with this information on hand, even someone who is familiar with these archives will not ceased to be amazed at finding (or rediscovering) the wealth of texts in many of them. So, for example, the first chapter makes it possible to visualize clearly that a single archive, the one called the "Archive of the Great Priest", produced, among other writings, a whole series of primary religious and literary mythological texts (Baal Cycle, Mytheme of 'Baal's Hunting', Mytheme of Anat, Mytheme of the *ilm nˤmm*), of epic texts (Kirta Epic, Danil-Aqhat Epic, Rpủm Myth), ritual texts (God lists, Offering lists, Complex lists), an expiation ritual and a prayer, Hurrian texts (often defined as "incantations"), letters and administrative texts, lexical texts, Akkadian consonantal texts, as well as hippiatric texts. From an analysis of the composition of the archive and of the functions peculiar to a *rb khnm*, "High Priest", the author concludes that this house belonged to "a high civil servant of the theocratic state, which at the same time was the official archive for the mythico-ritual texts as well as the workshop where copies were made and young scribes were trained so effectively" (pp. 23-24).

Quite close to the archive of the High Priest was what is called "Agaptarri's House". The author studies the latter, together with the one called "Maison du prêtre-magicien" and the archive known as "Lamashtu", because "The three archaeological spaces in question form an interconnected area seen from inside, which means that it was owned and used as a housing unit" (p. 31). He concludes that this house had three main functions, from which "a realistic portrait of (Binu) Agaptarri" (p. 54) would emerge: "First it is a reference library of classical Akkadian texts of magic performances … which may have functioned as prototypes and guides for forming their own Ugaritic models" (p. 53); secondly, it was intended for the "instruction of young people entering this profession in a true religious attitude towards the patron gods that they must sincerely profess" (p. 54), and in third place "the technical training … of the young magician as a literate scribe" (p. 54). Together, these two archives – of the High Priest and of Agaptarri – close to each other and also near the sacral temple area, must have formed "a sort of *cultic-magic residential space*" (p. 77) within the city.

The "Maison aux Tablettes Littéraires" must have been "a scribal workshop intended mainly for the 'middle class' requirements of Ugaritian society" (p. 58), "a school and a notary's office" (p. 59). The "archive of Rapānu" shows that this person was not "just a learned and highly confidential scribe, but a high civil servant, possibly the highest public official at the time" (p. 75). The archives usually called "Maison du Lettré" and "Maison de Rašapʾabu" are discussed together because analysis of the texts from the first "makes clear that there was not such a particular archive" (p. 79), so that "we can even figure out that that room 'Maison du Lettré' was the 'classroom' and scriptorium where the documents were copied and the apprentices' training took place, while the so-called 'Maison de Rašapʾabu' was the space where the already written down documents were

stored" (p. 82). As for the nature of the archive, this house was "a training school. Its chief scribe was responsible for the copying and keeping of the archival records of his master's affairs of any kind, functioning in this regard as the actual secretary of the Rašapʾabu's house and interests" (pp. 83-84). The concentration of the "Maison de Rašapʾabu"/ "Maison du Lettré" and the "archive of Rapānu" in the same urban quarter "makes of it a sort of *civil service quarter*" (p. 77).

One of the author's key ideas is that the private archives were also schools for scribes. This is what he says, for example, in the case of the archive of Rašapʾabu: "From this textual contents record the image of a 'notary' register emerges, which not only keeps records of economic private transactions, susceptible of circumstantial verification, but also has the necessary scribal infrastructure to carry out such written records. His owner / titular was *ākil kāri* [i.e. 'supervisor of the harbour'], as we know according to textual testimony, but he must be credited also to be he himself a scribe, because only a scribe, namely, someone who knew how to read and write, could keep control of the documentation preserved in his house and under his responsibility", adding that "This qualification could be made extensive to the rest of owners / holders of the Ugaritic private archives." (p. 85; cf. also p. 84: "We may so conclude that any Ugaritic archive was in fact an edubba", as well as pp. 62 and 75).

Instead, in the case of the archives in the royal palace of Ugarit, "Faced with the almost complete absence of literary and religious texts as well as the modest number of scribal exercises and lexical material … it must be concluded that this archive was not a scribal workshop. Its main function was that of 'notary office' in which the royal acts were kept as well as the documentation dealing with the economic interests of the Palace" (p. 114). As for the building called the "Palais Sud", it seems to have functioned as "a sort of mere storehouse or reserve of archival material, probably of the Central Palace archive, not specially requested and operative" (p. 90).

Three appendixes complete the work. The first (pp. 123-128) is an "Archaeological Register of the Ras Shamra Mission". The second (pp. 129-133) provides a list of "The unpublished syllabic texts from the house of Rapānu". The last appendix (pp. 135-164) republishes an article by the author, which originally appeared in *Aula Orientalis* 33–2 (2015), 221-241, with the title "The Marzeaḥ and the Ugaritic Magic Ritual System. A Close Reading of KTU 1.114*"; the reason for including it in this volume is "to enhance the extraordinary importance that Ugaritians bestowed upon the keeping in their archives … of this kind of records as a sort of guarantee of the social and religious institutions of the town" (p. 135).

An index of the texts mentioned and discussed would have been very useful for consultation of this work.

Here we can add some short bibliographical notes:

– *Maison de Rašapʾabu"* : see also the detailed study by V. Matoïan, "La maison dite 'de Rashapabou': inventaire des objets découverts lors de la fouille de l'édifice et essai d'interprétation", in V. Matoïan and M. Al-Maqdissi (eds.), *Études ougaritiques* III, Ras Samra-Ougarit XXI, Leuven 2013, pp. 157-202.

– *Urtēnu's Archive*: in note 2 on p. 61 and note 5 on p. 10 add S. Lackenbacher and F. Malbran-Labat, *Lettres en akkadien de la "Maison d'Urtēnu". Fouilles de 1994*,

Ras Shamra-Ougarit XXIII, Leuven 2016 (a work included in the final bibliography of the book). To the second note add also P. Bordreuil (ed.), *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit VII, Paris 1991 (also included in the final bibliography).

– *"Maison aux Jarres"* : the author states that "this set of texts is not important enough to warrant a functional interpretation" (p. 111); however, the function of this archive has been studied in detail by J.-Á. Zamora, "Uso documental y funcionamiento administrativo en Ugarit: la 'Casa de las grandes vasijas'", *ISIMU* 7 (2004), pp. 203-221.

– *"South Palace"* : for the most recent archaeological aspects of this building see V. Matoïan and M. Al-Maqdissi, in V. Matoïan *et al.*, "Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la Mission archéologique syro-française de Ras Shamra – Ougarit en 2009 et 2010 (69ᵉ et 70ᵉ campagnes)", *Syria* 90 (2013), pp. 448-451.

– *The Ras Ibn Hani Archive*: after this book appeared, the texts from Ras Ibn Hani were published in P. Bordreuil, D. Pardee, and C. Roche-Hawley, *Ras Ibn Hani II. Les textes en écriture cunéiforme de l'âge du Bronze récent (fouilles 1977 à 2002)*, Beirut 2019. For the identification of a direct link between this archive and the archives of the royal palace of Ugarit see D. Pardee, "Deux tablettes ougaritiques de la main d'un même scribe, trouvées sur deux sites distincts : RS 19.039 et RIH 98/02", *Semitica et Classica* 1 (2008), pp. 9-38.

– *Royal Palace Archive*: on the archives found in the royal palace of Ugarit see also S. Lackenbacher, "Les archives palatiales d'Ugarit", *Ktema* 26 (2001), pp. 79-86, *ead.*, "Quelques remarques à propos des archives du palais royal d'Ougarit", in V. Matoïan (ed.), *Le mobilier du palais royal d'Ougarit*, Lyon 2008, pp. 281-290, as well as A.-S. Dalix and J.-Y. Monchambert, "Du fragment aux archives. Le cas de la pièce 68 des 'archives sud' du palais royal d'Ougarit", in B. Geyer, V. Matoïan and M. Al-Maqdissi (eds.), *De l'île d'Aphrodite au paradis perdu, itinéraire d'un gentilhomme lyonnais. En Hommage à Yves Calvet*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit XXII, Leuven 2015, pp. 127-137. On the correspondence found in the palace, the author notes that "a comparative study of this set of correspondence with that of the *sākinūma*'s (Urtēnu and Rapānu…) archives imposes itself. Was possibly the Royal Palace Archive the last destination of this sort of texts while their retention in the officers' archives was only temporal, during the officer's duty period?" (p. 114); this problem has been considered in S. Lackenbacher, "La correspondance internationale dans les archives d'Ugarit", *Revue d'assyriologie* 89 (1995), pp. 67-76.

On the general function of the archives of Ugarit see also F. Rougemont and J.-P. Vita, "Palais et archives: organisation administrative des palais dans le monde mycénien et à Ougarit", in F. Rougemont (ed.), *Palais sans archives, archives sans palais. Palais, archives et territoires en Orient et en Égée*, *Topoi* Suppl. 16, Lyon 2020 (in press). Similarly, on the scribes of Ugarit, R. Hawley, D. Pardee and C. Roche-Hawley, "The Scribal Culture of Ugarit", *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* 2 (2015), pp. 229-267.

The work presents points that could certainly be discussed or given a different nuance, but above all it is an indispensable *vade mecum* for anyone wishing to work on this aspect of the culture and history of Ugarit. The author deserves all our appreciation for having produced a work that will be so useful for future studies on the topic.

CSIC-ILC Madrid   Juan-Pablo VITA
May 2020