Christiansen, Birgit: *Schicksalsbestimmende Kommunikation.* Sprachliche, gesell-schaftliche und religiöse Aspekte hethitischer Fluch-, Segens- und Eidesformeln. Studien zu den Bogazköy-Texten, 53. Harrassowitz Verlag Wiesbaden, 2012. XII, 638 Seiten, 1 Tabelle. Gebunden, 128,00 EUR. ISBN: 978-3-447-06174-2.

In this revised version of her 2008 dissertation (Freie Universität Berlin) Chris-tiansen (henceforth C.) brings communication theory and an exhaustive review of the textual evidence (in Akkadian as well as Hittite) to bear on defining the role of curses, blessings, and oaths in Hittite society. This broad prospective, the judicious decision to classify the relevant concepts in terms of prototypes, not fixed categories (pp. 55–56), and a healthy dose of common sense enable C. to challenge or relativize several widespread and longstanding claims regarding oaths and curses in Hittite (hers is the first study to properly treat blessings systematically alongside curses). It is likely that soldiers, temple officials, and other subordinates of the Hittite king swore oral oaths (p. 10 and Chapter 7 *passim*), but there is no basis for supposing that the mutual pledges made by the Hittite king and various treaty partners involved any such speech acts. Rather, it is the written formulations that we find in the treaties themselves that constituted the oaths (pp. 142–44 and Chapter 4 *passim*). Hence the provisions for displaying copies of the treaties in the temples of the deities called upon to enforce the commitments made. Similarly, the oral oaths taken by officials may have been predominantly formulated as conditioned self-curses (p. 39 and again Chapter 7), but it is hard to imagine that Hattusili III and Ramses II or Tuthaliya IV and Kuruntiya of Tarhuntassa ever expressed their treaty obligations in terms of a self-curse. While one should not underestimate the Hittites' notion of the power of the spoken word, it also seems problematic to attribute to an uttered curse a "magi-cal" self-fulfilling power (see refs. pp. 10 and 37). If this were so, why would the elaborate summoning of divine enforcers have been necessary? In carefully review-ing the Hittite terminology for 'curse', C. also gives due attention to the question of whether there is evidence for non-verbal acts of cursing, citing several plausible examples (pp. 69–71).

The quality of the philological analysis of the cited texts is very high, and of the few lapses most have no serious consequences for the overall interpretation. One unfortunate exception is C.'s failed attempt to interpret the expression *šeknun šarā pippa-* 'turn up the robe' as referring to an act of removing evil from one's person (pp. 127–9). As I argued already in *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 35 (1983) 141–3, listing of this act in a ritual alongside (false) oath, bloodshed, mutilation, and curse (KUB 7.41 Ro 12–14) makes it clear that it is a criminal act, referring to self-exposure not as an "obscene gesture," but as a curse, typologically paralleled else-where (equivalent functionally to the hand gestures of modern European societies).

C. thus suppresses the best example we have of non-verbal cursing in Hittite cul-ture.

The classification of cursing and blessing formulas (Chapter 10) is very well con-ceived and will prove to be especially useful to all those interested in the verbal as-pects of the topic. The final synthesis of the results (Chapter 11) and the extensive indices further enhance the overall impact of the work, on whose successful execution the author is to be congratulated.

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Zadok, Ran: *Iranisches Personennamenbuch, Band II: Iranische Namen in semiti-schen Nebenüberlieferungen.* Faszikel 1B: Iranische Personennamen in der neu- und spätbabylonischen Nebenüberlieferung. In: Iranische Onomastik, herausgegeben von Bert G. Fragner und Velizar Sadovski, Nr. 4. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Wien, 2009. 371 Seiten. Broschiert, 60,80 EUR. ISBN: 978-3-7001-6110-3.

The volume under review, like the previous one, belongs to the series aimed at a comprehensive representation of the stock of Iranian personal names. This task can also be regarded as a part of the broader lexicographic effort when the object of study includes the onomastics of the Achaemenid period. Old Iranian names were normally "telling", for example the name of king Artaxerxes, Old Persian *Arta-xšaça-* con-veyed the meaning "(having) the kingship of Truth", or something similar. The re-verse implication of this transparent structure is the lexical reality of most items found in onomastic compounds. Since the Old Persian lexical stock is only fragmentarily attested through the limited corpus of Achaemenid royal inscriptions, while no Me-dian texts have been identified thus far, the study of personal names attested in for-eign transmission significantly improves our knowledge of Achaemenid Iranian (Me-dian and Old Persian) vocabulary.