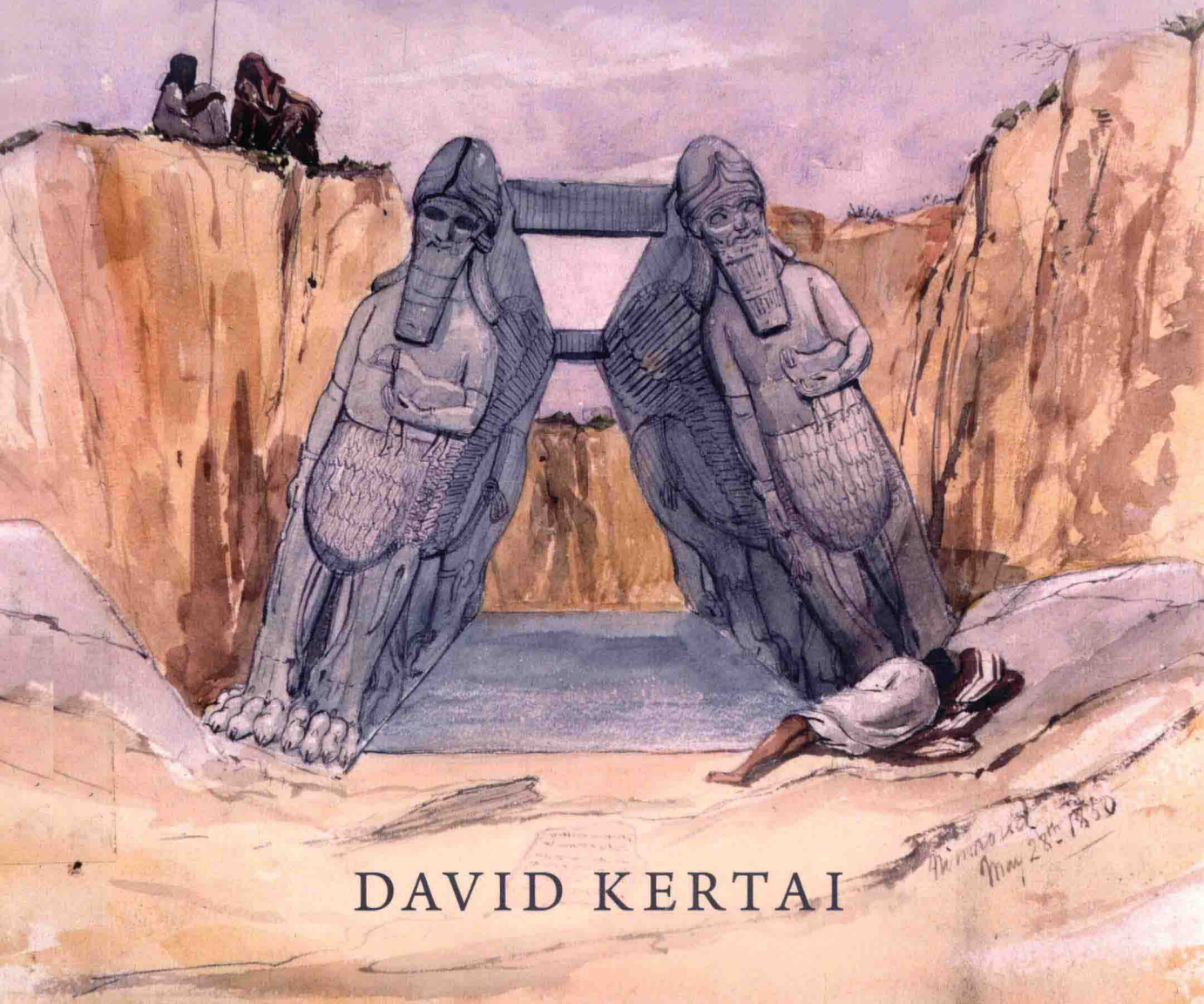


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THE ARCHITECTURE OF LATE ASSYRIAN ROYAL PALACES



DAVID KERTAI

The Architecture of Late Assyrian Royal Palaces

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF LATE ASSYRIAN ROYAL PALACES

1 To my parents

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHw	von Soden and Meissner 1965
BIWA	Borger 1996
CAD	<i>Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> (Chicago, 1956–2010)
CTN 3	Dalley and Postgate 1984
RIMA 1	Grayson 1987
RIMA 2	Grayson 1991d
RIMA 3	Grayson 1996
RINAP 1	Tadmor and Yamada 2011
RINAP 3	Grayson and Novotny 2012
RINAP 4	Leichty 2011
SAA 1	Parpola 1987a
SAA 3	Livingstone 1989
SAA 4	Starr 1990
SAA 5	Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990
SAA 6	Kwasman and Parpola 1991
SAA 7	Fales and Postgate 1992
SAA 10	Parpola 1993
SAA 11	Fales and Postgate 1995
SAA 12	Kataja and Whiting 1995
SAA 13	Cole and Machinist 1998
SAA 14	Mattila 2002
SAA 15	Fuchs and Parpola 2001
SAA 16	Luukko and Van Buylaere 2002
SAA 19	Luukko 2013

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Introduction

On the 12th of an unknown month around the year 713¹ the emissaries from Egypt, Gaza, Judah, Moab, and Ammon entered the Assyrian city of Kalḫu with what the Assyrians called their tribute (*maddattu*).² They had travelled a long way to pay their respects to the Assyrian king. The emissaries came to Kalḫu at the end of the city's lifetime as primary royal city, a status it had achieved 150 years earlier during Ashurnasirpal II's (883–859)³ reign. The construction of Sargon II's (722–705)⁴ new capital, Dur-Sharruken, was well under way, but only twenty years later, during the reign of Sennacherib (704–681), Nineveh became the new, and even more monumental, primary royal city.

This book will concentrate on these three cities and the royal palaces that were constructed within them. After more than 150 years of research we still know excruciatingly little about how these palaces functioned and what happened within their confines. Most analyses of Assyrian kingship have focused on textual and art historical sources. A comprehensive overview of Assyrian kingship and the functioning of the Assyrian state is, however, still to be written. Some of the most basic issues, such as the size and nature of the court society, are still debated.

The royal palaces formed one of the primary spatial settings of Late Assyrian kingship. The architectural contexts they created represent a culturally specific way of organizing space. This book will be based on the assumption that architecture, like material culture in general, is correlated to the way societies organize and constitute themselves. The architectural setting in which the court acted has received relatively little attention, with most architectural studies ignoring the

¹ All dates are BCE unless otherwise noted.

² SAA I, 110: r. 4–11. Postgate (1973b: II n. 29a) argued for a date of c. 716 and a *terminus ante quem* of 712, based on the sender of the letter being Marduk-remanni, the governor of Kalḫu. As Sargon started the construction of Dur-Sharruken only in 717 it is very unlikely that colossi could have already been installed in its doors, as stated in the letter, in 716. The letter is, therefore, more likely to date shortly before 712.

³ Ashurnasirpal II will mostly be referred to as Ashurnasirpal. Ashurnasirpal I reigned in the 11th century and plays a minor role in this book.

⁴ Sargon II will generally be referred to as Sargon throughout this book as he is the only Assyrian king during this period by this name.