

AASOR 16 12+ at full length*

Albert Planelles – ILC, CSIC
albert.planelles@cchs.csic.es

[This article presents a complete edition of the Nuzi text AASOR 16 12+, which belongs to the dossier of Kušši-ḫarbe. Since the original publication of the text in 1936, a number of fragments that add a significant amount of text have been joined to it. This article provides an updated edition that also presents, for the first time, a copy of the text and an identification of the seal impressions.]

Keywords: Nuzi, Kušši-ḫarbe, corruption, Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East.

1. Introduction

Among the various groups of texts found at Nuzi, few have sparked as much curiosity as the dossier of the corrupt mayor Kušši-ḫarbe.¹ This group of texts records the testimonies of citizens against Kušši-ḫarbe and his subordinates, who were accused of a not insignificant list of crimes that includes, among others, misappropriation, kidnapping, extortion, assault and even rape. The texts, mostly *umma*-declarations, were written down years after the events took place, probably as evidentiary records of the charges against Kušši-ḫarbe and his henchmen. Unfortunately, the outcome of the legal proceedings is not known, and the fate of Kušši-ḫarbe and his subordinates remains unknown. The 24 tablets and fragments belonging to this dossier that have been identified were all found in the palace, including the text AASOR 16 12+.

AASOR 16 12+ was found between 1927 and 1929, allegedly in room L2.² As was customary at that time, it was sent to Harvard University for study, where it was given the catalogue number

* Abbreviations follow those of the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*. I wish to thank Josué J. Justel for his reading of the draft of this article and for offering his suggestions. All shortcomings remain my sole responsibility. I am also indebted to the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East for allowing me to work on its collection, and especially to Adam J. Aja, chief curator of the museum, for his assistance with the collection and his kindness during my stay.

1. On this dossier, see Pfeiffer and Speiser 1935-1936, 13-20, 59-75; Gordon 1941; Koschaker 1941; Hayden 1962, 174-177; Cassin 1982, 110-113; Dosch 1993, 146; Wilhelm 1995, 152; Lion 2000, 158-162; Fincke 2002, 305-306; Maidman 2010, 81-123; von Dassow 2017, 126-128.

2. The rooms excavated in the palace area were originally given the numbers C + no. This is why Pfeiffer and Speiser state that the text was found in room C2 (1935-1936, 8). However, at some point during the first season of Harvard University excavations (1927/1928), the archaeologists changed the grid and the numbering of the various areas of the main mound (Fincke 1999, 16). The new numbering system would identify that room as L2 (thus, Mayer 1978, 13), but the introduction of the new grid caused some confusion and possible mistakes in the register of the findspots of

SMN 391. Today, it is kept at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, where it can be found under the accession number 2000.6.9. A picture of it is available on the CDLI (no. P409416). I had the opportunity to collate the tablet in May 2022 and, since it belongs to such a famous dossier, I present an updated edition here.³

2. *Research history*

The text was originally published in transliteration by Robert Pfeiffer and Ephraim Speiser (1935-1936, 20). However, the tablet is broken, and the authors considered it too fragmentary for a translation (1935-1936, 75). More recently, Maidman (2010, 110-111) reedited it and included a translation. However, Maidman's presentation of the text is based on the Pfeiffer and Speiser edition and not on a new collation of the tablet. No copy of this text has been published so far. First Pfeiffer and Speiser, and later Maidman, presented a 21 line transliteration, the first five lines of which were badly damaged. However, today the text is significantly longer. Over the years, some fragments must have been joined to the original tablet. The composite text can be seen in the CDLI picture, which was uploaded in 2010. However, the whole text has never been published, the joins remain unknown to most scholars, and the museum has no record of who made them.

In order to reconstruct the research history on this text I contacted a number of scholars who have worked intensively on Harvard Nuzi texts and whom I would like to thank for their invaluable help: Philippe Abrahams, Jeanette Fincke, Brigitte Lion, and Anne Löhnert.⁴ My correspondence with them led me to find out that several joins were made by Jeanette Fincke on 29th August 1996. She joined fragments EN 10/1 64 and NTF P 192 (1) to the original tablet published by Pfeiffer and Speiser. The first of these fragments was published by Fincke and preserves the upper edge of the tablet. The second is not actually one fragment, but at least five, which preserve parts of the lines of the obverse. These were probably kept together in a box with the number NTF P 192 (1).⁵ It is unclear to me if one of the fragments of the current tablet was part of box NTF P 192 (1) or was joined later. I cannot confirm that the vertical fragment that preserves the ending of lines 3 to 7 was also added by Fincke in 1996. However, if it was joined later, it is unknown who added it and what museum number it was stored under (if it ever had one). In any case, the fragment must have been joined before 2010, when the CDLI picture was uploaded.

3. *The present edition*

The composite tablet measures 108 x 76 x 30 mm. It does not deal with Kušši-ḫarbe himself but with one of his subordinates, Kipiya. The text compiles the declarations of three men (Iruya, Zike and Bēl-abī) concerning Kipiya's illegal acts, and each statement is followed by Kipiya's own justification. Many of the texts in the dossier have this back-and-forth structure (e. g. AASOR 16 1,

tablets. According to Lacheman (HSS 14: xix-xx; HSS 16: vii), the findspots of the tablets said to come from C2 in the old numbering system is not entirely clear. They could actually have come from either L2 or M2, two different rooms according to the new numbering system (thus, Maidman 2010, 110). On this issue, see also Mönninghoff 2020, 6, 16.

3. My visit to the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East took place within the framework of the research project PID2019-104035GB-I00, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

4. Jeanette Fincke and Anne Löhnert kindly shared their own notes on AASOR 16 12+ with me as well. I would like to thank them accordingly.

5. The fact that several fragments are kept together in the same box appears to be a common phenomenon in the NTF collection (Fincke 1999, 19).

4, 5, 6, 14, HSS 13 350+). The text is particularly similar to AASOR 16 5 and AASOR 16 6, where declarations of a number of individuals are set against declarations made by Kipiya. Although AASOR 16 12+ does not seem to refer to the episodes reported in the other two texts, it deals with similar topics. In fact, the accusations against Kipiya are similar in all three texts: he seems to be held responsible for the theft of sheep (sometimes for the celebration of the *eššēšu*-festival) and garments.

4. Seal impressions

AASOR 16 12+ is sealed by two individuals. One of the names is partially preserved and the other one is completely lost. However, their identities can be established thanks to the seal impressions, because these impressions appear in other texts in the dossier and were also identified, independently, by Edith Porada in Nuzi texts kept in Chicago. The first seal impression (end of the reverse) appears in AASOR 16 2, 3+, 6 and 8, used by a man called Ḫaiš-Teššub. It corresponds to AASOR 24 no. 648 which, according to Porada, belonged to Ḫaiš-Teššub son of Puḫi-šenni. The beginning of his name is preserved in the caption written at the very end of the reverse/upper edge. The second seal impression (upper edge) appears in AASOR 16 8 used by a man called Paya. It corresponds to AASOR 24 no. 1006 which, according to Porada, belonged to Paya son of Pui-tae.⁶

Ḫaiš-Teššub and Paya are known to have sealed many of the texts in the Kušši-ḫarbe dossier, either together (AASOR 16 3+, 5, 7, 8), alone (Ḫaiš-Teššub: AASOR 16 2, 6, HSS 13 430) or with other people (Paya: AASOR 16 14; EN 9/1 470). It can be suggested with a reasonable degree of confidence that Ḫaiš-Teššub and Paya also sealed AASOR 16 12+.

5. Transliteration, translation, and comments

Publication number: AASOR 16 12.

Museum number: SMN 391; 2000.6.9.

Other numberings: CDLI no. P409416.

Main editions: Pfeiffer and Speiser 1935-1936, 20; Maidman 2010, 110-111.

Other references: Shaffer 1964, 191 n29; Wilhelm 1970, 8 n4; Mayer 1978, 14, 136; Löhnert 2018, 223.

Transliteration:

- Obv. 1. *um-ma*^m*i-ru-i*[*a-ma*]
 2. *i-^rna i^l-te-en* M[U[?]
 3. ^r2 UDU¹.NITA ^ù 2 *en*-[*zù*
 4. ^rm¹*ki-pí-ia il-te-q*[*è*
 5. ^rù¹ MÁŠ.TUR.M[EŠ]-*šu-nu* [

 6. *u*[*m-ma*]^m*ki-[pí]-ia-m*[*a*]
 7. 2 *en*-^r*zù*¹ [*a-n*]*a ka-a*[*z-za-ur-ni*]

Translation:

- Thus (speaks) Iruy[a:]
 In one/the first y[ear[?] ...]
 Kipiya too[k ...] two male sheep and two
 goat[s ...]
 And their kids [...]

 T[hus] (speaks) Ki[p]iya:
 I t[ook] two goats [a]s a co[m]pensation]

6. Both seal impressions might also appear in other texts in the dossier, but I have not had the opportunity to check all the tablets. As already highlighted by von Dassow (2017, 128 n50), the sealings on the tablets in this dossier have never been systematically studied. This is not the goal of this article either, which only discusses the seal impressions in order to provide an edition of AASOR 16 12+ that is as complete as possible.

8. <i>ša</i> GIŠ.MAR.GÍD.†DA ¹ <i>e[l-te-qè]</i>	for the/a chariot, and I took two male sheep
9. ù 2 UDU.NITA.MEŠ <i>a-na</i> [for [...]
10. <i>el-te-qè-š[u]-nu-t[i]</i>	

11. <i>um-ma</i> ^m zi-†ké-ma 1 ¹ UDU	Thus (speaks) Zike: Kipiya t[ook] one sheep
12. <i>a-†na¹ iš-šé-ší</i> ^m ki* ¹ -pí-ia <i>il-[te-qè]</i>	for the <i>eššēšu</i> -festival. Tarmiya, his own
13. [^m]tar-mi-ia †ŠEŠ ¹ -š <u>u</u> -ma <i>it-ta-a[d-din]</i>	brother, ga[ve] (him one), but he took
14. †ù ¹ ša-†nu ¹ -[ú] UDU <i>il-te*-qè</i>	another sheep.
15. [x x x x] -š <u>u</u> UDU ^m zi-li-†ip ¹ -[[...] the/a sheep Zilip[...]
16. †il ¹ -[te ² -qè ²]	t[ook ²].

17. <i>um-m[a]</i> ^m ki-pí-ia-ma	Thu[s] (speaks) Kipiya:
18. <i>a-na ša-at-ta-an ša-at-[ta-an]</i>	every yea[r] I take one sheep from him for
19. 1 UDU-š <u>u</u> <i>a-na iš-šé-ší</i>	the <i>eššēšu</i> -festival.
Lo. Ed. 20. <i>a-ša-ab-bat</i>	

21. <i>um-ma</i> ^m be-la-a-bi-ma	Thus (speaks) Bēl-abī:
Rev. 22. ^m ki-pí-ia <i>iš-ša-ab-†ta¹-[an-ni(-ma)]</i>	Kipiya took [me ...]
23. ù <i>i-na É nu-pá-r[i]</i>	and in the/a workhou[se ...]
24. ù 1 UDU <i>il-te-qè</i> [and he took one sheep [...]
25. <i>ša-nu-ú</i> ITI- <i>ḫu</i> [another month [...]
26. ù TÚG*-†ia <i>il¹-[te-qè]</i>	and he t[ook] my cloth/garment [...]
27. ù <i>lu-ba-ri</i> [and my garment [...]

28. <i>um-ma</i> ^m k[i-pí-ia-ma]	Thus (speaks) K[i]piya:]
29. 1 †UDU ¹ <i>a-na i[š-šé-ší]</i>	one sheep for the <i>e[ššēšu]</i> -festival ...]
30. ù <i>ša-nu-ú</i>	and another [...]
31. <i>qà-as-s[ú]</i>	hi[s] authority [...]

SEAL IMPRESSION (AASOR 24 648)	
Up. Ed. 32. NA ₄ .KIŠIB ^m ḫa ¹ -[iš-te-šub]	Seal of Ḫa[iš-Teššub]
SEAL IMPRESSION (AASOR 24 1006)	
33. N[A ₄ .KIŠIB ^m pa-a-a]	S[eal of Paya]
Le. Ed. 34. ŠU ^m d30-na-din-†MU ¹	(By the) hand of Sîn-nādin-šumī

Comments:

Lines 1-20 of the Pfeiffer-Speiser edition correspond to lines 12-31 here. Their line 21 is line 34 here.

Line 7: the restoration of the final word is based on AASOR 16 5: 7-8. On the various proposals for the interpretation of *kazzaurmu*, see Richter 2012, 192. The generally accepted interpretation is that of CAD K: 311 and Wilhelm 1988, 62.

Line 12: what Pfeiffer and Speiser transliterated as a plural marker (line 1 of their transliteration) is actually KI, the first syllable of the PN.

Line 14: the sequence UDU *il-te* is what Pfeiffer and Speiser transliterated as *lu il-li-[ik]*, in what was line 3 of the text for them.

Line 16: although no signs belonging to this line were visible in the fragment studied by Pfeiffer and Speiser, they correctly assumed that there was a line of text here (line 5 of their transliteration). Maidman (2010, 247 n120) retained their numbering of lines for convenience. What remains of the line is extremely damaged. At the end of the line, below the PN Zilip-[...] on line 15, there are a few signs coming from the reverse of the tablet in the opposite direction. They can be read as follows:

...-k]a³-an-ni
... il/el-t]e-qè-ma

They represent the last signs of two lines of text, although it is unclear to me which lines they belong to. Given their position, they seem to belong to lines in the range 24-27.

Line 18: the restoration of the final two signs was suggested by Pfeiffer and Speiser (line 7 of their transliteration) and followed by CAD Š2: 203b and Maidman (2010, 110). CAD E: 372a restores *šat[ti]*.

Line 22: Maidman already suggested the restoration of the personal pronoun *-anni* at the end of the line (line 11 in his edition), although he did not include it in the transliteration, only in the translation (Maidman 2010, 111, 248 n133). Given that in Nuzi Akkadian the addition of a suffix tends to trigger the syncopation of medial non-accented vowels in open syllable (Berkooz 1937, 29, 35; Gordon 1938, 35), the presence of a personal pronoun beginning with a vowel seems the best way to explain the form *iššabta-* instead of *iššabat-* (**ištabat-*). Furthermore, the form *iššabtannima* is preserved in full in other texts in the dossier, namely AASOR 16 8: 45 and HSS 13 350+: 2 (Fincke 2002, 305; Maidman 2010, 102, 108).

Line 23: Maidman (2010, 111) translates “and [put? me?] in the workhouse”. Based on the context, his suggestion certainly seems plausible. However, since the verb is completely lost, no attempt at a restoration is made here.

Line 25: Maidman (2010, 111) translates lines 25 and 26 (14 and 15 in his edition) together as if no signs had been lost at the end of line 25. He also translates line 25 as “(for) a second month”. Since no preposition is preserved on the tablet, I have refrained from restoring one.

Line 26: the restoration of the final verb was suggested by Pfeiffer and Speiser (line 15). See Zaccagnini 2020, 41-46 for the possible background and implications of the seizure of clothes.

Line 28: restoration suggested by Pfeiffer and Speiser (line 17).

Line 29: Pfeiffer and Speiser also considered that some signs had been lost after the preposition *ana* (line 18), but they did not attempt to restore anything, nor did Maidman. Some traces are preserved before the gap that, although extremely incomplete, are compatible with an IŠ sign.

Line 30: according to Pfeiffer and Speiser’s transliteration (line 19), the final sign Ú was still visible when they studied the text. Today it is completely lost.

Line 31: according to Pfeiffer and Speiser’s transliteration (line 20), the final sign ZU was better preserved than today when they transliterated the text. Today it is impossible to say whether this was the last sign of the line or not. The interpretation presented above is that of Maidman (2010, 111), although the fragmentary context precludes a final interpretation.

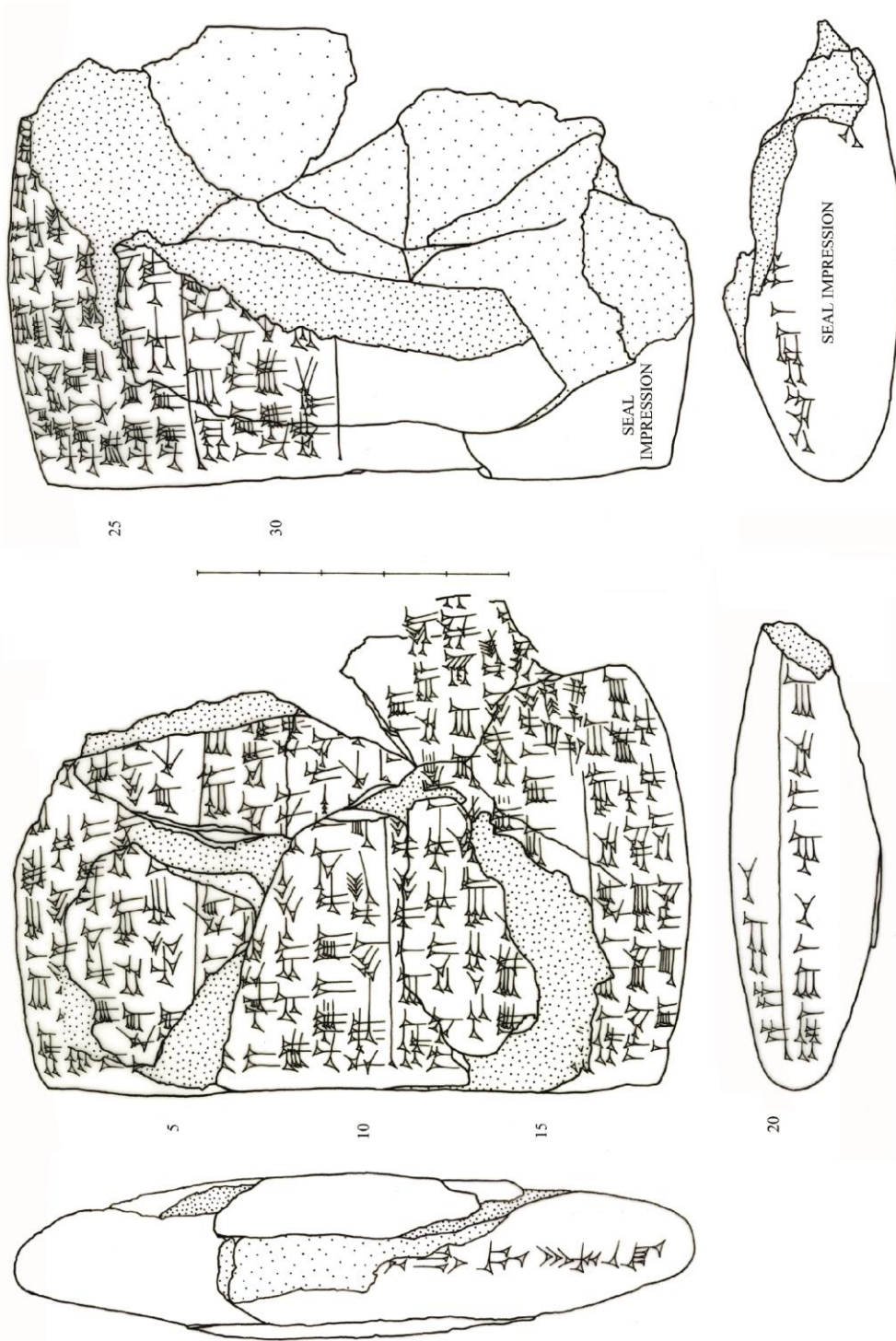
6. Bibliography

- BERKOOZ, MOSHÉ. 1937. *The Nuzi Dialect of Akkadian: Orthography and Phonology*. Language Dissertations 23. Philadelphia: Linguistic Society of America.
- CASSIN, ELENA. 1982. "Heur et malheur du *ḥazannu* (Nuzi)". In *Les pouvoirs locaux en Mésopotamie et dans les régions adjacentes: Colloque organisé par l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de Belgique 29 et 29 Janvier 1980*, edited by André Finet, 98-117. Brussels: Institut des Hautes Etudes de Belgique.
- DÖSCH, GUDRUN. 1993. *Zur Struktur der Gesellschaft des Königreichs Arraphé*. HSAO 5. Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag.
- FINCKE, JEANETTE. 1999. "The Nuzi Collection of the Harvard Semitic Museum". In *Nuzi at Seventy-Five*, edited by David I. Owen and Gernot Wilhelm, 13-24. SCCNH 10. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- . 2002. "Appendix to EN 10/3: Transliterations of EN 10/3 Texts Joined to Previously Published Texts". In *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi 10/3*, edited by David I. Owen and Gernot Wilhelm, 305-320. SCCNH 12. Bethesda: CDL Press.
- GORDON, CYRUS. H. 1938. "The Dialect of the Nuzu Tablets". *OrNS* 7: 32-63, 215-232.
- . 1941. "The People Versus the Mayor". *Smith Alumnae Quarterly* (August): 227.
- HAYDEN, ROY E. 1962. "Court Procedure at Nuzu". PhD dissertation, Brandeis University.
- KOSCHAKER, PAUL. 1941. "Ein politischer Propagandaprozeß in Nuzi aus dem 15. Jahrhundert v. Chr.". *Jahrbuch der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 1940*: 85-86.
- LION, BRIGITTE. 2000. "Les textes judiciaires du royaume d'Arrapha". In *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie: Archives judiciaires du Proche-Orient ancien (III^e-I^{er} millénaires avant J.-C.)*, edited by Francis Joannès, 141-162. Temps & Espaces. Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes.
- LÖHNERT, ANNE. 2018. "Feasts and Festivals According to the Texts from the Palace Buildings in Nuzi". *Kaskal* 15: 219-241.
- MAIDMAN, MAYNARD P. 2010. *Nuzi Texts and their Uses as Historical Evidence*. WAW 18. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- MAYER, WALTER. 1978. *Nuzi-Studien I: Die Archive des Palastes und die Prosopographie der Berufe*. AOAT 205/1. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer.
- MÖNNINGHOFF, HANNAH. 2020. *Der Palast in Nuzi. Studien zur formalen Struktur des Palastgebäudes und den Funktionen der Palastinstitution*. SVA 18. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- PFEIFFER, ROBERT H., and EPHRAIM A. SPEISER. 1935-1936. *One Hundred New Selected Nuzi Texts*. AASOR 16. New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research.
- RICHTER, THOMAS. 2012. *Bibliographisches Glossar des Hurritischen*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- SHAFFER, AARON. 1964. "Kitru/Kiterru: New Documentation for a Nuzi Legal Term". In *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim, June 7, 1964*, edited by Robert D. Biggs and John A. Brinkman, 181-194. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- VON DASSOW, EVA. 2017. "Texts from Nuzi". In *The Context of Scripture: Volume Four; Supplements*, edited by K. Lawson Younger Jr., 119-129. Leiden: Brill.
- WILHELM, GERNOT. 1970. *Untersuchungen zum Hurro-Akkadischen von Nuzi*. AOAT 9. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer.

———. 1988. “Gedanken zur Frühgeschichte der Hurriter und zum hurritisch-urartäischen Sprachvergleich”. In *Hurriter und Hurritisch*, edited by Volkert Haas, 43-67. Xenia 21. Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz.

———. 1995. “Identifikationen von ERL-Nummern”. In *Edith Porada Memorial Volume*, edited by David I. Owen and Gernot Wilhelm, 151-155. SCCNH 7. Bethesda: CDL Press.

ZACCAGNINI, CARLO. 2020. “Legal and Socio-Economic Aspects of the Deprivation of Clothes in the Ancient Near East”. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte. Journal for Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Law* 26: 37-56.



Copy of AASOR 16 12+